

MACON-BIBB COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2017

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority was held at 5:30 p.m. on September 26, 2017 in the Morris M. Cohen conference room on the fourth floor of the Terminal Station at 200 Cherry Street, Macon, Georgia. Those present were:

Craig Ross, Chairman

Chuck Howard, Vice-Chairman

Sheddrick Clark, Secretary

Members: Nettie Thomas, Violet Poe, Frank Tompkins and Jami Gaudet

Members Absent:

Also present were F. Bradford Wilson, Jr., Counsel for the Authority, Georgia Slagle, CPA for the Authority, Dave Golder, Interim General Manager & CEO/Safety & Training Manager, Andy Stroud, Facilities & Marketing Director, Brenda Banks, Executive Assistant & Accounts Payable Coordinator, Danny Thompson, Chief Financial Officer, JoAnn Lamb, Operations Manager, June Slaughter, Paratransit Manager, Joey Connor, Maintenance Foreman, and Jermaine Whisby, Fixed Route Supervisor. A proper Quorum was present.

The Chairman Craig Ross called the meeting to order and a moment of silent prayer was observed. The Chairman briefly reviewed the Agenda as presented. Chuck Howard moved for approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Violet Poe, and approved. Approval of the Minutes was the next agenda item. With two corrections addressed, a motion was made by Violet Poe for the approval of the Minutes, which were unanimously approved following a second by Chuck Howard.

Jan Beeland, Executive Director of the Macon Arts Alliance, was introduced by Chairman Ross for her presentation. Due to technical problems with her presentation, the Chairman announced that he would move Ms. Beeland to a later time on the agenda.

Chairman Ross then honored Joey Connor, Maintenance Shop Foreman, with a plaque for his 25 years of service. Jermaine Whisby, Fixed Route Supervisor, was also recognized with a gift card for a recent display of exemplary customer service. Ms. Violet Poe also commented that she and Commissioner Elaine Lucas were impressed with Mr. Whisby's driving skills. Mr. Whisby drove the Pedestrian Safety Review Board to Pendleton Homes and the ad hoc

committee to Central City Park on Tuesday, September 19, 2017. Ms. Poe thanked Mr. Whisby for doing an outstanding job.

Ms. Georgia Slagle was then recognized by the Chairman for the financial report. Ms. Slagle presented the Financial Statements and Supplementary Information for the Month and One Month Ended July 31, 2017 and 2016 for Fixed Route, and Paratransit operations. She shared that, under the direction of GDOT, the Terminal Station Fund has been rolled back into the Operating Fund. Ms. Slagle began with the Statements of Net Position and announced a cash flow of \$465,000.00. Total cash flow for the same period last year was at a deficit of \$45,000.00. The grants receivable amount of \$235,639.14 includes June operating, and several outstanding capital grant reimbursement requests. A receivable remains for the bi-party agreement in the amount of \$255,578.00 from last year's audit. The prepaid workers' compensation insurance amount of \$60,829.19 is a significant decrease to the \$119,098.59 amount in 2016. Ms. Slagle commented that this variance is due to the slash in workers' compensation premiums. Under Property and Equipment, Buildings and Improvements are back at \$10,276,928.15 because of Terminal Station being rolled back into Operations. Ms. Slagle then reviewed liabilities and net position. The BB&T line of credit is \$366,653.15 compared to \$253,033.10 in 2016. The net pension obligation and deferred resources related to pension net figures will be adjusted by the actuary report and audit. Total net position measured \$9,781,817.61.

Ms. Slagle then reviewed the Variable Budget Statements of Revenues and Expenses. Under operating revenues, Ms. Slagle stated that passenger fares for July was \$55,637.49. Compared to the current budget of \$70,833.33, there was an unfavorable variance of \$15,195.84. However, prior year actual figures show passenger fares were \$51,946.24 in July 2016. The other revenue amount of \$30,197.21 represents the Mercer University route. Terminal Station income of \$64,277.04 will be explained in another schedule of the financial report. Under operating expenses, combined salaries shows a favorable budget variance of \$27,095.29. Employee benefits were \$19,122.86 less compared to budget. Gas and diesel fuel was favorable to budget by \$6,841.71. Repair parts and supplies indicate a favorable prior year actual variance for July of \$11,256.59. Professional and other services also fell below budget by \$16,969.25. Ms. Slagle stated that Terminal Station expenses were in line with the budget at \$44,634.67. Under Non-Operating Revenues, Ms. Slagle shared that the operating grants show an unfavorable variance of \$77,765.08. Ms. Slagle announced an increase in the change in net position of \$100,505.00.

Ms. Slagle then shared the Terminal Station Revenues and Expenses Schedule. Total rental and other income was \$64,508.21 for July which tracks closely to budget. Under expenses, she mentioned that there are no July 2016 salary figures listed for comparison. Ms. Slagle explained that last year, salaries were not allocated until August 2016. After expenses, Terminal Station income measured \$19,642.37. The last item of Ms. Slagle's report was the Paratransit financial statement. The Statement of Revenues and Expenses shows most of the line items are tracking under budget. Total revenues for July was \$48,023.00 which represents a year to date budget percentage of 7.83%. Sheddric Clark asked Ms. Slagle if a six month budget comparison report could be prepared to see how effective the Fixed Route budget cuts have been. Ms. Slagle and Danny Thompson responded that this report will be created and presented to the Board. A motion was made by Chuck Howard for the approval of the Financial Report, which was unanimously approved following a second by Frank Tompkins.

Ms. Jan Beeland then began her presentation. She introduced Megan McNaught, Curator for the Macon Arts Alliance. Ms. Beeland announced that the Macon Arts Alliance applied for a Downtown Challenge grant funded by the Knight Foundation and the Peyton Anderson Foundation. Macon Arts Alliance was awarded \$31,500.00 for their "Transportation Enhancing the City Through Art" grant proposal. Ms. Beeland shared that she had originally discussed a temporary sidewalk art project with Mr. Rick Jones. That conversation led to the possibility of having a mural painted on the exterior wall of the Transfer Center at the Terminal Station. Ms. Beeland stated that Marlon Baldwin with Macon-Bibb County also had the idea of a mural, so a collaborative effort began.

Megan McNaught then presented the process of finding artists to paint the mural. Ms. McNaught received 11 responses from her call for proposal for three artists to paint the mural. The paintings from the 11 anonymous artists were sent to a Mercer art professor, a Wesleyan art professor and a museum curator for grading. Grading was based on artistic merit or skill, originality, and the aesthetic value of the image. Ms. McNaught stated that there were restrictions of no historical or political content in the paintings. The paintings of the top three scoring artists were revealed. Ms. Beeland clarified that there will be three paintings on the mural with a transitional piece between each painting. Sheddric Clark inquired if a written description for each painting was available. Ms. McNaught responded that interpretations for each painting were sent by most of the artists, but she did not bring them to the meeting. Mr. Frank Tompkins commented that he interpreted a prevailing theme that permeates each painting

as a connecting point. When Mr. Tompkins asked if his interpretation was valid, Ms. McNaught answered that the concepts of each artist were created independently. She stated that once the three artists are notified that they have been selected to paint the mural, they will be asked to collaborate on the flow of the mural. Mr. Tompkins then asked if the artists themselves, or Macon Arts Alliance would decide on the final mural design. Ms. McNaught responded that the artists will work together for a cohesive theme.

Ms. Jami Gaudet inquired about the estimated completion time and size of the mural. Ms. McNaught stated that the mural is expected to be completed by Thanksgiving and each painting will take up about four panels at 14 x 48 ft. The projected start date is October 12th. Ms. McNaught and Ms. Beeland also shared that a date is being planned for the community to interact with the artists during the painting of the mural. Mr. Tompkins asked how indigent persons may be included in the interaction with the artists. He queried if certain areas could be targeted for a reduced or free bus fare to the Terminal Station for the community event. Chairman Ross commented that every year a free bus ride day is provided, and perhaps we could incorporate the free day with this community event. Mr. Tompkins asked who would prepare the wall of the Transfer Center for the mural painting. Andy Stroud responded that three bids were submitted for the preparation of the wall, and TNT Commercial Contractors won the bid.

Mr. Sheddric Clark expressed concern about the interpretation of the artwork being available so that no one is offended. Ms. Jami Gaudet commented that Mr. Clark's point was well taken, and that it would be nice for the public to know the artist's inspiration for the painting. Ms. McNaught agreed and will work with the artists to include their interpretations in the transitional panels of the mural. Chairman Ross asked if the artists are local. Ms. McNaught stated that two of the artists are from Macon and the other is from Middle Georgia. Ms. Beeland shared that the artists will be informed of their selection on tomorrow, September 27th. Ms. Violet Poe asked what role Marlon Baldwin will play in the mural project. Ms. Beeland answered that he will work alongside the Arts Alliance with the artists. Ms. Jamie Gaudet praised the Knight Foundation and Peyton Anderson Foundation for giving so much to our community. Chairman Ross expressed excitement about the mural and thanked Ms. Beeland and Ms. McNaught for their presentation.

The Chairman then called upon Dave Golder for the General Manager's report. Mr. Golder announced that Fixed Route Bus 715 and Paratransit Bus 602 are back in service. In the Safety and Training area, Mr. Golder trained four fixed route drivers in August. Based on

training results, he and Jo Ann Lamb have assessed that the drivers are close to being put on the road. Each driver has one or two routes in which to complete training. Mr. Golder anticipates having six new drivers to train in October, and expects to have them on the road after Thanksgiving. Mr. Golder stated that September was a very active month for MTA, especially with Tropical Storm Irma. He provided a report for board members to show the staff's involvement in providing shuttles for the Frank Johnson Community Center, Georgia Power, and Red Cross. Mr. Golder thanked MTA managers for ensuring the safety of the buses and routes, passengers, Broadway office, and employees. He recognized Jo Ann Lamb for being in constant contact while she travelled to Indianapolis, IN for a conference. He also praised June Slaughter and Nichole Wallace for their work in rescheduling Paratransit trips due to closed medical facilities.

Mr. Golder then discussed the reinstallation of bus stop signs. Complaints about missing bus stop signs led to investigating all 1,290 bus stops. It was discovered that 480 signs were missing. Mr. Golder is working with Best Signs to replace the missing signs. So far, there have been only five complaints about the new signs being installed. Ms. Violet Poe asked about the bus stop on Forsyth Road across from Kroger. She commented that this stop has been a major safety concern for the Pedestrian Safety Review Board because passengers have to cross five lanes of traffic to get to Kroger. Mr. Golder responded that he would take a look at this bus stop location. Chairman Ross voiced concern about the bus stop on Riverside Drive across from the Palm Tree hotel. This stop also requires passengers to cross five lanes of traffic. The Chairman stated that further research is needed for alternative bus stops for both locations.

Public Comments was the next item on the agenda. The Chairman invited guests to speak for up to a maximum of five minutes. Jackie Glover was the first speaker. Ms. Glover shared that she was disturbed by the discussion of free passes for veterans at the last meeting. She commented that she loves veterans, and has many veterans in her family. She inquired if she understood correctly that MTA is planning to give lifetime free passes to veterans. She asked if a feasibility study has been done to find out how many veterans are in Macon. Ms. Glover stated that with route cuts, financial concerns, and possible fare increases, offering free passes to an unknown number of people for an unknown length of time is not good. Ms. Glover suggested that honoring veterans on Veteran's Day, providing a free pass once a month, or offering reduced fares would be better.

Wade Horton was the next guest to speak. Mr. Horton began his comments by complimenting MTA managers. He congratulated Joey Connor and Jermaine Whisby on their awards. He recognized them for coming up with the best and quickest solutions when bus problems arise. Mr. Horton stated that he is also concerned about free veteran passes. He commented that someone who enters the military at age 18 can become a veteran at age 22. This could create a long span for a lifetime free pass. He agreed with Ms. Glover on the feasibility study, providing a free pass once a month, or offering reduced fares.

Andrew McGovern then spoke. He announced that he specializes in painting large murals for restaurants. Mr. McGovern stated that some logistics were not shared during the Macon Arts Alliance presentation. He suggested that the best time for painting a mural is at night under controlled circumstances. During the day, there is limited work space with people walking back and forth, and the risk of getting paint on people. He stated that it should only take a week to paint the mural. Mr. McGovern remarked that honoring the veterans is a great idea. He then shared an unpleasant experience that occurred on the Bellevue Route where the driver was extremely rude to passengers. He ended his comments by stating that Fixed Route Supervisor, Linda Parker is amazing.

The next guest to speak was Wendy Brown. Ms. Brown shared that she has lived in Macon for 3 1/2 years. She commented that bus drivers William, on the Macon Mall bus, Hershel on Houston Ave., and Frederick Thompson on Bellevue are all extraordinary. They are all professional, courteous, caring, and stellar human beings. She would love to see them recognized, and that they should train other drivers. She stated that her only complaint about the new buses is that they sit so low that she can't hug her favorite driver.

Jo Ann Lamb asked Chairman Ross if she could make a comment. She encouraged anyone who experiences an ugly driver to complete a complaint form. The name of the driver is not required. She only needs a time and a bus number.

The last speaker was David Scott who expressed thanks for being hired as MTA's greeter. Chairman Ross commented that Mr. Scott is always at the Transfer Center, dressed sharply and has been an MTA supporter for many years.

Old Business was the next agenda item. The first item of discussion was veteran bus passes. Chairman Ross shared that he has been looking at systems across the country who offer free veteran passes. San Francisco, CA offers passes to anyone in the military. Some systems offer free passes for just disabled veterans, or those in a specific age group. Chairman Ross stated

that last month, the free pass idea was presented to see if there was interest. Ms. Violet Poe and Ms. Jami Gaudet will now start to develop the best veterans pass program for Macon. Every veteran in Macon will not receive a free pass. Chairman Ross reported that he and Jami Gaudet rode the Houston Ave. route on Saturday, September 23rd. The Chairman asked every male on the bus if they were a veteran, and none of them were. Plans are moving forward with the free veterans pass plan. Chairman Ross hopes to have a more refined plan by the October meeting, and be ready to offer it to veterans by Veteran's Day on Saturday, November 11th. The Chairman asked if anyone had any questions. Mr. Frank Tompkins asked if any contact has been made to State Representative James Beverly about this initiative. Mr. Tompkins stated that Mr. Beverly is heavily into programs for veterans, and may be helpful in acquiring funding or becoming an ex-officio member of our committee. Chairman Ross then discussed STIC funding. If veterans ride, ridership levels increase which helps increase funding. The next item for discussion was the Paratransit focus group. June Slaughter reported that Wade Horton has accepted the invitation to be a member of the group. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 28th at 2:00 p.m. The last item under Old Business was Paratransit ticket sales. The Chairman announced that there was a complaint last month about Paratransit passes no longer being sold at the Terminal Station. Ms. Slaughter commented that Paratransit passes are now available at the 2nd Floor MTA Office at the Terminal Station.

Under New Business, The Chairman shared that a press conference will be held on Wednesday, October 4th at 10:00 a.m. outside of the Terminal Station to announce the Lo-No grant award. Vice-Chairman Chuck Howard asked if an electric bus would be available for viewing at the press conference. Chairman Ross responded that BYD could not provide an electric bus because they will be in Atlanta at 9:00 a.m. to set up their display for the APTA EXPO.

The next item under New Business was Board Meeting Change for 2018. Chairman Ross stated that in the original Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority Act of 1980, it is required that a meeting be held at least once a quarter. The Chairman commented that since he has been on the board, meetings have been held every month. There are times when there are only a few items to discuss that could wait until the following month. He further stated that if there is a project being worked on, like the veteran passes, that gives ample time to work on the project and have it ready to vote on by the next meeting. Chairman Ross proposed that meetings be held every other month beginning January 2018. In the event something important comes up, there will be a called board meeting. A motion was made by Frank Tompkins for the approval to hold board

meetings every other month beginning January 2018, which was unanimously approved following a second by Sheddric Clark.

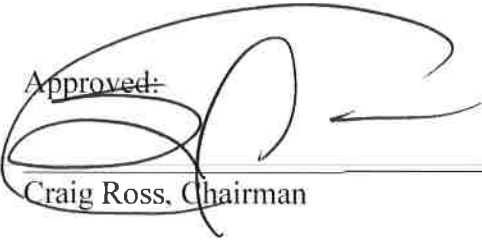
The last item under New Business was the President & CEO search update. Ms. Violet Poe reported that she serves on the Search Committee with Frank Tompkins and Jami Gaudet. MTA Counsel, Brad Wilson has also been requested to attend each meeting. Ms. Poe announced that the committee has been meeting weekly since September 12th to review resumes that have been received. All resumes have been provided to the Search Committee by Rhonda Lowe, Human Resources Manager. The committee will continue their review process until the closing date for the position posting. Ms. Poe shared a chart of all of the advertisers, and posting schedules. She also passed around samples of the job postings in *The Macon Telegraph*, on the Georgia Department of Labor's website, and in APTA's newsletter, *Passenger Transport*. Ms. Poe asked Jami Gaudet to give details about two advertisers, GMA and ACCG, where Ms. Gaudet suggested a job posting be made on their joint website. Ms. Gaudet explained that GMA is the Georgia Municipal Association which represents about 150 cities in Georgia. ACCG is the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia which represents county municipalities. Ms. Gaudet has worked with GMA for many years. Ms. Gaudet invited Ms. Janice Ross to share her involvement with ACCG. Ms. Ross commented that ACCG provides training, insurance policies, help with legal matters, workshops, and facilitated SPLOST this year. Ms. Poe stated that, as amended in the minutes, the Search Committee will continue to screen all applicants, and the full Board of Directors will select the final candidate.

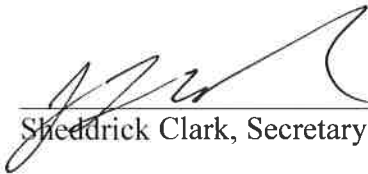
Chairman Ross then asked if the Board had any comments. Sheddric Clark thanked Dave Golder and the rest of the staff for the work done during Tropical Storm Irma. He announced that he was at the Frank Johnson Center and at Georgia Power with Theresa Robinson. Chairman Ross thanked June Slaughter and Nichole Wallace for their work in rescheduling Paratransit customers and assisting other dialysis patients who were at shelters. Mr. Frank Tompkins thanked Brad Wilson for his immeasurable knowledge and advice. Mr. Tompkins also thanked Chairman Ross and the MTA staff for a job well done. Ms. Violet Poe announced that she read an article about Cherry Blossom Festival being presented an award in Tucson, AZ from the International Festivals and Events Association. The article also mentioned that Macon Transit Authority won 8 silver awards. The last Board comment was from Jami Gaudet who thanked Chairman Ross for the bus ride on last Saturday, September 23rd and looks forward to riding all of the routes.

Ms. Janice Ross invited everyone to attend a barbecue luncheon in honor of those who worked during Tropical Storm Irma. The luncheon will be held at Rosa Parks Square beginning at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 27th. Chairman Ross announced for those that didn't already know that he has been married to Janice Ross for 47 years, and that she is the Clerk for Macon-Bibb County Board of Commissioners.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: 
Craig Ross, Chairman


Sheddric Clark, Secretary