

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF AUTHORITY
County of Lackawanna Transit System
June 26, 2024

The regular meeting of the County of Lackawanna Transit System Authority was held on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. at the Lackawanna Transit Center.

Present were:	Martha Dougher	Brian Doughton
	Michael Dougherty	Atty. Timothy Hinton
	Atty. Joseph DeNaples	Timothy McGrath
	Mike Danchak	Jane Farrell
	Frank Soto	Keri Savage
	Greg Czyzyk	Kelly Matone
	Nicole Ference	

Mr. Brian Doughton opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Doughton added that an Executive Session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

Mr. Doughton requested a roll call of the board members. Brian Doughton was present. Michael Dougherty and Martha Dougher participated via zoom. Gregg Neito and Larry Wynne were excused.

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Doughton requested a motion to approve the May 29, 2024 meeting minutes. Martha Dougher made a motion to accept the minutes and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Acceptance of Financial Documents

Mr. Doughton requested a motion to approve the Finance Statements for the month of April 2024. Michael Dougherty made a motion to accept the financial reports and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Public Comment/Agenda Items

Mr. Doughton welcomed comments from the public regarding agenda items; there were none.

Executive Director's Report/Department Reports

- A. Mike Danchak addressed the board regarding the finance department. Mike stated that the finances are very strong. Mike said that they are looking ahead to next year. He expects to have a fare increase in the shared ride department. We will have to petition Penn Dot for the approval for the increase. There will also be a fare increase for the Persons with Disabilities service. The lottery trips are 100% funded so there won't be an increase with that. They will begin to work on it this fall and they hope to have the increase approved by next June. Mike stated that we hope to get a big boost in advertising revenue with Gateway. Mike noted that we currently have three investments. The pension with Ralph Colo is very strong. He feels that we should reach our 7% goal

or possibly up to 12% return. We have a bond portfolio with Fidelity that is doing well. At this point we have seen an approximate gain of \$100,000. We also have a Certificate of Deposit with FNCB in the amount of approximately one million dollars that is yielding around 5%. Mike believes it will be maturing in February or March. The funds were available because we received a pre-payment from Lackawanna County. Mike stated that FNCB has been a great partner to deal with on the CD and Line of Credit that was renewed. The line was needed as a backup for the construction project. At this point, all of the bills are paid for the project.

- B. Greg Czyzyk reviewed the ridership reports for the fixed route department for April 2024. Greg stated that we are at 75% of pre-pandemic levels. The revenue is on par with previous months.
- C. Kelly Matone reviewed the ridership report for the shared ride department for April 2024. Kelly stated that the revenue for April was up 14% from last year. Also, the ridership has increased 20%. The pre-pandemic ridership is at 90%. Based on the Technical Assistance Study, they are meeting with peer agencies at the suggestion of Michal Baker. Kelly stated that they have had three interviews with other agencies. The discussions were geared toward many subjects, such as; KPI's, organizational structure, staff roles, cross training, medical assistance cost allocation and other items. They are waiting to schedule three or more meetings with other agencies. There are recommendations that have been made and they are slowly executing certain things. Mr. McGrath commended Kelly for her work on the tasks and getting them executed. He thanked her for taking ownership of the project. Mr. McGrath stated that a member of the shared ride staff was injured on the job. He wished her well in her recovery. This injury has also fast tracked some of the items that were suggested. He felt that these are positive moves in the department.
- D. Keri Savage addressed the board regarding communications department. Keri announced that they have expanded service on Route 71 to add service to Lowes, Best Buy, Sam's Club and Johnson College. Now we are able to accommodate students at Johnson that are there later in the day. Also announced was the Game Day Express. This is an expansion of an active route. It will be dedicated route to PNC Field for the Railrider home games. This will be a huge benefit for families that did not have transportation in the past. This will also increase our ridership for this route. Mr. McGrath noted that it might take some time to see the results. Although the universities are on break now, the route will provide service when they are back in session. This will also be a benefit to the underserved communities that the Railriders are trying to reach. Mr. McGrath stated that it is more of a soft opening but, we will advertise and promote it more going forward. He also noted that, before we go through a transit study, items like this will be added to increase ridership. Mr. McGrath thanked the team for getting this together in such a short time. Keri felt this will be a good opportunity when the train begins service from New York. Their fans can come here to see Railriders games. Atty. Hinton asked if there is more demand for trips to Mohegan Sun. Keri stated that, when she is out at the senior centers, they are asking for more service to Mohegan. Keri felt the issue with the route is the time constraint. Mr. McGrath stated that they are currently looking at making some changes to that route. But they are trying to work with the casino to cross promote the service. Kelly Matone stated that the shared ride department has a client that takes the van to the transit center and then gets the bus to Mohegan. Keri stated that the Railriders have been advertising the service extensively. Mr. McGrath stated that we adopted the Charter Policy to accommodate these types of

services. Keri stated that she is working on getting Champ to ride the route to promote it. Mr. McGrath stated that they have a meeting scheduled tomorrow to look at servicing Movies in the Park.

- E. Frank Soto addressed the board regarding safety and security. Frank stated that there was one preventable accident in the month of April and three in the month of May for the fixed route department. They were minor accidents. The shared ride department had no accidents in the months of April or May. Frank stated that they will be working on the PTASP updates in the following months. The changes are required by the FTA and it will be ready for approval in October 2025 along with the revised safety metrics. Frank noted that they have held back on the Train the Trainer Program because they have been onboarding new employees. The Safety Department executed ADA Sensitivity and Wheelchair Securement Training at the Transit Center. Almost half of the fixed route operators attended. We are utilizing our barn drivers cover in order to pull drivers off the road and get them trained. Frank announced that they provided in person training to employees from Pete's Garage on two occasions. The training was provided for fixed route, shared ride and ADA weekend service. COLTS management will accompany them on the first day to make sure there is a smooth transition in service. Routes, rights and lefts, and maps have been provided. Fares will be collected by COLTS on a daily basis. Frank stated that Allied Security has been providing a great service. They are directing smokers to the smoking areas and redirecting cars as they pull in the COLTS bus area.
- F. Nicole Ference Human Resources department. Nicole felt that, by the next meeting, the shared ride department will be fully staffed. Now we have three candidates going through the training process. Several of the part-time driver stated that they are interested in full-time employment so that will help out. Nicole stated that they are past the interview process with a mechanic and now they are waiting on the background check. There have been a few interviews for the fixed route department. They plan to move on with one of the applicants and she received another application that looked promising. They have also had three sessions of negotiations with ATU. Keri noted that they have focusing on getting more EEO training. Members of administration were assigned EEO training on the EEO Process and timelines. Certificates for the training will be added to their personnel file. Keri hoped that the training will help with the day-to-day management of the employees. They have also sent out a bigger social media advertisement for the fixed route positions. Mr. McGrath asked if we are advertising for seasonal help. Keri stated that they haven't. Mr. McGrath thought that changing the wording may get some attention and possibly get employees just for the holidays or summer. Keri also noted that members of administration have been active with NEPA Moves. We have been attending a lot of the college forums but recently they attended the NEPA Moves full collaborative conference. COLTS was able to network with others attendance. There were members of government, business owners, human service organizations and a lot of other outreach opportunities. With the connections, it is possible that we can start doing things for each other without such a heavy lift. Keri stated that the most recent policy update, the COLTS Exclusion of Service and Trespass Policy, is on the agenda this month for approval. The biggest change to the policy is what to do when there are ADA implications because the current Disruptive Passenger Policy does not include that wording. Mr. McGrath felt that filling the mechanic position was very important. He also announced that we will be having an ice cream truck at the administration building on Friday at 12:30 for the employees. He invited the board members to come by and have an ice cream with the employees. Mr. McGrath

suggested that we reach out to the construction companies to see if they would be interested in paying for ice cream for the construction workers.

- G. Mr. McGrath updated the board on a few items. Mr. McGrath stated that working with Pete's Garage was a team priority for all of operations. He feels that everyone did a great job working on the transition. We do anticipate some complaints and issues but, everything should go smoothly. Mr. McGrath noted that we are doing more outreach events such as NEPA Moves. They are an advocacy group for transportation. From the one meeting, we now have four other meetings with organizations that we can help facilitate providing transportation. We have also been involved with the Complete Streets Project with the City of Scranton. This is a group that is working to reconfigure the streets in the downtown area to make them more pedestrian friendly and also working to coordinate the public transportation. Mr. McGrath wanted to circle back to Frank's point on PTASP requirements. He noted that federal and state governments zero in on certain things and this is taking on a life of its own. The document shows our safety plan and the metrics involved. They look at the information for the past several years and what is expected in 2025. There are federal regulations that are going into laws that we have to abide by. We will be taking the existing document and have it updated with the new regulations. The plan is to do some updates in October but then our annual renewal will be in December. There are a lot of complex issues and there is union involvement in the plan. The one concern is the unions involvement on how funds should be spent. Mr. McGrath stated that there was a review with Highmark and everything went well. Mr. McGrath noted that the construction project is going well. As the project moves along, there are more individuals working so it creates a navigation challenge but there aren't any major issues.

Public Comment/Other Business

- A. Mr. Doughton requested a motion for the Resolution Authorizing the Approval of the COLTS Exclusion of Service and Trespass Policy. Michael Dougherty made the motion for the approval of the resolution and Brian Doughton second the motion. All were in favor.
- B. Mr. Doughton requested a motion for the Resolution to Approve the UGI Service Extension Agreement. Michael Dougherty made the motion for the approval of the resolution and Brian Doughton second the motion. All were in favor.
- C. Mr. Doughton welcomed comments from the public regarding other business; there were none.

Michael Dougherty made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:16 p.m. and Brian Doughton seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Submitted by:
Jane Farrell, Executive Assistant