

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

**November 3, 2016**

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on November 3, 2016 at 10:32 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 F. Dallas  
Frederick L. Daniels, Jr.  
Jim Durrett, *Chair*  
Jerry Griffin  
Freda B. Hardage

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/CEO Keith T. Parker, AICP; Chief Operating Officer Richard A. Krisak; Chief Administrative Officer LaShanda Dawkins (Acting); Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill; AGMs Joseph Dorsey (Acting), Robin Henry, Ming Hsi, Benjamin Limmer, Ryland McClendon and David Springstead; Executive Director Ferdinand Risco; Sr. Directors Cynthia Moss Beasley, Rhonda Briggins, Kevin Hurley, Amanda Rhein and Donald Williams; Directors Onyinye Akujuo and John Bayalis; Manager Alisa Jackson; Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Davis Allen, Rhonda Allen, Abebe Girmay, Niki Hester, Don Lawrence, Leeshu Kennedy, Debra Oliver, Terry Ponder, Toni Thornton.

Also in attendance was Ehren Bingaman of HNTB.

**Consent Agenda**

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- a) Approval of the October 6, 2016 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

On motion by Mr. Hardage seconded by Mr. Griffin, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a vote of 3 to 0, with 3 members present.

## **Individual Agenda**

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### **Briefing – 2017 Legislative Agenda**

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Mr. Bayalis briefed the Committee on items selected for MARTA's 2017 Legislative Agenda to further the Authority's interest in several areas; including, Revenue Generation, Motor-Fuel Tax Exemption, Vending Program Expansion, and Accounting Practices.

#### *Financial*

- Dedicated Transit Funding
  - MARTA supports efforts to expand dedicated MARTA funding for system expansion projects in both Fulton and DeKalb Counties
- Reinstitution of the Motor Fuel Tax Exemption
  - MARTA, as well as every other transit system across the state, had long enjoyed exemptions from paying traditional motor fuel taxes prior to the 2015 legislative session; that year, the General Assembly chose to not renew the exemption for motor fuel taxes on transit systems and, as such, it expired on June 30, 2015
  - The consequence of the removal of this exemption costs MARTA approximately \$3.1M per year with respect to taxes on fuel types including gasoline, diesel fuel, and compressed natural gas; this additional cost is equal to an 8-cent fare increase
  - In coordination with counterpart systems throughout the state, MARTA will seek legislation to reinstitute this exemption

#### *Vending Program*

- Vending Program Expansion
  - MARTA is requesting authorization to enter into more public-private partnerships that would bring enhanced amenities to its customer base through various competitive procurement processes such as Request for Proposal or other methods
  - Such authorization would give MARTA more flexibility to evaluate proposals across several important variables predictive of successful vending program implementation (e.g., design of kiosks, quality of items offered, and revenue generation)

*Accounting Practices*

- Allow for the execution of a "Bond Resolution"
  - MARTA will seek an amendment to state bond law that would provide for prior Board approval for the execution of "bond resolutions"
  - Such authority would allow for more decision-making flexibility by having the authority (i.e., MARTA Board of Directors) to pre-approve transactions favorable to the issuing organization (i.e., the Authority) under specific circumstances (i.e., pre-approving bond transactions resulting in overall savings to the issuing authority within a defined parameter; for example, 3.0% - 3.2%)
  - Making such a change in code would align bond law with existing commercial paper law
- Other Accounting Practices
  - MARTA will examine available opportunities to redefine how non-cash flow transactions are reflected in annual budgetary reporting

Mr. Daniels asked if the expiration of the motor fuel tax exemption was the same issue that Delta Airlines had with their fuel.

Mr. Bayalis said no, that was a separate issue.

Mr. Daniels asked what keeps MARTA from expanding the vending program now.

Mr. Bayalis said MARTA Act stipulations.

Mr. Griffin said a bond resolution is just that. The wording used may create confusion with legislators, when staff is actually saying that the Board would approve within a certain range.

Mr. Durrett said it may be more appropriate to say "resolutions regarding bonds".

Mr. Daniels asked how long would each pre-approval remain in place.

Mr. Hurley said no more than one month.

Mr. Daniels asked about MARTA's request to redefine non-cash flow transactions.

Mrs. Beasley said the request has to do with GASB 68 and GASB 75. Currently MARTA is required to record underfunding. For example, in 2015 MARTA had \$10M. However, the Authority actually did not receive that. MARTA is requesting that the items be treated similarly to depreciation.

Mr. Griffin said there is no way around GASB.

Mrs. Beasley said MARTA is not wanting to get around it. This has to do with the MARTA Act and reporting.

### **Briefing – Clayton County High Capacity Transit Update**

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Mr. Williams updated the Committee on planning activities related to the Clayton County High Capacity Transit Study.

#### *Project Phases*

- Scoping
  - Purpose and Needs
  - Goals and Objectives
  - Critical Issues
  - Range of Alternatives
  - Input – Public, Agencies, and Stakeholders
- Prepare Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
  - Alternatives Screening and Analysis
  - Technical Environmental Studies
  - Input – Public, Agencies, and Stakeholders
- Publish DEIS
  - Public, Agencies, and Stakeholders review and comment
- Select Preferred Alternative
  - Comments reviewed and addressed
  - Preferred Alternative selected
  - Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to be undertaken

*Norfolk Southern (NS) Final Report*

- Study purpose
  - Determine right-of-way available for potential acquisition by MARTA
- Key findings
  - Much of the corridor can meet NS future requirements and a MARTA line
  - Some NS track relocations will be necessary
  - Identified constraints along corridor will add significant cost
- Additional considerations
  - Operate outside of NS right-of-way where feasible
  - Develop alternative alignment options

*Existing Conditions Report*

- Collect existing and future conditions data
  - Population and employment
  - Socioeconomic demographics
  - Land use and development patterns
  - Transportation system performance and travel trends
- Data will help:
  - Identify study goals and objectives
  - Determine purpose and needs

*Socio-economic & Demographic Trends*

- Key findings
  - 2040 forecast:
    - 36% population increase
    - 25% employment increase
- Existing and growing transit dependent and commuter population

*Land Use & Development Trends*

- Key findings

- Most development occurring in the north
- More transit supportive development needed in the south

*Summary of Key Findings*

- Norfolk Southern is willing to work with MARTA; however right-of-way constraints may require alternative alignments
- Forecasted increases in population and employment will result in increased demand on transportation networks
- Increased congestion - Tara Blvd, SR85, SR54, SR138 and I-75
- Bus service continues to experience steady growth
- More transit supportive development is needed along major corridors
- Northern half of the county is currently where the most development and redevelopment activity is taking place

*Next Steps*

- Develop alternative Norfolk Southern alignments
- Schedule early scoping meetings
- Continue data collection and analysis
- Initiate public and corridor stakeholder outreach
- Develop purpose and need

Mr. Griffin commended staff for identifying many concerns. He said it is important that the study is moving forward. He added that the railroad may present some problems.

Mr. Durrett asked if the solution could be multiple alternatives.

Mr. Williams said that is what will be examined.

Mr. Parker thanked the Planning and External Affairs teams. MARTA has received a lot of positive feedback from this study.

**Other Matters**

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Mrs. McClendon announced the following events:

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- MARTA Full Scale Exercise  
November 5<sup>th</sup> 11:30pm – November 6<sup>th</sup> 3:00am
- MARTA Advisory Committee (MAC) Meeting  
November 8<sup>th</sup> 9:30am – 12:30pm
- Fresh MARTA Market launch at H.E. Holmes Station  
November 9<sup>th</sup> 3:00pm
- Clayton County Public Outreach Meeting  
November 10<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm
- Diversity & Inclusion – Get Ready for Transportation Summit  
November 14<sup>th</sup> 7:30am – 1:30pm
- Clayton County Public Outreach Meeting  
November 17<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm
- Avondale Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Groundbreaking  
November 28<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm – 5:00pm

**Adjournment**

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The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.