

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

November 6, 2014

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on November 6, 2014 at 10:36 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6th Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

Board Members Present

Harold Buckley, Sr.
Jim Durrett, *Chair*
Roderick E. Edmond
Freda B. Hardage

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Keith T. Parker, AICP; Chief Operating Officer Rich Krisak; Chief of Staff Rukiya Eaddy; Chief Administrative Officer Edward L. Johnson; Chief Financial Officer Gordon Hutchinson; Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill; AGMs Joseph Dorsey (Acting), Robin Henry, Ming Hsi, Reginald Mason, Ryland McClendon, Terry Thompson and Donald Williams (Acting); Executive Director Ferdinand Risco; Sr. Directors Rhonda Briggins and Joseph Erves; Directors Lyle Harris, Diane Hamilton and Jennifer Jinadu-Wright; Managers John Bayalis, Kelly Hayden and Alisa Jackson; Manager, Executive Office Administration Tyrene L. Huff; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Davis Allen, Alphonse Eugene, Nicholas Gowens, Don Lawrence, Saba Long, Courtney Middlebrooks, Srinath Remala and Tameka Wimberly.

Also in attendance Charles Pursley, Jr. of Pursley Friese Torgrimson; Andrea Simmons of AJC; Derek Crider of AECOM; Pam Alexander of LTK Engineering; Jack Buckingham of MATC; Steve Markenson and Kevin Pullis of WBA Research.

Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the October 2, 2014 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes
- b. Resolution Authorizing the Adoption of FY2015 Service Standards

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On motion by Mr. Buckley seconded by Mrs. Hardage the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0, 4 members present.

Individual Agenda

Briefing – March 2015 Mark-Up – Proposed Service Changes

Mr. Hayden briefed the Committee on the proposed service changes for the March 2015 Mark-up.

- The MARTA Act and MARTA Service Standards require public input for new routes or major service changes (greater than 20% miles or hours) and consideration before bus and rail modifications are approved by the Board for implementation
- The proposed route modifications for the March 2015 Mark-up were developed based on input and feedback from passengers and communities as well as MARTA's ongoing service monitoring and evaluation to identify and pursue opportunities to enhance service
- The proposed modifications have been designed to: add service in and to Clayton County, to improve service reliability (On-Time Performance) of existing service, enhance safety; minimize perceived adverse impacts on communities, improve operational efficiency and better tailor service to demand
- Public Hearings on the proposed service changes will be conducted the week of December 1, 2014; following the December Public Hearings, the Board will be briefed on the results at the and asked to approve the implementation of the route modifications at the January 2015 Board meeting

Highlights

- Implement new service into Clayton County
- Improve On-Time Performance (OTP)
- Improve bus route efficiency - "Right Size" the service
- Respond to customer requests

Clayton County Related Modifications and Additions

- **Route 15: South DeKalb/Candler Road**
 - Route 15 with trips ending at Georgia Perimeter College will be extended south to Forest Parkway in Clayton County
 - This extension will be renamed Route 15 – Forest Parkway/South DeKalb/Candler Rd. (trips on Linecrest will remain unchanged)
- **Route 55: Jonesboro Rd./Hutchens Rd.**
 - Route 55 trips will be extended from Old Conley and Jonesboro Rd. to Forest Parkway in Clayton County
 - This route will be renamed Route 55 – Forest Parkway/Jonesboro Rd/Hutchens Rd
- **Route 196: College Park/Church/Upper Riverdale/Mt. Zion**
 - Route 196 this new route will originate from the MARTA College Park Station and operate via Riverdale to Southlake Mall (terminus)
- **Mobility:**
 - Implement complementary ADA service for the above new and extended routes to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Other Current Marta Route Modifications

- **Route 1: Centennial Olympic Park/Coronet Way**
 - To improve operational efficiency, on-time performance and reduce congestion at Five Points Station this route will terminate at North Avenue Station
- **Route 16: Noble**
 - To improve operational efficiency, on-time performance and reduce congestion at Five Points Station this route will terminate at Civic Center Station
- **Route 74: Flat Shoals**
 - This route will be extended to Candler Park and Ember Drive at the request of the public

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- To improve operational efficiency and reduce congestion at Five Points Station this route will also now terminate at King Memorial Station
- Route 84: East Point/Camp Creek
 - To address increased ridership on Washington Road to and from East Point Station a short-turn route will be operated from Camp Creek Market Place in order to improve the frequency of trips during the peak periods
 - Certain trips will operate to the Social Security Office on Centre Pkwy.

Briefing – Clifton Corridor

Mrs. Wimberly updated the Committee on the Environmental Review Process of the Clifton Corridor Transit Initiative.

Status Update

- Since last Board Presentation in August 2013
 - Completed Pre-Environmental Preparation (Phase I)
- Refined adopted Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to:
 - Meet engineering and environmental constraints
 - Refined costs and ridership
 - Will be identified as Alternative 1 in Environmental Process
- Identified design options with associated lower costs and higher ridership
- Option 1B
 - At-Grade alignment; no tunnels
 - Goes through heart of Emory Campus
 - Requires use of CSX ROW
 - Lower in cost than LPA
 - Will now be identified as Alternative 2
- Option 1C
 - Same as option 1B except: tunnel underneath Emory Campus

- Will now be identified as Design Option C
- Option 1D
 - Proposed use of abandoned railroad right-of-way (ROW)
 - No longer an option due to Farmer's Market Expansion
 - Will now be identified as Design Option D

Stakeholder Coordination

- First Touch Stakeholders Briefings
 - Updated all high-level stakeholders on project's status and next steps
 - Reached out to:
 - DeKalb County Commissioners/Staff
 - City of Atlanta Council Members/Staff
 - Lindbergh LaVista Corridor Coalition
 - Emory University
 - DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce
 - City of Decatur
 - DeKalb County Farmer's Market
- CSX Coordination
 - Initiated discussions about the possibility of sharing ROW on portions of the alignment

Environmental Review Process

- Notice of Intent issued on October 21
 - Officially begins the NEPA (environmental review) process
- Public Scoping Meetings on December 4 & 9
- Agency Scoping Meeting on December 9
- From February 2015 - August 2015 environmental assessments will be conducted
- Completed DEIS expected Fall 2015

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- Completed FEIS & Record of Decision projected in Late 2016/Early 2017
- Key Considerations
 - Use of CSX ROW
 - Maintenance facility location
 - Utility reconnaissance
 - Traffic circulation and impacts
 - Property impacts
 - Determine project competitiveness
 - Community Support
 - Finding a champion
 - Financial strategy

Next Steps

- Initiate NEPA scoping and public meetings
- Begin negotiations with CSX on identifying lease or right-of-way purchase agreement for at-grade alignment options
- Identify potential funding sources and financial strategy
- Complete technical studies
- Request entry into Project Development
- Obtain Record of Decision (ROD) by late 2016/early 2017

Briefing – Market Analysis

Mrs. Jinadu-Wright and Mr. Markenson presented the methodology and findings of the research conducted by WBA Research on the public's perception of MARTA.

Overview

- With a goal of increasing ridership MARTA hired WBA Research to help understand the public's perception of the Authority
 - What do they think of the system?
 - What drives their current mode choice(s)?

- What might make them consider using MARTA or using it more often?
- WBA performed a literature review, conducted stakeholder interviews, focus groups and a quantitative resident survey

Research Summary

- Stakeholder Interviews
 - November 2013
 - 10 small group discussions
 - Cross section of MARTA departments
- Focus Groups
 - December 2013
 - 4 groups
 - 2 among riders
 - 2 among non-riders
- Quantitative Resident Survey
 - February – April 2014
 - 1,001 interviews
 - 500 phone
 - 501 web

Travel Landscape

- 13% are Frequent/Occasional Users
 - Take at least 5 MARTA Rail or 5 MARTA Bus trips in a typical week
- 30% are Infrequent Users
 - Take at least 1 MARTA trip per month, but less than 5 per week
- 56% are Rare/Non-Users
 - Take MARTA less than once per month, or not at all

Perceptions of MARTA

- **Strengths**
 - Cost effective
 - Can be more convenient
 - Less stressful than driving
 - Free parking
 - Opportunities to multitask
 - Breeze Card is easy to use
- **Weaknesses**
 - Lack of knowledge of system
 - Perceptions that MARTA is not safe from crime
 - Customer service
 - Frequency of service
 - Connectivity between bus and rail
 - Lack of restrooms
 - Lack of express service

Key Actionable Takeaways

- **Increase Awareness of the System**
 - MARTA is not in the transportation mode consideration set for many
 - Many don't know fare or how it is funded
 - Many are unsure if MARTA is available for their commute
- **Implement "Rail First" Strategy**
 - Industry-wide, people are more receptive towards rail
 - Atlanta residents think more highly of MARTA rail than bus
 - Residents are more likely to consider rail, especially for events
- **Push Employer Partnership Program**
 - MARTA users are more likely to have subsidized Breeze Cards

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- Target employers who have: limited or no free parking, easy access to MARTA Rail stations and middle income (\$30K-\$70K per year) and well-educated employees
- Promote Safety Record
 - Perception that MARTA is not safe from crime
 - Especially bad among rare and non-users
 - However, MARTA has a strong safety record
 - Communicate safety features, which are unnoticed by non-riders
 - Cameras on vehicles
 - "Ride with Respect" campaign
- Improve Customer Service
 - Poor perception of customer service among most employees
 - Many mentioned that more customer service training is key
 - Concerns about hiring policies, want to see "customer-friendly" hires
 - Better communication to public between bus and rail and during delays is crucial
 - Poor perception of customer service among residents
 - Lowest among rare and non-users
 - Improving customer service among front-line employees is key
 - Communicate customer service features
 - MARTA app
 - Options for loading Breeze Cards
- Segmentation Analysis
 - Two step clustering analysis using two sets of basis variables
 - Mode Usage
 - Likelihood to use and attitudes toward public transportation
 - Primary Riders - core of MARTA ridership, regular users
 - Secondary Riders - users who could become core riders or non-riders

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- Potential Riders - non-riders with potential to use
- No Potentials - non-riders with no potential to use

Next Steps

- Launch an Awareness Campaign in 2015
 - General awareness: facts & tools
 - Safety record & security enhancements
 - Continued awareness around our Code of Conduct/Ride with Respect
 - Track work
- Continue to further enhance our trade/strategic marketing partnerships
- Review Employer Partnership Program:
 - Discount structure
 - Develop more targeted promotions
 - Improve relationships with Program Administrators
 - Improve simplicity of the Partnership Partner Pages (online administration)
- Human Resources Customer Service Initiative 2015-2016
 - Develop an Employee Engagement Strategy for creating an organizational culture of Customer Focus for both-internal and external customer
 - Update and Revise the Customer Service Impact Training (CSI) for all MARTA employees
 - Mandatory CSI Training for all employees as a condition of continued employment

Briefing – 2015 Legislative Agenda

Ms. Briggins briefed the Committee on the Authority's proposed 2015 Legislative Agenda.

Financial Issues

- **Ad Valorem Unintended Consequence Correction**
 - Over the next 5 years, MARTA is projected to lose approximately \$46M in revenue due to HB 386 (2013) – to recoup these funds, MARTA should be "made whole" by the state prior to residual revenue being dispersed; if not made whole, the loss of this fund stream would reduce MARTA's bonding capacity by in excess of \$500M
- **Permanent Elimination of 50/50 Capital/Operating Tax Split**
 - The permanent elimination of this mandate would provide MARTA with the fiscal authority to manage the overall organization and the flexibility to respond to changing economic conditions
- **Concession Services**
 - MARTA Act language clean-up; authorize pilot program and TOD/concessions competitive bidding
- **Reduction of 1% Administrative Fee Collected by State**
 - Currently, the state charges a 1% administrative fee to collect sales and use taxes in participating jurisdictions; reducing this fee to a percentage that better reflects the actual cost to the state would save MARTA an estimated \$900,500 annually

Board Considerations

- **Reduce Need for Supermajority Vote on Certain Items**
 - Currently, the MARTA Act requires a supermajority vote on the following items:
 - The issuance and sale of revenue bonds or equipment trust certificates
 - Purchase or lease of any privately owned system of transportation
 - Contract awards greater than \$200K for construction, alterations, supplies, equipment, repairs, maintenance or services
 - Concession grants

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- Contracts awarded for Authority-owned property of facility management
- In order to streamline the process, MARTA will propose eliminating the supermajority mandate under these circumstances while mandating it for the following:
 - Hiring of General Managers
 - Hiring of General Counsels
 - Authorization for projects valued at greater than \$100M that are either (A) expansion projects or (B) capital investment projects
- Board Meeting Flexibility
 - MARTA will propose changing the number of annual Board meetings and authorize different meeting formats to provide more flexibility to the Authority's Board meeting process

MARTA Act Revisions

- Amend Language Pertaining to Sales & Use Tax for Joining System
 - MARTA will propose eliminating the 1/2% option from the MARTA Act language completely, thus eliminating the lower sales and use tax rate option permanently for prospective jurisdictional partners

Legal Issues

- Sovereign Immunity
 - Grant MARTA the sovereign immunity, with limited waiver, enjoyed by other governmental entities; sovereign immunity helps protect public tax dollars from excessive encroachments and limits the fiscal impact of tort damages awards borne by taxpayers – MARTA is seeking similar immunity levels currently granted to other government entities
- Ride With Respect Fines/Fees
 - MARTA will propose further defining the process and fleshing out specific details to increase the efficiency and force of enforcement

Other Matters

- Paratransit Trip Shedding – Medicaid Fix

- Third-party brokers channel their Medicaid client trips to MARTA Paratransit, which effectively increases their profit margin at the expense of taxpayers
- A proposed remedy would be to allow public transit providers to substitute Federal ADA paratransit requirements and guidelines, which MARTA and other public transit operators (e.g., CCT, GCT) are legally required to comply with, for the Medicaid transportation service provider provisions

Dr. Edmond said MARTA needs to report what it has been able to do without the restriction.

Ms. Briggins said MARTA will provide that as well as what it can do for the future of the Authority.

Other Matters

Mrs. McClendon made the following announcements:

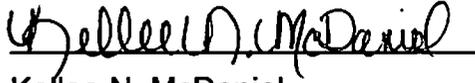
- ARC's Annual State of the Region Breakfast will be held on November 7th
- City of Atlanta's Transportation Committee will meet on November 12th – a request for the 14th Amendment to the RTCAA to add Clayton County is on the agenda; if approved, full Council adoption of the 14th Amendment to the RTCAA will take place at the November 17th Atlanta City Council meeting
- MARTA Bus Service will be re-routed to accommodate the Atlanta Track Club Half Marathon on Thanksgiving Day (November 27th)

Mr. Durrett announced that MARTA received a 2014 PEDS Golden Shoe Award in the category of Pedestrian-Friendly Access for the pedestrian bridge that provides access to the Buckhead MARTA Station to thousands of residents and commuters and is inspiring increased Transit-Oriented Development.

Adjournment

The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kellee N. McDaniel", written over a horizontal line.

Kellee N. McDaniel
Senior Executive Administrator to the Board