

Marquette County Transit Authority
1325 Commerce Drive Marquette, MI 49855

Board Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2023

Call to Order: 6:01 PM by Chairman James Nankervis.

Roll Call:

Present: Jim Nankervis, Tony Tollefson, Jason Wallner, Pete LaRue, Dawn Schuhknecht, Karen Kasper, Barb Owdziej, Ed Anderson.

Others Present: Bill Geller-Executive Director, Kristine McDonnell-Finance Officer, Mike Richer-Operations Manager, Kevin Hodges-Operations Manager, Janet Cobb-Administrative Assistant.

Excused or Absent: Scott Krah, Taylor Klipp.

Minutes:

Barb Owdziej asked for the entire last paragraph in the notes to be removed. A motion was made by Jason Wallner to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2023 meeting with a change on the last paragraph. Remove the first sentence and put the rest under Jason Wallner board member comments. Supported by Dawn Schuhknecht. One opposed eight approved. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda:

Motion was made to accept Agenda items A-D by Pete LaRue. Supported by Karen Kasper. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Agenda:

Motion was made by Pete LaRue to approve agenda with the addition of investment rates and diversifying. Supported by Jason Wallner. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Opportunity for Citizens to Address the Authority: None

Action Items:

1) Finance Committee report given by Tony Tollefson. The financials were reviewed for the 1st quarter of FYE 9/30/23. The finance committee has started a discussion about investing our money for a better interest rate and return. Marquette County has indicated they have started a conversation about designating 100,000.00 in ARPA funds to the Marquette County Transit Authority. Motion made by Pete LaRue to accept the Finance report. Seconded by Dawn Schuhknecht. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

2) Operations report was presented by Mike Richer. This is our first week of the Western, Palmer and Negaunee routes. They will be slow to start but operations will continually analyze to see if any changes need to be made. We are getting two medium sized buses from the

Capital Area Transportation Authority. Discussed community events and they work best with the organizers contacting us for a park and ride. Motion made by Bill DeGroot to accept the Operations report. Seconded by Barb Owdziej. Unanimously supported. Motion carried. Then a discussion was held regarding the constraints it what we can and cannot do. We cannot compete with other transit companies. Spec Services are for the elderly, disabled and low-income individuals. It is difficult to set up a route for special community events.

3) The finance committee wants to be open with the Board about discussions held about investment opportunities. What are everyone's personal comfort levels? We need to develop and investment policy and have continued discussion on this. The ARPA funds from the County is not a one-time shop and buy. They want it invested in a way that continues to help customers of Marq-Tran. The Executive Director should attend their next meeting.

Any Old or New Business:

- 1) Bill Geller presented the Executive Director's report. He attended the MPTA Legislative Program on March 6-8. For the current year, MPTA is proposing an LBO increase of 20 million. It is anticipated that Governor Whitmer will propose a 15 million increase. Bill handed out investment opportunities along with rates of current returns and new areas of investing. He also handed out an e-mail from Kelly Jandron of Range Bank explaining the invested money into Silicon Valley Bank is safe and is available if needed. We have a new staff vehicle, a 2023 Yukon. Some one put an anonymous add in the Mining Journal showing their appreciation for Marq-Tran.

Upcoming meetings:

Board meeting April 20, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

Board Members Comments:

Barb Owdziej said she appreciated hearing the financial and operations reports. It sounds like the future of Marq-Tran is on everybody's mind. As a new board member, she wanted to learn about the long-term and short-term history of Marq-tran. She reviewed minutes back from 1985 that said the Board should have set up goals within 6 months. She is here because the City of Marquette wanted her to represent as an advocate for alternative transportation. She has taken bus rides. She has concluded Marq-Tran has existed for a very long time. She would like to see a guide to present future and long-term goals for Marq-tran. She would like to see a master plan from the board and a consensus of what our priorities are. The pandemic changed us. We will not get back to a pre-pandemic state. Can we be less dependent on government funds? What if the federal government no longer wanted to fund transit? Can we attract a larger broader audience? Would it be prudent to hire a consultant to invest in long term growth and development? We need to be under an umbrella meaning we all need to be working in the same direction. Marq-Tran brings good to our communities. She hopes we can all work together on that. She would like to see Marq-Tran to be on more people's radar.

Tony Tollefson stated that our plan is to keep the buses running. To the board member that commented about the last phrase in the previous months minutes there are certain individuals that do not know how things run at Marq-Tran and try to make suggestions on how it should run.

Jim Nankervis indicated one of the biggest problems we have is finding bus drivers.

Bill Geller said we are always analyzing routes. We will find ways to get to all areas and new housing developments.

Opportunity for Citizens to address the Authority: None

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Jason Wallner to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Dawn Schuknecht. Unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Chairman Jim Nankervis adjourned the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristine McDonnell
Finance Officer