



Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority
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BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

Opening: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brian Hamilton, at 12:03 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room, located at Central Station, 1735 Morris Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama 35203.

Members Present: Frank C. Galloway, Jr., Brian Hamilton, Johnnye P. Lassiter, Doris Powell, and Guin Robinson

Members Absent: Joyce Brooks, Walter Jones, Ronald Lyas, and Rev. Patrick Sellers

Others Present: Debra Anderson-Burse, Leon Barkan, Peter Behrman, Christopher Bolling, Anna Brown, Marva Douglas, Bing Edwards, Martin Edwards-Clark, Butch Ferrell, Earl Hilliard, Lee Jackson, Barbara Lawson, Chris Leffert, Dr. Jesse Lewis, Richard Nardecchia, Kevin Owens, Nicholas Porterfield, Councilor Kim Rafferty, David Russell, Brandon Wilson, and Solomon Wilson.

A moment of silence was observed.

Ms. Lassiter led the assembly in the recitation of the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Adoption of the Agenda: The agenda was adopted by general consent, with a change in the order of items.

Adoption of the Minutes: The minutes were adopted by general consent.

Chairman's Report:

Mr. Hamilton recognized Birmingham City Councilor Kim Rafferty who was in attendance. He then thanked all board and staff members who attended Councilor Rafferty's and Commissioner Sandra Little Brown's transit summits.

Montgomery Advocacy Strategy

Three gentlemen with varying degrees of experience in governmental affairs each gave a presentation to the board regarding services they could provide to represent the BJCTA. They were Earl Hilliard, Curtis Pickens, and David Russell. Staff was asked to collaborate with the attorneys to review any funding restrictions that would prevent retaining a lobbyist and moving coordinated efforts forward. If the board should decide to utilize such services, then the procurement policy will be followed. Mr. Robinson expressed interest in learning what BJCTA funding partners would think before going forward, as effective lobbying requires much coordination. Ms. Lassiter requested that Mr. Pickens and Mr. Russell provide written copies of their proposals.

Committee Reports –

A. Program Development Committee: Ms. Powell provided highlights on two items: 1) She referred to Resolution No. 2011-19 and reported that the Committee recommended an increase in fare to \$0.50 and a half-fare program at \$0.25 for the elderly and/or disabled persons; and 2) Mr. Brandon Wilson gave an excellent presentation regarding the Southwest Corridor Study, which will be presented to the full board at a later date.

Mr. Hamilton requested that the ridership report and the issue of bus shelter installations be presented in the next Program Development Committee meeting. Ms. Lassiter requested the names of communities who have paid the 20% match for bus shelters.

B. Finance Committee: Mr. Galloway reported that the Finance Committee reviewed several resolutions. He commented specifically on Resolution No. 2011-19 because the recommendation respectfully differed from that of the Program Development Committee. The Finance Committee recommended leaving the current fare at \$0.25 and authorizing staff to implement a half-fare program at an amount of \$.10 for the elderly and/or disabled persons.

C. Human Relations Committee: Mr. Robinson reported that all Board members should have the tools for evaluating the executive director and asked the members to please work toward meeting the deadline in submitting their assessments. Questions can be directed to the board chair or to Mr. Robinson.

Executive Director's Report -

Executive Director Peter Behrman distributed photos of the buses from Gwinnet County Georgia and reported that maintenance director Lee Jackson had selected sixteen (16) buses that would be free to the BJCTA. The use of these buses would be for the suburban commuter express route, as well as some shuttle and special service routes where most passengers board at one point and de-board at another.

Roadeo

Mr. Behrman announced that the 2011 Roadeo is being planned for April 17, 2011. The winners will compete in the National Roadeo that is being held in Memphis, Tennessee. The board members were invited to participate in judging the events, presenting awards, and assisting in any other way that they would like to do so.

Reorganization Plan

Mr. Behrman reported that the Plan is moving along. He has been meeting individually with the supervisors and researching overtime issues and the employee classification status – exempt versus non-exempt. He requested that a final decision not be made on the classification status until the new Director of Transportation has been hired as this will affect his department.

Mr. Robinson requested that the attorneys begin looking at the duties that the BJCTA supervisors are currently performing, whether they are exempt or non-exempt, what qualifies their status, and provide a report at the next Human Relations Committee at what constitutes an exempt versus non-exempt status.

Financial Report

Chief Financial Officer Richard Nardecchia reported that as of February 28, 2011, assets were \$43,063,153.54 while total liabilities were \$13,434,857.38. The Income Statement details year to date revenues of \$19,469,129.88 and expenses of \$12,230,093.79 resulting in a difference of \$7,239,036.09. The total cash and cash equivalents were \$13,313,448.71 of which \$11,522,991.47 was the balance in the operating and money market accounts. Total overall variance with the budget is a positive \$1,930,227.79. The major factor for the positive variance in revenues is approximately \$200k in ad valorem taxes. On the Expenses, the major factors for the positive variance are favorable health claims of \$230k and \$792k set aside for the bus rehab program.

Resolutions for Consideration and Approval:

- A. **Resolution No. 2011-19:** Authorization for the Executive Director to Implement a Half-fare Program on the *dart* Service to the classes referred to in the resolution at a fare of \$0.10 was moved by Mr. Galloway, seconded by Ms. Lassiter and approved by general consent. Ms. Powell abstained.

Discussion: One of the findings in the Triennial Review is that the BJCTA was not in compliance with the half-fare program so this is a federal requirement. The general rule is that for every 10% increase in fare, there is a loss of 4% in ridership. While there is a probable \$3,000 loss in fares with the proposed \$0.10 fare, if the fares were increased there would be the loss of ridership, also causing an unknown loss of revenue. Issues raised were that the public has seemed to be in support of an increase and the new fare might cause an additional burden for the City of Birmingham.

- B. **Resolution No. 2011-20:** Authorization for the Executive Director to Approve Commencement of Repairs on Unit #414 and Authorize Payment of Invoice was moved by Ms. Lassiter, seconded by Mr. Robinson, and approved by general consent. Mr. Galloway abstained.
- C. **Resolution No. 2011-21:** Authorization for the Executive Director to Approve Commencement of Repairs on Unit #2023 and Authorize Payment of Invoice was moved by Mr. Robinson, seconded by Ms. Lassiter, and approved by general consent.
- D. **Resolution No. 2011-22:** Authorization to Release Solicitations was moved by Mr. Galloway, seconded by Mr. Robinson and approved by general consent.

Discussion: The Finance Committee discussed the need for resolutions to

release solicitations. As long as the Board is made aware of the solicitations and communications are good, there is no need for the process to board actions.

- E. **Resolution No. 2011-23:** Authorization for the Executive Director to Enter into Contract with Volkert, Inc. for an Additional Sixty-Seven (67) Hours to Provide Program Management Services to the BJCTA was tabled. Mr. Hamilton abstained.

Discussion: Mr. Robinson questioned when the project will be completed, 90 days as stated in the previous board meeting or 15 weeks as stated in the letter dated March 1, 2011, from Volkert, Inc. In response to Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Leffert offered to be responsible for having a representative at the next meeting but as Mr. Hamilton stated, it is ultimately it is the responsibility of the executive director.

- F. **Resolution No. 2011-24:** Authorization for the Executive Director to Approve Commencement of Repairs on Unit # 452 and Authorize Payment of Invoice was moved by Mr. Robinson, seconded by Ms. Lassiter, and approved by general consent. Mr. Galloway abstained.

- G. **Resolution No. 2011-25:** Authorization to Purchase Two (2) Orion Rear Ends was moved by Mr. Galloway, seconded by Ms. Lassiter, and approved by general consent.

Discussion: Ms. Lassiter requested to know the total amount of maintenance related resolutions requested for Board approval.

- H. **Resolution No. 2011-26:** Authorization to Exercise a One (1) Year Renewal Option to the Contract with VentureNet, LLC to Provide T-1 and Internet Services was moved by Mr. Galloway, seconded Ms. Lassiter and approved by general consent.

Old/New Business:

Leon Barkan of Volkert, Inc., arrived to answer questions regarding Resolution No. 2011-23 that was tabled earlier in the meeting. Mr. Robinson questioned what appeared to be a discrepancy in comments made at the February board meeting and the letter of March 1, 2011, which was addressed to Chris Leffert. The bus washer will be in operation in 60 days. The vacuum system will be delayed beyond the bus washer.

Public Comments:

- A. Councilor Kim Rafferty reported on her recent Washington trip for the purpose of attending a transit summit where the keyword was “intermodal”. For every urban center in the state of Alabama, the population cut off is 210,000 for using funds for operational costs. The federal environment is researching ways to allow flexibility and changing the regulations so the money can be streamlined to more transit systems. It is very important for the urban systems to have a unified voice at the federal level and work together for state dedicated funding. Three past Secretaries of the Department of Transportation have agreed to come to

Birmingham to create an intermodal facility. They are Mort Downey, Norman Mineta and Rodney Slater.

When Trinity Hospital receives clearance to move to Highway 280, they will be interested in investing into a fast, local transit system along the Highway 280 corridor.

Councilor Rafferty is waiting on the Board's advice regarding the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC). Mr. Hamilton requested that the Program Development Committee and the attorneys consult with each other regarding TAC.

- B. Butch Ferrell reported the Transit Advisory Committee is setting up a table in the Central Station lobby and communicating with the riders so that they can become more involved in transit and also to get their stories. He announced that he will be traveling to Washington as a representative from the Greater Birmingham Ministries of Birmingham on April 2, 2011.

The **Meeting Adjourned** at 1:30 p.m. The next **Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors** will be held **Wednesday, April 27, 2011 at 12:00 PM** in the Council Chambers at Bessemer City Hall located at 1800 Third Avenue North, Bessemer, AL 35020.

Minutes submitted by: Barbara Lawson, Administrative Assistant

Date: _____

Approved by: _____
Brian Hamilton, Chairman

Attest: _____
Frank C. Galloway, Jr., Secretary/Treasurer