

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

**March 5, 2015**

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on March 5, 2015 at 10:35 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

**Board Members Present**

Robert Abdul-Salaam  
Robert L. Ashe III  
Harold Buckley, Sr.  
Jim Durrett  
Jerry Griffin  
Freda B. Hardage, *Chair*  
Christopher Tomlinson\*

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Keith T. Parker, AICP; Chief Operating Officer Richard A. Krisak; Chief Administrative Officer Edward L. Johnson; Chief Financial Officer Gordon L. Hutchinson; Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill; Chief of Staff Rukiya S. Eaddy; AGMs, Robin Henry, Ming Hsi, Reginald Mason, Ryland McClendon and Donald Williams (Acting); Executive Director Ferdinand Risco; Directors Farouk Baksh and Lyle Harris; Managers Kelly Hayden and Janide Sidifall; Manager, Executive Office Administration Tyrene L. Huff; Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Davis Allen, Frederick Askew, Nicholas Gowens, Don Lawrence, Saba Long, Courtne Middlebrooks, Srinath Remala and Robin Salter.

Also in attendance Pam Alexander of LTK Engineering; Jack Buckingham of MATC; John Crocker of JTC Analytics; Chuck Deeb of T.Y. Lin International; Andrea Foard of Parson Brinckerhoff.

**Consent Agenda**

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- a. Approval of the February 5, 2015 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

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

On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Mr. Buckley, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a vote of 5 to 0, with 5 members present.

### **Individual Agenda**

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#### **Briefing – Clayton County Outreach Campaign**

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Mrs. McClendon briefed the Committee External Affairs' comprehensive outreach plan leading up to the Clayton County bus service on March 21, 2015.

#### *Purpose*

- The External Affairs (EA) Office will carry out a comprehensive outreach plan leading up to the Clayton County bus service on March 21, 2015

#### *Goal*

- To inform and educate Clayton County Local Elected Officials and residents about MARTA services, programs, and procedures to provide an opportunity to learn about, but not limited to the following:
  - Bus Routes/schedules
  - The simple steps how to ride MARTA
  - MARTA's code of conduct policy (Ride with Respect)
  - Fare products/transfers
  - How to purchase, register and reload breeze cards
  - DEO seniors, disabled customers, LEP
  - Police – safety and security
  - Mobility – application process, travel training and trip scheduling
  - Reduced Fare – application process
  - Customer Service – complaints, issues, etc.
  - Media Sales – locations to purchase breeze cards
  - Students Program (K-12) – process to add new schools

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*Focus Groups*

- Clayton County Focus Groups
  - February 4, 2015, 6:00-8:00PM, Virginia Gray Community Center
  - February 5, 2015, 6:00-8:00PM, Riverdale Town Center
- Clayton County Focus Groups – LEP Group
  - TBD

*Job Fair/Meet MARTA*

- February 7, 2015, 10:00am-2:00pm
- 1,000 participants
- Overview of Services
- Meet MARTA Materials
- Register/Buy Breeze Cards

*Meet MARTA Days*

- Overview of Services
- Get Breeze Card
- Sign-up Reduced Fare
- Learn about Mobility
- Understand the bus routes
- Talk to MARTA Police about safety
- Meet MARTA staff
- Dates/Locations
  - February 21<sup>st</sup>, 10am-2pm – H Mart Riverdale
  - February 27<sup>th</sup>, 9am-2pm – Clayton Community Services
  - February 28<sup>th</sup>, 10am-2pm – Riverdale Health Expo
  - March 7<sup>th</sup>, 11am-3pm – Hearts to Nourish Hope
  - March 14<sup>th</sup>, 10am-2pm – Riverdale Town Center

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*Clayton County Orientation*

- March 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:30am-2:30pm – MARTA HQ/Annex
- Agency/Admin. Officials (Public Works, Transportation, Police, Sheriff, COO, CFO, Legal, Facilities, etc.)

*Munch and Learn with Keith Parker*

- February 19<sup>th</sup>, 8am – Clayton County Chamber of Commerce

*Next Steps*

- Webinars
  - How to Ride MARTA
  - MARTA Programs
  - Special Service

**Briefing – Proposed Service Changes for August 8, 2015**

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Mr. Hayden briefed the Committee on the Proposed Bus Service Changes for the August 8, 2015 Mark-Up.

*Highlights*

- Implement new service in Clayton County (Route 191 – GA-85/Riverdale/Airport; route 193 – SR-54/Jonesboro/East Point Station; Route 195 – Forest Parkway/College Park Station; FLEX 1 – Lovejoy Circulator)
- Improve On-Time Performance (OTP)
- Improve bus route efficiency - "Right Size" the service
- Respond to customer requests (add Sunday service on Route 8 – North Druid Hills; Route 75 – Tucker) improve OTP on Route 148 – Sandy Springs Station to Riveredge Pkwy. via Mount Vernon Hwy.

*Proposed Recommendations for August 2015 Service Modifications (Major)*

- Clayton County related additions
  - Route 191A: GA-85/Riverdale/Airport via Flint River Rd.; Route 191B: GA-85/Riverdale/Airport via GA-138

- Both routes will start at the Clayton County Justice Center in Jonesboro and operate to Hartsfield Jackson International Airport International Terminal
- Route 193A: SR-54/Jonesboro/East Point Station; Route 193B: SR-54/Jonesboro/East Point Station via Battle Creek Rd.
  - Both routes will start at the Clayton County Justice Center in Jonesboro and operate via Tara Blvd. (or Battle Creek Rd.), Jonesboro Rd., Conley Rd., Old Dixie Hwy., Central Ave. to MARTA East Point Station
- Route 195: Forest Pkwy./College Park Station
  - Route will start at Bouldercrest and Anvil Block and operate via Bouldercrest, Forest Pkwy., Phoenix Blvd., GA-314, Southampton Rd., Godby Rd., Old National Hwy., Roosevelt Hwy., Lee St. Connector, Main St. to College Park Station
- FLEX 1 – Justice Center/Lovejoy
  - Utilizing a small vehicle (30 feet with 15-24 seats available, dependent upon wheelchair needs) this route will operate on local surface streets between the Clayton County Justice Center and the City of Lovejoy providing connecting service to other Clayton County routes; deviations into population centers will attempt to reduce long walks to bus stops
- Mobility
  - Implement complementary ADA service for the new and extended routes to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Other current MARTA route modifications
  - Route 8: North Druid Hills
    - Add Sunday service; route will now operate 7 days per week
  - Route 75: Tucker
    - Add Sunday service; route will now operate 7 days per week
  - Route 148: Sandy Springs/Riveredge Pkwy.
    - To improve OTP, relocate current terminus of route from Medical Center Station to Sandy Springs Station; route to

operate via Mount Vernon Hwy., Ferry Rd. then current routing to Riveredge Parkway

*Public Hearings & Next Steps*

- Public Hearings will be conducted the week of April 13, 2015, at five separate locations (TBD)
- Following public hearings, the Board will be briefed of the results during a April 2015 committee meeting and asked to vote on the route modifications for implementation at the May 2015 full Board Meeting

Mrs. Abdul-Salaam asked when will Mobility service start in Clayton County.

Mr. Hayden said Mobility mimics fixed-route service and will start when routes begin.

**Briefing – FY15 Quality of Service Survey Semiannual**

Dr. Salter presented the Quality of Service (QOS) Semiannual survey results.

*Survey Method*

- 3,783 bus and rail patron interviews from July 1 – December 19, 2014
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 1,789
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter: 1,994
- Margin of error: +/- 3.2% for both quarters combined

*Key Findings*

- Performance Ratings
  - Average scores of three performance attributes significantly improved
    - Controlling nuisance behaviors in rail stations 6.9 → 7.2
    - Frequency of train service on weekends 5.7 → 6.1
    - Controlling nuisance behaviors on buses 7.2 → 7.9
- Primary Drivers of Overall Satisfaction
  - Performance attributes analyzed to identify strongest predictors of overall satisfaction

- *On-time performance and frequency of service* have strongest relationship to overall satisfaction
- Primary drivers of satisfaction in both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarters:
  - Frequency of delays caused by train breakdowns or repairs
  - Trains are on time
  - Courteous bus drivers
  - Courteous station service personnel

*Takeaways*

- No major shifts in rider profile
- Opinions about MARTA service are improving
- More than half of the primary drivers of satisfaction are areas of strength for MARTA
- Drivers that are not strengths are attributes related to on-time performance
- Customers appear to be noticing impact of MARTA's Ride with Respect efforts

Mr. Griffin asked how is this information shared with staff.

Dr. Salter said the Research & Analysis team goes out to various MARTA facilities to share and discuss QOS survey results.

**Briefing – I-20 East Transit Initiative**

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Ms. Sidifall briefed the Committee on the status of the I-20 East Transit Initiative.

*Adopted Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)*

- Result of a two-year Detailed Corridor Analysis which evaluated a broad range of transit alternatives for the I-20 East Corridor
- Two components:
  - 12 mile extension of existing MARTA heavy rail transit (HRT) from Indian Creek Station to Mall at Stonecrest in eastern DeKalb County

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- 12.8 miles of new bus rapid transit (BRT) in HOV and general use lanes from Five Points Station Wesley Chapel Road

### *Project Status*

- Environmental studies initiated for the two components – August 2012
  - Environmental Assessment (EA) for the BRT component
  - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the HRT component
- Technical studies have been conducted to evaluate potential impacts and benefits to the social, natural, cultural and physical environment
- Draft environmental documents reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and being updated to address FTA's comments
- Revised environmental documents will be resubmitted to FTA for review and approval by early March 2015
- With FTA's approval, public hearings will be scheduled in the Summer
- Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the BRT component by Fall 2015
- Record of Decision (ROD) for the HRT component by Fall 2016

### *Environmental Review Process*

1. Feasibility Study & Alternatives Analysis (AA)
  - MARTA completed a locally-conducted Feasibility Study in 2002 and AA in 2004
2. Detailed Corridor Analysis
  - This phase updated the Locally Preferred Alternative for MARTA Board and ARC approval
3. Draft Environmental Impact Statement; Draft Environmental Assessment (Current)
  - This phase begins an in-depth environmental analysis mandated by National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
4. Preliminary Engineering/Final Environmental Impact Statement
  - This phase will require FTA approval for entry into Preliminary Engineering and complete the NEPA process; Duration: 12-18 months

5. Final Design

→ At this phase local funding must be committed and FTA will evaluate project for Full Funding Grant Agreement; Duration: 2-4 years

6. Construction

→ Full Funding Grant Agreement in place with FTA – this phase could take 2-4 years depending on the type and length of transit investment

7. Revenue Operation

*HRT Component of LPA - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)*

- EIS is required for any major federal action that may significantly affect the environment
- Results in a Record of Decision (ROD)

*BRT Component LPA - Environmental Assessment (EA)*

- EA is used to determine if an EIS is necessary
- If there is no significant effect to the environment, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) results

*Project Performance*

- Ridership Modeling updated:
  - Projected Daily Boardings (2040)
    - BRT – 17,100
    - HRT – 39,000
  - Projected New Daily Transit Riders (2040)
    - BRT – 1,700
    - HRT – 15,700
- Project cost estimates (2013\$)\*
  - Capital Costs
    - BRT – \$220M (does not include vehicles)
    - HRT – \$2.6B

- O&M Costs (Annual)
  - BRT – \$14M
  - HRT – \$46M

*\*These costs reflect a "snapshot in time" given the knowledge currently available. As further planning and engineering is performed, future cost estimates will vary to reflect changes in the design and operation of the project*

#### *Project Opportunities*

- BRT to be implemented first - brings improved mobility to corridor in the near term
- FTA supportive of the environmental review to date
  - Views the BRT project as one with near-term potential and candidate for Small Starts discretionary funding, provided MARTA can demonstrate match
- Preliminary evaluation against federal Capital Investment Grant Program criteria indicates that:
  - HRT extension would qualify for consideration of New Starts funding
  - BRT project would be competitive as a Small Starts project
- Coordination with Georgia DOT for potential funding of the HOV interchange construction
- Request for FTA approval for entry into "Project Development" for the I-20 East
- BRT project provides MARTA with "pre-award authority"

#### *Project Challenges*

- FTA requirement for a reasonable financial strategy to construct and operate the I-20 East BRT and HRT projects
  - Step 1 – to complete NEPA, must demonstrate a sound financial strategy
  - Step 2 – to secure a grant, must demonstrate local capital and O&M funding commitments

- Competitiveness for discretionary Federal funding
  - Need to improve the project's competitiveness by:
    - Pursuing both value engineering to reduce project costs
    - Working closely with local communities and developers in the I-20 East corridor to develop plans and policies that optimize the economic development potential around proposed transit stations
- Ensure all other complementary systems have required investment and are maintained in a state of good repair

*Next Steps*

- Revised environmental documents will be resubmitted to FTA for review and approval by March 2015
- Request for entry into Project Development
- With FTA's approval, public hearings will be scheduled in the Summer
- Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the BRT component by Fall 2015
- Record of Decision (ROD) for the HRT component by Fall 2016

Mr. Tomlinson asked if BRT would be sharing existing HOV lanes.

Ms. Sidifall said yes.

Mrs. Abdul-Salaam asked about existing systems that may be similar to this project.

Ms. Sidifall said Cleveland's BRT is a model system the Authority would look to replicate.

Mr. Ashe asked how far along is the planning in comparison to the Clifton Corridor and GA 400 projects.

Ms. Sidifall said this project is approximately two years further along.

**Other Matters**

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Mrs. McClendon announced the following External Events:

- APTA Legislative Conference – March 8-10, 2015
- MARTA Clayton County Launch Event – March 14, 2015
- Clayton County service begins March 21, 2015
- Central Atlanta Progress Annual Meeting – March 31, 2015

**Adjournment**

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The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Kellee N. McDaniel  
Senior Executive Administrator to the Board