

CENTRE AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

July 24, 2006

4:00 PM

STATE COLLEGE BOROUGH BUILDING

Room 241, 243 S. Allen Street

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Spychalski, Chairman
Joe Davidson, Vice-Chairman
Richard Kipp, Treasurer
Gary Powers
Kathryn Bittner

STAFF PRESENT: Hugh Mose, General Manager
Judith Minor, Director of Administration
Joe Gilbert, Director of Operations
Eric Bernier, Service Development Manager
Amanda Jones, Asst. Director, Administration
Melissa Hnatkovich, Human Resources Specialist
Terri Quici, Executive Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Derek Leydig, AVAIL Technologies
Dorcey Houtz, AVAIL Technologies

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Spychalski called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM and acknowledged the attendance of Melissa (Missy) Hnatkovich. Amanda Jones introduced Missy as the new Human Resources Specialist and stated that she would be taking on some of the Human Resources responsibilities that Ms. Jones now performs. Ms. Hnatkovich has previous Human Resources experience. Chairman Spychalski welcomed Missy to CATA.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes of June 5, 2006 Regular Board Meeting

Chairman Spychalski entertained a motion to approve the minutes. Richard Kipp moved to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2006 Regular Board Meeting as presented. Gary Powers seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Receipt of May 2006 Finance Report

Chairman Spychalski entertained a motion to receive the May 2006 Finance Report. Kathryn Bittner moved to receive the May 2006 Finance Report as presented. Joe Davidson seconded.

Judi Minor discussed how expenses are being applied to the line item of Federal Operating Assistance instead of State Funding (New). Ms. Minor stated that this will allow for more carryover of “flex” funding.

Kathryn Bittner asked for an update on natural gas purchases. Ms. Minor stated that gas is bought through mid-December well below the \$8.50/mcf budgeted this year. Ms. Minor indicated that prices continue to fluctuate, though.

Mr. Mose provided an update on the fare media and paratransit reports, which basically remained the same as prior months with paratransit down a little, and pass and token sales up strongly.

With no further discussion, Chairman Spychalski called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

C. *Policy Review and Adoption*

Joe Davidson moved to adopt the *Modified/Alternate Duty Return to Work for Work-Related Injury/Illness* and *ADA Reasonable Accommodation* policies with recommended changes. Gary Powers seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Amanda Jones presented two new policies, *Over-the-Counter/Prescription Drug* (Policy Manual) and *Tuition Assistance* (Personnel Manual) for review and adoption. Ms. Jones indicated that she would like to present the *Over the Counter/Prescription Drug* policy at the annual August training session, and therefore requests its approval at this meeting.

Joe Davidson asked if there is a standard form to request tuition reimbursement. Ms. Jones stated that the request would be made in the form of a written letter. Judi Minor stated that, from an accounting perspective, funds being reimbursed prior to the completion of the course could create some problems if the person doesn't complete the course or have adequate grades. Several Board members indicated that they felt more comfortable with a reimbursement issued after satisfactory completion of the course. Mr. Mose suggested that staff revise the *Tuition Assistance* policy and present it at the September meeting for approval.

Chairman Spychalski entertained a motion to approve the *Over-the-Counter/Prescription Drug* policy (Policy Manual). Gary Powers suggested a change on page 1, Procedure, paragraph 3 in which the word “the” is removed (when ~~the~~ completed the) and on page 2, Discipline in which the word “in” be included (Policy violations may result in disciplinary).

Joe Davidson moved that the Board adopt the *Over-the-Counter/Prescription Drug* policy (Policy Manual) with recommended changes. Richard Kipp seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

D. *Advanced Public Transportation Systems (APTS) RFP Recommendation*

Hugh Mose reviewed the memo that was included in the Board packets that outlined the process CATA has used in the APTS deployment. Mr. Mose stated that back in January

the Board had concurred with staff's recommendation that Avail Technologies be employed as CATA's system integrator, and also our agent in the procurement and installation of the various components. Mr. Mose explained that Avail issued an RFP for mobile data terminals, communications equipment and base station equipment and received three responses. Mr. Mose stated that staff recommends Digital Dispatch Systems (DDS) provide the on-board, communications and base station equipment. Mr. Mose then introduced Derek Leydig and Dorsey Houtz from Avail Technologies and asked that Mr. Leydig provide a brief overview of the project.

Mr. Leydig stated that Avail's lab will be used to integrate the equipment and software from subcontractors to make sure it is working with their system. Mr. Leydig said that once the entire system is operating properly, they will load it into a couple of buses for "live" testing. Mr. Leydig explained that during a 30-day evaluation period, bugs will be worked out until the system is acceptable, at which time all buses will be outfitted with the automatic vehicle location system. Mr. Leydig stated that the benefits to CATA are that the driver will now be able to focus on only driving the bus, the dispatch office will be able to make "real-time" adjustments providing better on-time service, and additional reports will be available for better service planning. He stated that the benefit to the public is web-based, "real-time" information that can be accessed by computer, PDA, or web-enabled cell phone. Mr. Leydig invited the Board members to their offices to see a unit in action. Mr. Mose followed by strongly encouraging the Board to take advantage of the invitation.

Joe Davidson moved that the Board authorize the General Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with Avail Technologies for system integration and other work necessary for CATA's APTS deployment, in an amount not to exceed \$731,115, and to accept the proposal from DDS. Gary Powers seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Hugh Mose thanked Eric Bernier for taking over the project and moving forward with it when Tim Geibel resigned. Chairman Spychalski also offered his thanks for the work he has done.

E. *Bus Refurbishment/Repair Update*

Hugh Mose stated that Joe Gilbert and Sherry Snyder have worked very hard to develop a plan for rehabilitation/replacement of buses. Mr. Mose said that CATA already has in place funding sufficient to rehab five New Flyers and replace five Orions with five new 40' CNG buses. Mr. Mose stated that funding requests would be made in future fiscal years so as to continue the process to rehab/replace all of the buses. Mr. Gilbert stated that implementation of this plan should begin by the end of this year.

Discussion continued regarding "what if's" (i.e. CNG tanks need to be replaced before the bus is replaced). Kathryn Bittner and Chairman Spychalski thanked Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Mose for providing the information in a way that they could easily understand (charts). Chairman Spychalski noted that this item was for informational purposes only.

F. *Final Sites Evaluation: Intercity Bus Facility – Request for Comments*

Mr. Mose stated that the Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) General Forum

had referred the full report to CATA and Penn State for comment, noting that a copy of the report was included in the Board packets. Mr. Mose also included a copy of a draft letter to Tom Zilla that provided his comments regarding the two “final” Intercity Bus Facility locations (Porter and Hastings and the Urban Village site). Mr. Mose also offered in the memo a recommendation to construct an intercity bus facility in concert with a future parking structure on the West Campus. Mr. Mose stated that since the Materials Science Building did not get built at the existing terminal location, there is now time available to look at other options.

After review of the memo by Mr. Mose, Chairman Spychalski recommended that the phrase “best alternative” be reworded to something such as “the only advantage.” Mr. Mose agreed to incorporate this and other recommendations in the final letter.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Annual Policy Review Schedule

Chairman Spychalski entertained a motion to adopt the Annual Policy Review Schedule for FY 2006/2007. Richard Kipp moved to adopt the Annual Policy Schedule. Kathryn Bittner seconded.

Hugh Mose provided background about the new schedule, noting that this year CATA’S institutional policy statements, our Drug & Alcohol Program Policy, and the Personnel Manual (for non-represented employees) are being added for review, with just an abbreviated review of the Policy Manual.

With no further discussion, Chairman Spychalski called for a vote. The motion carried unanimously.

B. August 2006 Board Meeting

Chairman Spychalski stated that staff is recommending the August 2006 Board meeting be cancelled due to lack of agenda items and because the General Manager will be out of town.

Joe Davidson moved to cancel the August 2006 Board meeting. Richard Kipp seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Proposal for DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) Goals 2006/2007

Judi Minor stated that, as in past years, staff has proposed a goal of 5%, based on its evaluation of the number of DBE firms in the area and actual expenditures in previous years. Ms. Minor stated that the goals have been advertised and comments solicited, of which none were received.

Joe Davidson moved that the Board adopt the DBE goal of 5% for federal fiscal year 2006/2007. Gary Powers seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

A. General Manager's Report

Hugh Mose shared with the Board a design report he had received today on the transit center for Curtin Road. Mr. Mose stated that CATA has already received an earmark of \$500,000 to provide pullouts on both sides of the road, full accessibility, and other passenger amenities.

Mr. Mose invited the Board to the summer picnic and State College SPIKES game that the CATA Rec Committee is coordinating. Mr. Mose stated it was August 26th and asked Board members to let him know if anyone is interested in going.

Mr. Mose discussed natural gas and diesel fuel prices, noting that currently there is the largest cost differential since CATA transferred to CNG in 1996.

Mr. Mose stated that CATA recently underwent a Risk Management Assessment by the SAFTI Insurance Pool. He indicated that a representative had done on-board checks and facility inspections for overall safety. Mr. Mose said that overall it was a good report, although there is still room for improvement.

B. Service Development Report

Eric Bernier referred to his monthly report that was included in the Board packets. Joe Davidson asked for an update on the Sign Replacement Project. Mr. Bernier stated that it is moving slower than planned and that about a dozen signs have been placed. Gary Powers complimented on how good they looked.

Mr. Mose asked Mr. Bernier to talk about the Municipal and Emergency Services Photo ID Card Project. Mr. Bernier explained that the Centre Region COG approached CATA to provide region-wide, standardized ID cards for all emergency essential personnel. Mr. Bernier stated that all have been completed (COG, Harris Township, Ferguson Township, State College Borough, College Township and the Alpha Fire Co.) except Patton Township.

Kathryn Bittner asked Mr. Bernier how the Arts Festival Shuttle had worked out this year. Mr. Bernier indicated that ridership was down about 1.5% but noticed that the LOOP ridership was up about the same amount.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Spychalski entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Gary Powers moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:46 PM. Richard Kipp seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board recessed to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.