

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF AUTHORITY  
County of Lackawanna Transit System  
April 30, 2025

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The regular meeting of the County of Lackawanna Transit System Authority was held on Wednesday, April 30, 2025 at 4:35 p.m. at the Lackawanna Transit Center.

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

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 and Martha Dougher were present. Michael Dougherty participated via zoom. Robert Durkin and Gregg Nieto were excused.

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Doughton requested a motion to approve the March 26, 2025 meeting minutes. Michael Dougherty made a motion to accept the minutes. Brian Doughton seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Acceptance of Financial Documents

Mr. Doughton requested a motion to approve the Finance Statements for the month of February 2025. Brian Doughton 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 our financial position is holding steady. Mike also noted that, discussing the route configuration is important and why things are being addressed. With the fixed route performance metrics and the operation cost per passenger, during the pandemic the cost was approximately \$9.00. Now, the cost is over \$16.00 per passenger. In the shared ride department, it is approximately \$42 per passenger. The funding for that department is a bit different but the reimbursement from Penn Dot is approximately \$28 per passenger. We have to get the difference from grant funding. This is the reason why we look to lower costs by looking at the routes and finding ones that are underperforming. By merging some routes, we may be able to service more people and making it more cost effective. Mike noted that we are always looking ten years down the road at what to

anticipate. He feels we are doing well financially. We have cut a lot of sub-contracting by doing things in house. This requires additional work for the staff but, they are doing great. Mike stated that when he started, there were approximately 145 employees and now we have about 130 employees. We are still doing the same amount of work and providing the same service. It is just being done in a more efficient way. Mike felt that you find efficiencies and a baseline, then how to perform to make it more cost effective. This will help us to grow.

- B. Kelly Matone reviewed the ridership report for the shared ride department for February 2025. Kelly stated that the ridership was up 5% from February 2024. The Average Daily Riders were 94% compared to pre-pandemic numbers. The on-time performance ran at 95%, the state average is 90%. Kelly stated that they are waiting for two new vans to come in. The vans are currently at Coach, awaiting transfer to our paint facility. With regard to the Technical Assistance Program, this past month, they have been working to finalize job duties. At the end of last month, there was a job posting for an operations position in the shared ride department. Kelly stated that they are purging and shredding documents in advance of the move to the new facility. They are all eagerly awaiting the transition to the new facility.
- C. Keri Savage addressed the board with regard to human resources and communications. Keri stated that there were 38 full-time and 6 part-time fixed route operators. We are looking to fill 4 full-time positions. We have 2 within pre-employment screening. There are 28 full-time and 12 part-time shared ride operators. The position for Manager of Shared Ride Operations has been posted and a couple applications were received. At this point, only one interview was conducted. In the maintenance department, there are 8 full-time mechanics, 7 full-time service employees, 1 full-time janitor and 2 part-time service employees. Keri stated that we welcomed Frank Sandy to the administrative team, as the Manager of Maintenance and Facilities. She noted that they have noticed a great improvement with the night operations. In administration, there are 17 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. Keri stated that there was an application received for a part-time customer service representative for the transit center. They are working on the background screenings for the individual. The thought was to possibly expand the hours of service at the transit center. Keri stated that there was an SEIU pension meeting held on April 17, 2025. With regard to public outreach, Keri stated that the Game Day Express was launched on April 8, 2025. They are waiting until the end of the month to gauge the ridership. Keri stated that they are trying to dive into the marketing plan to find out what media source will work best to increase the ridership. Earth Day was celebrated on April 21, 2025. Some members of the team volunteered to clean up debris along North South Road. On April 29, 2025, members of the fixed route team conducted travel training with Mid-Valley Secondary School. Administrative Professionals Day was also celebrated to honor the dedication and hard work of our Administrative Professionals. On April 7, 2025 there was a meeting with NEPA Moves where we attended a general collaboration meeting. A presentation was provided by Michael Baker regarding the MPO's studies in preparation for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. Keri stated that on April 24, 2025, members of the team attended the NEPA Moves College Forum, hosted by LCTA. Keri and Gretchen Wintermantel, from LCTA, made a presentation on what a new student orientation session would look like and how to schedule these opportunities. Keri also noted that there was a presentation by Connor Descheemaker, who is an advocate with Transit for All PA. They are an advocacy group that is gaining traction in presenting proposals for the governor's budget. Mr. Doughton asked if the Game Day Express was running now.

Keri said it is and it is scheduled to run for all of the home games. Mr. McGrath noted that the Tourism Bureau is very interested in getting the college students and underserved community involved with the Game Day Express. Keri stated that they have been in contact with the Tourism Bureau and provided them with all of the information on the route and how it is presented to the public. Keri noted that the ATU contracts were received and they are working on the distribution and receiving the acknowledgment from the employees. Also, Rider Appreciation is next week and they are working on ways to celebrate the day.

- D. Frank Soto addressed the board regarding safety and security. Frank stated that we are trending low with regard to accidents in the last year. Now we are seeing minor accidents with poles and signs that have happened in house. We will be implementing procedures to help mitigate the frequency of it happening. They are working with the drivers and dispatchers on how we are getting the equipment out of the garage in a safer way. Frank stated that there are 2 new fixed route drivers being trained. They should be out covering runs by the end of the month. The Voluntary Fixed Route Peer Training Program is in the works. All participants have been road tested, communications to eligible participants will be sent. They will be assigned to the new drivers as they are hired. Frank stated that there is one fixed route candidate scheduled to start in May.
- E. Zain Rabbani reviewed the Ridership Report for the fixed route department for February 2025. Zain stated that, compared to the pre-pandemic numbers of February 2019, the ridership was at 72%. They are doing research to see why the numbers are like this and also working to improve ridership. They are looking at the On Time Performance to see which route have chronic delays. For the month of February, the OTP was at 75%, which is the national average. But he feels that we can do better than that. They have come up with a three-month program to address the issue. The first month they will look into software glitches and any internal issues. The second month will be retraining the drivers. They will retrain on a route-to-route basis, also a driver-to-driver basis. This way you can pin point some of the issues. This will show if it is the route, the driver or something we can do to change the OTP. Zain stated that he and Greg Czyzyk had meetings to review the Avail tracking to see what time the buses are arriving at a certain point. After compiling the information, they will have meetings with the dispatchers and the union to explain why they are making adjustments. Zain will keep everyone updated as things develop and as they move forward. Mr. McGrath clarified that 72% of the pre-pandemic numbers is the trend throughout transit agencies across the country. Except for bigger cities, where transit is relied upon. Mr. McGrath stated that three letters were sent to the commissioners regarding complaints on our merger of two routes. They discussed the route changes at prior meetings. They are working to see if we are displacing these people with the change. The route is approximately 15 minutes longer each way. This change was not done arbitrarily; the change was made because the routes should travel in densely populated areas to serve the community. We are showing that the ridership has increased following the change. They will keep the commissioners updated as the issue is addressed.
- F. Timothy McGrath addressed the board. Mr. McGrath stated that, there have been some unique situation recently involving our vehicles, none of which were our doing. One incident occurred when two vehicles collided and one of the vehicles rolled onto one of our buses. There was also a third-party altercation that involved pepper spray. Mr. McGrath appreciates everyone's effort in dealing with these challenges. Mr. McGrath stated that we are very near to the completion of the new facility. They completed

approximately 8 start up tests but, only 2 went well. This was to be expected but, it is giving us plenty of time to adjust. As of now, they are targeting either the first or second week of June for the move. Mr. McGrath stated that the month of May is looking to be very busy. On Monday, he will be in Harrisburg for a PPTA Rally and to meet with the legislators. This is to advocate for all public transit funding. Mr. McGrath has meeting set up with several representatives. The following week is the PPTA Spring Conference and he will be attending along with Keri. Mr. McGrath thanked the board for accommodating the special board meeting held earlier in the month. The meeting was to get the budget approved and the information has been submitted. He also thanked the Solicitors for their time in negotiating the CNG contract with the state. They are doing a great service for the board and for COLTS.

Public Comment/Other Business

- A. Mr. Doughton stated that the board had a presentation of the June 30, 2024 Audit. He asked for a motion for the acceptance of the audit. Martha Dougher made the motion and Brian Doughton seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- B. Mr. Doughton requested a motion to approve Allied Universal as the vendor for security at the transit center. Martha Dougher made the motion and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor
- C. Mr. Doughton welcomed comments from the public regarding other business; there were none.

Martha Dougher made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor.

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Submitted by:  
Jane Farrell, Executive Assistant