

PARTA
PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MINUTES**

September 22, 2022

Board Members Present:

Karen Beck
Marge Bjerregaard
Richard Brockett
Jeff Childers

Debbie Davison
Dave Gynn
Mike Lewis
R. T. Mansfield

Jack Murphy
Frank Vitale
Stacey Wilson
Marvin Woods

Staff Present:

Claudia Amrhein
Marcia Fletcher
Kelly Jurisch

Justin Markey, Roetzel & Andress
Rebecca Schrader

Greg Springer
Brian Trautman

Board Members Not Present:

Virginia Harris (2nd excused absence)

Karen Wise (1st excused absence)

Guests Present:

Iris Meltzer, Member of the Substance Abuse Advocacy Subcommittee of the Portage County Substance Abuse Coalition

CALL TO ORDER

President Dave Gynn called the September 22, 2022, *PARTA* Board of Trustees meeting to order at 6:58 p.m. and asked for a roll call. After roll call, it was determined that **a quorum was participating.**

Mr. Gynn then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 25, 2022, Board meeting. **Mr. R. T. Mansfield** made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, which was seconded by **Ms. Karen Beck**. The **motion to approve the minutes, as presented, passed unanimously.**

GUEST COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Gynn then introduced the guest in attendance tonight, Ms. Iris Meltzer.

Ms. Meltzer thanked everyone for the opportunity to speak this evening. She said she is a resident of the city of Kent and is representing the Substance Abuse Advocacy Subcommittee of the Portage County Substance Abuse Coalition. In the provision of health care throughout the county, one of the major barriers is the lack of transportation. While most people have their own vehicles or someone who can drive them, that's not always the case. In the past couple of months, NEOMED established a full-service medical clinic for children and adults offering a wide range of services to the residents of the county, including substance abuse treatment. A major difficulty is that people cannot get to that clinic. It's obviously located in Rootstown and those without their own transportation find that they are unable to make or keep appointments. Her simple plea is to think about where the medical facilities are in the county, apart from UH Portage, and how people can access them because if people can't access healthcare, then they are not being helped. She asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Frank Vitale asked how many people the clinic serviced monthly.

Ms. Meltzer said the clinic has only been up and running about six weeks so she didn't think that question could be answered yet. However, she would be more than happy to communicate with the clinic to try to get that information and provide it to the Board.

Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Meltzer for bringing that to the Board's attention and said the Board doesn't plan the routes, but the staff does a really good job of it.

Mr. R. T. Mansfield said Ms. Meltzer is one of his oldest friends in Kent and they spoke about this earlier. He told her that, in the past, a module was added to the scheduling software that coordinated scheduling with medical providers on their end. He thought grant funding was received to establish the module with Trapeze. He hasn't heard anything about that program in the last few years and asked about its status.

Ms. Claudia Amrhein said PARTA doesn't have such a module. The short answer is it did not work. There are options for folks who don't live along a fixed route for regular service. Shared Dial-A-Ride service can be scheduled in advance to go from their home into Rootstown. There are also contracts with some agencies that could be helpful, such as Job & Family Services (JFS) for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) for those who are qualified. During the pandemic, PARTA couldn't get out and explain this service but that is starting to pick back up. She then asked Mr. Brian Trautman to comment.

Mr. Trautman asked for the days and hours of operation for the clinic.

Ms. Meltzer said she believes it's Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Trautman said almost all that time is covered by Dial-A-Ride service. It's first come, first served and everyone is eligible. PARTA would be glad to connect anyone with the training department to explain how to use that service. Ms. Kelly Jurisch runs the training department and travel training is done all the time.

Ms. Meltzer said she will contact the physician in charge of that clinic and suggest that they communicate with PARTA regarding Dial-A-Ride if they have not already done so. She had another meeting to go to and thanked the Board.

Mr. Trautman said PARTA would be glad to help if it could.

Mr. Gynn thanked Mr. Trautman and asked if there were any other questions or comments. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Amrhein if she had anything to add to the General Manager's report.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Amrhein said the last few months have been very busy with the fair, school starting, the software RFP that will be discussed in a little more detail tonight, the trolley launch, and several visits with elected officials. Summer flew by and fall is in full gear. Next month, many staff members will be attending the Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) conference in Columbus, which she has been involved in planning. She expressed her appreciation for everyone coming out and said she would be happy to answer any questions.

Hearing none, Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Amrhein for all the work she does and then moved on to the committee reports.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Gynn said the Administration Committee did not have a need to meet.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Gynn asked Mr. Mike Lewis to give the Finance Committee report.

Mr. Lewis thanked Mr. Gynn and said the Finance Committee met on September 20 and went over all the documentation provided by Ms. Rebecca Schrader. He then provided some of the highlights. He said KSU Revenues was a little behind because school just started. It's a straight-line budget and will start to catch up now that students are back. For Federal Capital Maintenance Assistance, drawdowns totaled \$767,815 through June. With interest rates increasing, people who are borrowing money are not happy right now. The monthly budget for Investment Income was about \$833. Last month it was \$23,160 so there's a benefit to the rates for PARTA. Expenses were all in line. There were some individuals who either cashed out vacation or personal time that caused Other Fringe Benefits to go up a little bit but overall, it was still in line. For the current period, there was a surplus of \$913,380, which was above the monthly budget by \$699,795. YTD Actual continued to be strong at \$1,903,623, which was a surplus of \$782,822 against budget. Some grant money went through for two buses and three LTVs, and the FTA approved the next phase of the Bus Storage Facility connecting buildings with a walkway. There was some excess money in the grant due to the cost of the foundation not being as much as projected so that now is being used for the walkway. He asked if there were any questions on PARTA's finances.

Hearing none, Mr. Lewis moved on to the Kent Central Gateway (KCG). He said it's a good month when revenues are all above what they should be, and expenses are below what they should be. For the current period, there was a surplus of \$15,806 with a monthly budget of \$9,581, which means it was above budget by \$6,225. YTD Actual was at \$108,412, which was \$96,112 over budget. The parking deck is being used more with the increased activity downtown. Coming out of COVID is reflected in the numbers for KCG. He asked if there were any questions.

Hearing none, Mr. Lewis reiterated what Mr. Gynn always says that the Finance Committee would love to have people at the meeting. He said the committee goes much more in depth with many more reports.

Mr. Gynn thanked Mr. Lewis, Mr. Jeff Childers, and Mr. Frank Vitale for participating in the meeting and said anybody was welcome to join the meeting.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Moving on, Mr. Gynn said the Operations Committee did not meet.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Gynn said the Personnel Committee will be scheduling a meeting later.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Gynn said he didn't believe there was any Old Business, so he moved on to New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Gynn then asked Ms. Kelly Jurisch and Mr. Trautman to give the presentation on the software RFP.

Ms. Jurisch and Mr. Trautman then presented their PowerPoint on the software RFP, which is attached.

Following the presentation, Ms. Jurisch asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Mansfield asked if the radio system would be compatible with the Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS).

Mr. Trautman said it won't be compatible with MARCS. He looked at MARCS, but it would have been extremely expensive. Portage County EMA has a device that takes all the different frequencies (Randolph Fire Department, Streetsboro, etc.), filters it all into this device, and allows each one of them to talk to each other. PARTA's radio system would be compatible with the Portage County EMA's device.

Mr. Mansfield said that's critical in the event of a ferocious disaster.

Mr. Trautman agreed and said one of the other things that comes with AT&T is a mobile tower. If something happened at PARTA, like a tornado or something, or if there was a large event of any kind and a tower needed to be set up because the local tower got knocked down, they'd bring a mobile tower and set it up on site.

Mr. Vitale asked about training.

Mr. Trautman said training is part of the package and includes in-house, on-line, and on the job training. He and Ms. Jurisch thought it would be a good idea to have the new Planner and the Operations Manager participate in writing the spec. They were given a couple examples to work with and then once they were done putting together their spec, it was refined and then given to Ms. Schrader and her staff to insert all the federal clauses and format properly. It's been seen several times and is very comprehensive.

Mr. Vitale asked about single source responsibility if the subcontractor doesn't work out.

Mr. Trautman said the prime contractor is responsible and has the controlling responsibility.

Mr. Gynn asked for the timeline from when the contract is given until implementation and if dual systems would be running for a while.

Mr. Trautman said he wants a parallel pilot running with the current system, so he'll probably carve out about 10 vehicles in the fleet and put in a tandem or parallel system to run with the current system to ensure that no one is missed. There will be problems, as always, when implementing a new system, but this will at least allow for running a pilot and getting the infrastructure, connections, and portals squared away. Then the rest of the fleet will be migrated over. One of the things graded on as part of the proposal and the best and final offer process, is length of time to implement the new system. If a bidder indicates it's going to take three years, they're probably not going to get the bid but if they give a reasonable timeline to work with, then that would be considered when comparing the proposals. The proposals are good and similar in a lot of ways.

Mr. Vitale asked if the decision would be made based on price.

Mr. Trautman said when there are three or four solid proposers and a very wide spectrum between them on pricing, price will come into consideration, but it won't be the sole determining factor.

Mr. Jack Murphy asked what kind of new features a rider could expect to see.

Mr. Trautman said currently there is a customer facing app that is very clunky and doesn't work consistently well. It's not what would be expected from an app in 2022. The newer customer facing apps allow for scheduling to be done through them, viewing of maps, and some interaction. Fare collection is also a part of this proposal. The current Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system calls the rider the night before and five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. The rider must answer the phone and push a button when the call is made the night before. The new system can send a text message and the ride can be canceled through the phone just by saying yes or no. That is not available now. "No shows" are probably one of the biggest costs now. A vehicle shows up and the rider doesn't take the ride without any prior notification to PARTA. That's a waste of gas, wasted trip, and waste of time. If more "no shows" can be eliminated with a simple app, that's a tremendous pick up.

Mr. Childers asked how much was expected to be saved and if it would be substantial.

Ms. Jurisch said it should be a nice number.

Mr. Trautman said it will be a substantial number. The cost of the new system will have to be compared with the offsets. The radio contract can be canceled, as well as the contracts with Trapeze and Enghouse. Offsets would include what was spent last year to replace MDTs and buying fare boxes. A fare box costs about \$18,000 to replace and all of them are at the end of their useful life. There is \$112,000 of grant money available. He can't say how much will be saved because he's still getting numbers in, like the cost of tablets and GPS lockboxes. The contract is for five years with five additional one-year extensions. It's potentially a 10-year deal. If it's a good deal, the contract will be extended. If it's not, the contract won't be extended, and this process will start all over again. He doesn't know what kind of deal AT&T will give or how much their data will be versus what PARTA is currently paying. All those things will come into play.

Ms. Stacey Wilson clarified that because it's cloud based, the full disaster recovery will be handled by the vendor.

Mr. Trautman said that is correct. As a matter of fact, a couple staff members will have most of this on their phones.

Hearing no further questions, Mr. Gynn thanked them for their presentation.

RESOLUTION

Mr. Gynn said there was no resolution.

EXECUTIVE SESSION, as needed

Mr. Gynn said there was no need for an Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing nothing further, Mr. Gynn entertained a motion to adjourn. **Ms. Marge Bjerregaard** made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by **Mr. Mike Lewis**. Mr. Gynn asked all in favor to say aye. He asked any opposed to say no. Hearing no opposition, the **motion to adjourn passed unanimously**.

Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Marge Bjerregaard and Ms. Karen Beck to meet with Ms. Jurisch to make sure that there was a convenient date for the Personnel Committee to meet.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcia Fletcher
Executive Assistant