

MINUTES

PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

September 26, 2019

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on September 26, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6th Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

Board Members Present

Roberta Abdul-Salaam
Robert L. Ashe, III, **Chair**
Jim Durrett
Roderick A. Frierson
Ryan C. Glover
Jerry Griffin
Freda B. Hardage
John 'Al' Pond
Rita A. Scott
Christopher S. Tomlinson*

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Jeffrey A. Parker; C-Suite Team Members Chief Administrative Officer Luz Borrero, Chief of Bus Collie Greenwood, Chief Financial Officer Gordon L. Hutchinson, Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill, Chief of Capital Programs, Expansion & Innovation Franklin Rucker and Chief of Rail Operations David Springstead; AGMs Heather Alhadeff, Marsha Anderson Bomar, LaShanda Dawkins, Virgil Fludd, Kirk Talbott, Emil Tzanov and Tom Young (Interim); Chief Information Security Officer Dean Mallis; Executive Director Paula Nash; Senior Directors Pia Forbes, Colleen Kiernan, Erica Pines, Don Williams and George Wright; Directors Jonathan Hunt, Sherrie Johnson, Douglas Miller, Steve Perry (Acting), Remy Saintil and Adam Shumaker; Manager Stephany Fisher; Manager MARTA Board of Directors Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Sr. Executive Administrator Kenya Hammond and Department Administrator Demeka Wallace. Others in attendance Hunter Abel, Adrian Carter, Alphonso Eugene, Abebe Girmay, Courtne Middlebrooks, LaTonya Pope, Delton Quarles, Eric Scott, Rod Spencer and Roosevelt Stripling.

Also in attendance Pam Alexander of LTK Engineering; Shane Blatt of Arcadis; Doug Edwards of MA/Atlas; Jennifer Laroga of ATL and Cara Vojdani of Arcadis.

* Christopher Tomlinson is Executive Director of Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) and is therefore a non-voting member of the MARTA Board of Directors.

In Memoriam

Mr. Ashe asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of former Board member, Mrs. Juanita Jones Abernathy. For those who were unable to attend the funeral, it was a reminder that we lost a treasure. One of the first of four people to call for the Montgomery Bus Boycott, she was the person that created the business plan for the Bus Boycott. She led with her life for decades, making her state, her region, her country and ultimately the world a better place. Mrs. Abernathy was one of the Authority's longest serving Board members. When asked to be on the MARTA Board, she told the Mayor at that time, that her career in public service started with buses and she thought it was appropriate that it continue with transit. I'm sure we'll all have more to say about her over time, but I wanted to acknowledge all that she meant to me.

Approval of the August 29, 2019 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

On motion by Ms. Hardage seconded by Mr. Durrett, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 6 to 0, with 8* members present.

Mr. Griffin abstained.

Briefing – Proposed Service Modifications for December 2019

Mr. Williams briefed the MARTA Board of Directors on the proposed modifications for routes: 19,123 and 823.

Background and Overview

- Service Modifications occur three times per year
 - April
 - August
 - December
- MARTA Act required public input before major service modifications
- MARTA's Service Standard establishes performance measures that guide the planning, programming and distribution of services
- Strategic Focus is to implement the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) framework of service as adopted in 2016

Planning & External Relations Committee
9/26/19
Page 3

Key Objectives

- Operational and Safety Requirements
- Service Efficiency and Effectiveness
- Community and Stakeholder Input

Proposed Modifications – December 2019 (3 Routes)

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| • 19 | Clairmont Road | DeKalb |
| • 123 | Church Street / North DeKalb Mall | DeKalb |
| • 823 | Belvedere | DeKalb |

Decatur (Routes 19, 123 and 823)

- Corrects safety concern on Church Street (unprotected left turn)
- Eliminates underutilized service segments
- Eliminates service duplication
- Redeploys resources to resolve on-time performance issues

Route 19 (Clairmont Road)

- Reallocates one bus from Route 123 to Route 19
- Assumes Commerce Drive and Howard Avenue segments from Route 123
- Provides additional running time to improve on-time performance
- Allows midday, night and weekend frequency to be improved from 45 minutes to 40 minutes

Route 123 (Church Street / North DeKalb Mall)

- Transfers Commerce Drive and Howard Avenue segment to Route 19
- Eliminates service duplication between Emory Decatur Hospital and North DeKalb Mall
- Corrects safety concern on Church Street (unprotected left turn)
- Expands service to new developments along Church Street and Milscott Drive
- Seeking to address concerns regarding Route 123 from Public Hearing

Route 823 (Belvedere)

- Eliminates underutilized service segment along Midway Road and Carter Road
- Allows frequency to be improved from 65-70 minutes to 60 minutes
- Improves connection opportunities with Routes 15 and 21

Estimated Impacts – December 2019

• 19	Clairmont Road	\$481,037
• 123	Church Street / North DeKalb Mall	\$504,219
• 823	Belvedere	<u>-\$11,060</u>
Total		-\$34,242 potential savings

Public Hearing Schedule

- When and Where:
 - Monday, September 16, 2019, Decatur Library Auditorium
215 Sycamore Street, Decatur, GA 30303
- Time:
 - 6:00 PM Community Exchange
 - 7:00 PM Public Hearing
- Approximately 70 attendees
- Majority comments came from citizens who use Route 123
- For patrons unable to attend, comments may be submitted by:
 - Leaving a message at 404-848-5299
 - Writing to MARTA's Office of External Affairs
2424 Piedmont Road, N.E
Atlanta, Georgia 30324-3330
 - Completing an online comment card at www.itsmarta.com
 - Faxing comments to 404-848-4179
- All comments must be received by September 23, 2019

Ms. Scott said while conducting the Public Hearing on September 16, 2019 there was robust conversation before and after the hearing. She committed to the residents, especially in the Downtown Decatur area that she would ride Routes, 19, 123 and 823 within a two-week period. Ms. Scott had the opportunity to ride Route 123, as she was concerned that this Route would have the greatest impact of any changes. She was able to see where there would be extreme concern on making a left turn out of DeKalb Medical. As she sat on the bus, the driver had to be careful and it took him a while to make the turn. Making the turn a different way would put the driver on Wynn Way. There are approximately six senior citizen locations which houses 300-500 seniors in the vicinity. These citizens are not only concerned about the mall and access to grocery stores, they are also concerned about DeKalb hospitals. This is where a lot of the seniors have doctor appointments within that area.

Mr. Williams said staff will address the residents concern and modify the purposed service modifications for Route 123.

Ms. Scott asked to be updated during the process.

Mr. Williams said an update will be provided on the modifications for Route 123

Mr. Frierson asked if a there was a transfer point extended going further north.

Mr. Williams said yes there is a transfer point. Staff is seeking to eliminate the duplication between Routes 75 and 123.

Mr. Frierson asked if a briefing on the revised service modifications would be provided during the upcoming Committee meeting.

Mr. Williams said yes, a briefing will be provided to illustrate the changes between the purposed service modifications.

Mr. Frierson asked to review the revised modifications before they are presented to the Board.

Mr. Williams said he would provide a copy prior to the upcoming Committee meeting.

Resolution Authorizing the Approval of the Fiscal Year 2020, Bus, Rail and Mobility Service Standards

Mr. Williams presented a resolution authorizing the MARTA Board of Directors to approve the updates to the FY 2020 Service Standards.

On motion by Mr. Griffin seconded by Ms. Hardage, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 8 to 0, with 9* members present.

Briefing – Communications Strategy

Ms. Forbes presented the highlights of strategic planning for communications.

The role of the Communications team is to share the MARTA story. Specifically, the team helps to craft the message, ensure it's consistency, manage its timing and strategize around how, when and by what platform it is delivered.

Objectives

- To operate as an in-house communications and public relations agency
 - Content strategy/management
 - Public Relations
 - Digital Media
 - Social Media Contributions
 - Internal Communications
- To expand the frequency of success stories shared through broadcast, print and social media, while supporting the communications needs of the executives and responding to day-to-day requests (press, open records requests, etc.)
- To position the agency as a leader/trailblazer in the public transit industry
- To shift stakeholder perception of MARTA to predominantly positive
- To strengthen the MARTA brand

Key Messages & Audiences

- Branded Messages:
 - Itsmarta
 - Taking people where they want to go.
 - Connecting People. Creating Community.
- Priority messages:
 - Consistent customer service
 - Capital program delivery with speed and efficiency
 - Fiscal responsibility
- Customers/Riders
- Residents/non-riders
- Government (local, state & federal)
- Industry organizations
- Advocacy groups
- MARTA Board of Directors
- Executive Office
- MARTA staff
- Media
- Jurisdictional partners

Media Relations

- Pitch stories
- Field media inquiries
- Manage open records requests
- Arrange interviews
- Provide media clearance
- Liaison to GM or SME
- Speak on behalf of GM or SME, as necessary

Events, Recognitions & Special Initiatives

- ISO Certifications
 - Recognized on a national level

Products

- Talking points/remarks, briefing sheets, presentations & op-eds (C Suite &/or Designees)
- News Releases, Media Alerts/Advisories
- Daily news clips - staff
- Weekly news clips - Board, EMT
- Crisis communication plan (Team)
- Communication plans for large-scale events
- Social media content/stories
- *5 Points* newsletter (Employees & Board)
- *Saporta Report* Submission

Briefing – MARTA Breeze Outreach Program Update

Ms. Pines provided an update on the MARTA Breeze Outreach Program.

Breeze Cards

- Long-term use card
- Load various fare products
- Breeze vending machines in 38 transit stations
- Can also be purchased online

Reduced Fare Program Issued to:

- Eligible Senior Citizens
- People with Disabilities
- Medicare Cardholders

Reduced Fare Locations

- Five Points Transit Station – Fulton County/ City of Atlanta
- MARTA Headquarters – Fulton County/City of Atlanta

MARTA Mobility

- ADA Complementary Paratransit Service
- Applications can be
 - Requested by Telephone
 - Obtained at a Reduce Fare Location
 - Apply On-line

Breeze Pop-up Program

- MARTA started hosting on-site locations throughout the system
- Scheduled monthly from June – December in Fulton, DeKalb and Clayton

Pop-up Outreach

- Station outreach is conducted at Five Points and end of the line stations to provide an opportunity to distribute information about the MARTA Breeze Pop-Up Locations and additional services that will be offered to out program.
- External Affairs staff distributed 10,000 flyers and 2,500 posters
- Kick-Off Events were held with Stakeholders and Elected Official in June for each county

Results to Date

- Number of participants by county June 1 – August 31, 2009
 - DeKalb County – 235
 - Fulton County – 182
 - Clayton County – 116
- The average daily activity per event
 - DeKalb County – 78%
 - Fulton County – 61%
 - Clayton County – 39%
 - Five Points – 93%
 - Lindberg – 21%

The Future

- Evaluate the Program to determine expansion feasibility
- Increase partnerships for onsite services
- Received a call from Grady Hospital who is interested in the Pop-up Breeze Program
- Currently receiving requests from elected officials and others within the community

Internal Partners

- Special thanks to:
 - Communications & External Affairs
 - Information Technology (IT)
 - Customer Service
 - Revenue Operations

Mr. Tomlinson asked are Breeze Pop-ups hosted for one day.

Ms. Pines said yes, Breeze Pop-ups are held one day at MARTA's participating stations.

Mr. Tomlinson asked what hours are the Breeze Pop-ups held.

Ms. Pines said Breeze Pop-up are held from 10am – 2pm.

Ms. Scott said patrons who attended the Breeze Pop-ups in DeKalb County were excited to have the ability to purchase MARTA Breeze Cards without having to travel downtown. It has been extremely well received by the community and they expressed great appreciation. Breeze Pop-up gave me the opportunity as a new Board member representing DeKalb to introduce myself and pass out business cards so that I can assist citizens of DeKalb.

Mrs. Hardage thanked staff for a job well done.

Mr. Ashe said Grady Hospital is one of the first names that comes to mind when Breeze Pop-ups are mentioned. It could be beneficial for the Authority to act more like a private business when it comes to marketing. This would not just make the Authority's products available for sale if someone wants to purchase; it would allow staff to sell the Authority's product where customers are located.

Ms. Pines said staff from Grady attended the Breeze Pop-up last month to view the operations of the program.

Planning & External Relations Committee

9/26/19

Page 10

Mr. Ashe asked if it would benefit the Authority to look at other major employers and ask them to partner with us by providing space for MARTA staff to be in their atrium or on their campus. Georgia Tech and Georgia State are two of our largest customers. Perhaps, if staff could be onsite during new student orientation, MARTA could attract more customers. Whether it be state, county or private sectors, I hope that staff can identify other major employers to help them improve their employers and their customer experience.

Mr. Tomlinson said from experience, targeting large office building and complexes could allow staff to market through atriums, food courts and cafeterias. This could entice more customers.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam suggested adding Clayton State and Atlanta Tech to the list for consideration.

Mr. Ashe acknowledged Mr. Tomlinson and his team for a job well done with distributing marketing emails for his organizations. These emails get peoples attention and translate that attention into action. I think we should figure out how MARTA can coordinate with you.

Briefing – 15th Amendment Update

Ms. O'Neill presented the MARTA Board an opportunity to discuss the Fifteenth Amendment that was provided during the September 12, 2019 Work Session.

Board Members and staff have been discussing the Fifteenth Amendment for a few years. A red-line version of the Fifteenth Amendment was provided to Board members without the exhibits. The Fifteenth Amendment with Exhibits were available on Board members' monitors.

Major changes include addition of Exhibits B & C that detailed those projects within Fulton and DeKalb Counties that were to be funded with the existing penny and a ten-year extension or with additional funding sources should they be available.

Another major change that applies to Clayton County was the deletion of a funding source for the initial capital purchase for the buses in Clayton County. It was anticipated that there was left-over SPLOST money that would be utilized. As it turned out, there were no funds left over. The initial purchase was made with the half penny that is the Escrow Capital Account for Clayton County.

There has been a lot of discussion about the addition of a clause to address Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and the possibility that some of the developments received tax abatements. Page seven in section five of the Amendment, which would be a new Section 4J in the Rapid Transit Contract itself, there is a provision to address the concerns that were revised about our jurisdictions participating and how a TOD proposal would be structured.

Based on received feedback, there's an additional clause that been inserted in Section 4J that clarifies that there is a TOD within the City of Atlanta, that it is the City of Atlanta that would have the ability to elect to have a TOD Council and that would be the appointing authorities for the members of that TOD Council.

Mr. Parker said the Authority has made that update and is now in the process of sharing the updates with local jurisdictions. The DeKalb County Commissioner is having a special meeting later today and they will see this change for the first time regarding the City of Atlanta.

Ms. O'Neill said there are other additions as well, before this version of the Fifteenth Amendment is presented during October's Board meeting. There has been suggestions from Clayton County.

Mr. Parker said there was a meeting with the Chairman of Clayton County where he raised a concern regarding a non-existing project list for Clayton County. There is an Appendix A, which is Atlanta, Appendix B for Fulton County and Appendix C, for DeKalb County. The Fourteenth Amendment incorporated a report that detailed all commitments made by MARTA. So the sense was that level of detail is already in the report. I spoke with the Chairman yesterday and we concluded a new list would be crafted, where all jurisdictions will be treated fairly.

* * *

Adjournment

The meeting of the Planning & External Relations Committee adjourned at 10:18 a.m.