

**METRO RTA  
PLANNING / MARKETING / RAIL  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
416 KENMORE BOULEVARD BOARD ROOM  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2021  
10:30 A.M.**

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

Attendees: Donald Christian, Gary Spring, Renee Greene, Robert DeJournett, Nick Fernandez, Vincent Rubino, Mark Derrig, Dawn Distler, Valerie Shea, Molly Becker, Angela Neeley, Bambi Miller, DeHavilland McCall, Jarrod Hampshire, Jay Hunter, Shawn Metcalf

Guests Present: Ron Brubaker, Sarah Owens, Dr. Daniel Van Epps

Mr. Donald Christian called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY MEETING**

Motion to approve minutes by Mr. Vincent Rubino. Second by Mr. Gary Spring.

**ITEM 3: SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Planning Report | Valerie Shea**

- Reviewed KPIs and Performance Report

Mr. Rubino asked the percentage of ridership attributed to students. Ms. Shea stated in 2019 about 11% of boardings were from Akron Public Schools (APS) students. METRO has fixed-rate contracts with APS and the University of Akron for their bus pass programs.

- Ms. Shea introduced the Comprehensive Operational Analysis and Transit Development Plan, the immediate next step in METRO's strategic plan. The Evaluation Committee received four responsive proposals through the RFP process, as outlined in the Resolution for consideration. This analysis will involve internal and external engagement, and is 100% grant funded from ODOT's OTP program.
- Discretionary Grant Report: The team is pursuing a federal grant for two additional electric buses. Applications are due in April.

**Marketing Report | Molly Becker**

- Reviewed KPIs

- A joint co-op with METRO, PARTA, and SARTA addressing the proposed state transit funding cuts was published in three publications, including Akron Beacon Journal. Meetings were scheduled with legislatures, including one with Senator Sherrod Brown next week.
- Transit Employee Appreciation Day is March 18. Yard signs are posted around Summit County, at bus stops and bus shelters. METRO will be celebrating with a snack bar and recognizing team members through a social media campaign.
- This month, the Marketing Department partnered with the Employee Engagement Center for their monthly EEC Days, informing team members how to stay connected at METRO through various channels.
- METRO is in the process of evaluating and selecting a vendor for advertising services.

Mr. Spring asked when METRO's last advertising contract expired. Ms. Becker stated that because advertising services were done in-house for the last 20+ years, there was no contract.

#### **Rail Report | Valerie Shea**

None

#### **ITEM 4: RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Resolution 2021-08:** A resolution authorizing the award of a Comprehensive Operational Analysis and Transit Development Plan services contract. (Pages 10-11)

#### **ITEM 5: OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Dawn Distler informed the Committee about early conversations regarding holiday bus service, which started with implementing full service on Martin Luther King Jr Day (previously a reduced service day). Ms. Distler said this would be METRO's first step in investing in service.

Mr. Gary Spring asked if full service or reduced service is being considered for holidays. Ms. Distler said the team is looking at each holiday to ensure service is provided in an equitable manner. All bargaining unions are being apprised of these conversations.

Mr. Ron Brubaker, a representative from the Task Force advocating for the Veterans Trail to be constructed on the Akron Secondary Line, presented his testimony to the Committee.

#### **ITEM 6: CALL FOR ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 10:59 a.m.