

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

January 31, 2019

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on January 31, 2019 at 9:33 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6th Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

Board Members Present

Roberta Abdul-Salaam
Robert L. Ashe, III, Chair
Robert F. Dallas
Frederick L. Daniels, Jr.
Jim Durrett
Roderick E. Edmond
William 'Bill' Floyd
Ryan C. Glover
Jerry Griffin
Freda B. Hardage
John 'Al' Pond
Christopher S. Tomlinson*

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Jeffrey A. Parker; C-Suite Team Members Chief Administrative Officer Luz Borrero, Chief Financial Officer Gordon L. Hutchinson, Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill and Chief Rail Ops/AGM Capital Programs & Dev David Springstead; AGMs LaShanda Dawkins, Virgil Fludd, Benjamin Limmer, Kirk Talbott, Emil Tzanov and Thomas Young (Interim); Chief Information Security Officer Dean Mallis; Executive Director Paula Nash (Interim); Senior Directors Jennifer Jinadu-Wright and Jacob Vallo; Directors John Cochran (Acting), Lisa DeGrace, Robert Goodwin, Jonathan Hunt, Donna Jennings and Don Williams; Managers Davis Allen, Stephany Fisher and Jacqueline Holland; Manager Executive Office Administration Tyrene Huff; Sr. Executive Administrator Keri Lee; Department Administrator Debra Oliver. Others in attendance Adrien Carter, Alphonse Eugene, Abebe Girmay, Courtne Middlebrooks and and LaTonya Pope.

Also in attendance Jasper de Lange and Cara Vojdani of Arcadis, John Saxon and Jim Schmidt of HNTB and David Wickert of AJC.

***Christopher Tomlinson is Executive Director of Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) and is therefore a non-voting member of the MARTA Board of Directors.**

Approval of the November 28, 2018 Planning & External Relations Committee Minutes

On motion by Mr. Daniels seconded by Mr. Pond, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 7 to 0, with 8* members present.

Briefing – Proposed Service Modifications for April 2019

Mr. Williams presented an update on proposed modifications for April 13, 2019 mark-up period.

Service modifications occur three (3) times per year

- April
- August
- December

Proposed Modifications – April 13, 2019

- Route 49 (McDonough Boulevard)
- Route 50 (Donald Lee Hollowell Boulevard)
- Route 850 (Carroll Heights / Fairburn Heights)
- Route 853 (Center Hill)

West Atlanta Routes (Routes 50, 850 and 853)

- Atlanta Industrial Park
- Chapel Hill Road – residents complaining about road
- Input from Collier Heights and Hunter Hills

Ted Turner Drive

- Route 49
- Provides continuous service along the Ted Turner Drive corridor
- Analysis study – operates more efficiently; improves access to the Richard B. Russell Federal Building

Public Hearing Schedule

- January 22, 2019 – Clayton County Board Room, 112 Smith Street, Jonesboro, GA 30236
- January 23, 2019 – DeKalb County Library (Decatur Branch), 215 Sycamore Street, Decatur, GA 30030
- January 24, 2019, Fulton County Government Center, 141 Pryor Street, Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Daniels said he was concerned with the underutilization of MARTA's buses and the amount of time and fuel being used to operate the system.

Mr. Williams said there is a plan in place. MARTA is working with the Maintenance Department seeking 30-foot buses to service low ridership areas. The modification is a process is to ensure that MARTA has the necessary resources to provide the level of service.

Mr. Limmer said one of the key recommendations from the COA was obtaining various bus sizes to match ridership patterns.

Mr. Daniels asked what is the timeframe for optimum utilization and expressed the need for MARTA to match bus utilization on routes or modify the routes to match bus usage.

Mr. Parker said MARTA is in the process of hiring a Chief of Bus Operations with experience around BRT and ART to oversee and assist with MARTA's bus utilization.

Mr. Ashe asked does MARTA track specific routes daily and how does MARTA utilize the data.

Mr. Williams said MARTA works closely with the Operations Department as well as the Research and Analysis Department to capture data including on-time performance, overcrowding conditions or any operational issue that may impact the operation of MARTA's bus. The data is reviewed bi-weekly and buses are allocated to the needed areas which allows MARTA to match the resources with the level of current service.

Mr. Floyd said the MARTA Act requires public input and asked does the Act specify the procedure.

Mr. Williams said under the MARTA Act, MARTA is required to hold Public Hearings with local jurisdictions.

Mr. Floyd advised MARTA to study the process of bus changes and said you can continuously study a problem, but the solution will not be resolved until something is actually done.

Mr. Griffin said Public Hearings are not related to the discussion of MARTA's bus sizes.

Mr. Williams said citizens occasionally request smaller buses to alleviate the possibility of destroying residential pavements and to alleviate home vibrations.

Mr. Durrett suggested MARTA dedicate FY2020 to developing a strategic plan within MARTA's region once the Chief of Bus Operations is brought on-board.

Mr. Parker said the Authority plans to focus on bus service during FY2020.

Mr. Durrett volunteered to assist with the planning and transformation of bus service and how to engage with the public. It's important to research why potential patrons are not utilizing MARTA and discover what can entice them to come on-board.

Mr. Ashe said although public hearings are required, MARTA can research additional resources to engage with the public. It's important to be proactive about communicating on the front end of transformation projects.

Mr. Goodwin said MARTA will release an on-line survey that will discover why patrons stopped bus utilization and what can get patrons to utilize bus service again.

Mr. Parker said MARTA's Marketing Team is using data collection to determine How MARTA can engage non-riders.

Mr. Durrett said radio advertisement to non-rides has increased especially during the Super Bowl period.

Mrs. Hardage said she encountered airport customers who were unfamiliar with MARTA and suggested marketing at the airport could increase ridership.

Resolution 2019 Regional Transit On-Board Survey

Mr. Goodwin presented this resolution on the 2019 regional transit on-board survey.

Survey Purpose

- To collect statistic valid samples of region transit ridership determining:
 - Who's riding MARTA
 - Why are patrons riding MARTA and
 - How are patrons riding MARTA

Survey Scope

- Includes all transit operations in 20 – county region
- Key transit traveler characteristics, e.g.:
 - Household size
 - Income
 - Race / ethnicity
- Key transit trip characteristics, e.g.:
 - Trip purpose
 - Origin, destination, boarding and alighting locations, transfers, modes of access and egress
- Fare payment method
- Target: ~34,000 surveys – to ensure valid information is captured

Schedule

- 15 months to complete
- Winter 2019 - 2020 (analyzing & processing data)
- Spring 2020 (deliver final report and materials)
- 6 months to 1 year (recalibrate mode choice model)

Budget

- Total - \$1.75M
 - MARTA: \$350,000 (local)
 - ARC: \$1,400,000 (federal surface transportation block grant)

Mr. Pond said referring to the survey schedule, the final project is produced in Spring 2020 and recalibrated in Fall 2020 and asked for the clarification of 'recalibrated'.

Mr. Goodwin said MARTA would perform and analyze the survey. Then, generate the final report in Spring 2020. The information is fed into Atlanta Regional Commissioner's (ARC) traveling process and completed during the summer.

Mr. Limmer said ARC is the entity that will manage the on-board survey, recalibration and updating the regional model.

Mr. Durrett asked why does MARTA need to provide the entire local match.

Mr. Parker said ARC approached MARTA and the decision was made for MARTA to advance funding, thereby preventing a slower process.

Mr. Ashe said MARTA provides 95% of the trips in the twenty (20) county region. MARTA makes Breeze available and are recuperating administrative value. MARTA has historically taken position where purchasing and economic power should contribute toward the benefit of the region – which ultimately benefits all parties having a strong regional transit system.

Mr. Daniels agreed that the on-board survey should be a regional project and asked why does the project take two (2) years for completion.

Mr. Goodwin said if priority analysis takes place over the winter the survey could be completed within twelve (12) to fifteen (15) months.

Mr. Daniels said with data rapidly changing how can MARTA ensure a survey will be in line with the given timeframe.

Mr. Goodwin said the last survey was generated over ten (10) years ago prior to the existence of Uber and Lyft. MARTA would begin to collect data and over the next few years seek to use technology for the future.

Mr. Daniels said it would be beneficial to MARTA to shorten the completion time frame.

Mr. Tomlinson said MARTA is thinking and acting regionally by stepping up to complete this project and this is the data needed to support discretionary grants.

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Mr. Floyd asked why is the survey target set to 34,000.

Mr. Goodwin said 34,000 surveys will allow MARTA to provide detailed data on specific bus routes.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked will the survey be conducted across all modes of transit including Mobility.

Mr. Goodwin said Mobility would not be included in the survey.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked what method would be used to collect the surveys.

Mr. Goodwin said primarily the surveys will be collected via hand-held tablets and paper.

On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Mr. Pond, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 11 to 0, with 12* members present.

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Adjournment

The meeting of the Operations Committee adjourned at 10:22 a.m.