

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**OPERATIONS & SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

**November 14, 2011**

The Board of Directors Operations Committee met on November 14, 2011 at 10:36 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**

Juanita Jones Abernathy  
Harold Buckley, Sr.  
Frederick L. Daniels, Jr.  
Jim Durrett  
Roderick E. Edmond  
Adam Orkin, Chair

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/CEO Beverly A. Scott; Deputy General Manager/COO Dwight A. Ferrell; AGMs Deborah Dawson, Wanda Dunham, Ben Graham, Georgetta Gregory, Mary Ann Jackson, Jonnie Keith, Cheryl King, Rich Krisak, Ryland McClendon, Elizabeth O'Neill and Gary Pritchett; Sr. Directors Johnny Dunning, Jr. and David Springstead; Directors Anton Bryant, Lisa DeGrace, Reginald Diamond, Joe Erves, Garry Free, Lyle Harris, Rod Hembree, Elvin Tobin and John Weber; Managers Emmett Crockett, Cara Hodgson Cynthia McCall, and Marvin Toliver; Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Sr. Executive Administrator Tyra J. Wiltz; Executive Administrator Renee Willis. Others in attendance Ashanti Allen, Doug Chambers, Rick Chambers Vicky Dewberry, Christopher Dorsey, Pat Munucci, Josh Piermarini, Anthony Pines, Srinath Remala, James Watkins and Shirley Webb.

Also in attendance Charles Pursley, Jr. of Pursley, Lowery and Meeks; Rodney Blackmon of ATU; Anthony Wiggins of CERM; Matt Pollack of MATC; Pam Alexander of LTK.

**Approval of the October 17, 2011 Operations & Safety Committee Meeting Minutes**

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On motion by Dr. Edmond seconded by Mr. Daniels, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0, with 4 members present.

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**Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract for the Procurement of Ford Transit Connect XLT Wagon Vehicles CP B23766**

Mr. Bryant presented this resolution for Board of Directors' approval authorizing the General Manager/CEO or her delegate to enter into a contract with Wade Ford for the procurement of ten (10) Ford Transit Connect XLT Wagon Vehicles.

Sixteen (16) vehicles are used by supervisors to monitor bus routes in Bus Operations. The vehicles are used daily by Bus Supervisors to monitor operators on their routes and provide immediate response to street incidents.

Ten (10) of these vehicles have met MARTA's replacement criteria of \$100,000 miles and are being replaced under this contract. The vehicles will then be retired and scheduled for auction.

Mr. Daniels asked how the fuel economy of the Ford Transit Connect XLT Wagon compares to that of the vehicles being replaced.

Mr. Bryant said the Ford Transit Connect XLT Wagon is built on a Ford Focus chassis which is a small four cylinder engine. The vehicles being taken out of service are eight (8) V8 sedans and two (2) Ford Escape SUVs. So there will be increase in fuel economy with these vehicles.

Mr. Daniels asked if staff will get more flexibility going from a car to a wagon.

Mr. Bryant answered yes. Field Supervisors were able to demo the wagons and they much preferred them over the previous vehicles because the wagons provide the capacity to easily carry support equipment and have side doors for access to materials as well as access from the rear. There is more usable space for Field Supervisors in this vehicle.

On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Mr. Daniels, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0, with 4 members present.

**Resolution Authorizing the Award of Contract for John Deere Engine Exchange Program CP B24036**

Mr. Bryant presented this resolution for Board of Directors' approval authorizing

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the General Manager/CEO or her delegate to enter into a contract with W.W. Williams Southeast, Inc. for the John Deere Engine Exchange Program.

MARTA performs a major overhaul (mid-life) overhaul of every full-size bus at about six years or 250,000 miles. The Federal Lifecycle requirement is 500,000 miles or 12 years, whichever occurs first.

MARTA's fleet of 2006 model year New Flyer CNG buses, equipped with John Deere engines is coming due for overhaul over the next two years. The John Deere engine exchange contract will enable the Authority to purchase 54 remanufactured engines to replace engines in the 2006 New Flyer fleet in order to meet the Federal Lifecycle requirement.

Mr. Durrett asked where is W.W. Williams Southeast, Inc. located.

Mr. Bryant said they are an extensive regional firm with a base in the Atlanta area.

Mr. Durrett asked which contract requirements were the Albany, GA firm unable to meet.

Mr. Bryant said the firm was an actual John Deere dealer, a distributor of farm equipment, and not equipped to overhaul engines. He added that another firm, based outside of Georgia, downloaded the contract documents but decided that freight costs would cause their bid to be cost prohibited.

On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Mr. Daniels, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0, with 4 members present.

### **Resolution Authorizing the Solicitation of Proposals for an Audio Visual Information System (AVIS) RFP P24348**

Mr. Springstead presented this resolution for Board of Directors' approval authorizing the General Manager/CEO or her delegate to solicit for the procurement of an Audio Visual Information System.

This new Audio Visual Information System (AVIS) will convey information to MARTA patrons audibly via speakers and visually via electronic signs. This system will completely replace multiple existing systems that have reached the

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end of their useful life and are no longer supported by the original manufacturers.

Mr. Daniels asked was this proposal made to the Board last year.

Mr. Springstead said staff made a proposal for the Train Control and SCADA Upgrade and several other systems projects. This is one of those systems; as well as, the Fire Protection System Upgrade. MARTA Staff is working to ensure that the systems within the stations are performing at an optimal level prior to the installation of the Train Control and SCADA Upgrade and the build of the new Integrated Operations Center (IOC). If a new "brain" is put in and the systems out in the stations are failing no quality data will be received.

Mr. Daniels said he recalls a proposal made last year of a high dollar amount that was similar to this one being discussed for the sound system.

Mr. Springstead said the Authority did re-advertise this one. Initially, it was to go out with only a Public Address (PA) product. After considering the addition of screens, Staff felt putting a full ADA compliant audible and visual system in at the same time would be more beneficial for MARTA.

Mr. Daniels said this was the audio proposal that came before the Board last year. Staff is bringing it back and enhancing it with video.

Mr. Springstead said that is correct. Staff pulled it back and enhanced it.

Mr. Daniels asked if this project will be compatible with MARTA's train control system going forward.

Mr. Springstead answered yes.

Mr. Daniels asked if there is an opportunity for marketing revenue enhancements in terms of the visual piece so that MARTA can offset some of the costs.

Mr. Springstead said the Signpost system includes 100+/- signs. Putting in AVIS fully ADA compliant would likely be in the 600-700 signs range. There is tremendous opportunity to look at revenue-streaming opportunities. This is a four-year build out; so Staff has time to organize, plan and put a strategy in place.

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Mr. Daniels said he would like to see a those plans as the project moves forward.

Mr. Orkin said everything ties in to the Operations; the voices we hear on the trains will tie into the stations and everything can be operated internally and work will be done with Marketing to see how much revenue can be generated for the signage.

Mr. Springstead said that is correct.

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

### **Briefing – Restroom Access for Bus Operators**

Ms. Jackson briefed the Committee on the issues pertaining to restroom access for Bus Operators.

Recently, a MARTA Bus Operator contacted the MARTA Board and management staff alleging two things:

1. Access to restroom facilities for Bus Operators is inadequate
2. Bus Operators are left with no choice but to violate MARTA rules for taking breaks, for which they are subject to discipline

#### *Bus Operations Environment*

- All MARTA bus routes terminate at a rail station on one end of the route
- All MARTA rail stations have restroom facilities for employees, including bus operators
- 29 routes (32%) have a MARTA rail station on both ends of the route
- Of the 62 remaining routes, 34 (55%) terminate at end of line stations where no public restrooms are available
- In cases where no restroom is available at the non-station end of the line, Bus Operators are expected to use the facilities when they return to a rail station
- The average round trip running time for MARTA routes is 90 minutes
- Ten (10) routes have round trip running time between 120-135 minutes have and end-of-line locations with no bathroom access

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- Bus Operator assignments are chosen in order of seniority
- Bus Operators choose their assignment three times per year (“Mark-Up”)

### *Transit System Planning Considerations*

- To determine the end of the line location, primary consideration is given to provide a safe and adequate turn around for the vehicles to return in the opposite direction
- Once the primary consideration is addressed satisfactorily, additional consideration is given to locating the end of the line near a restroom facility if possible

### *Example of a “worst case” bus route (regarding restroom access):*

- Route 32 Bouldercrest originates from the Civic Center Rail Station
- A round trip is about 2 hours and 15 minutes during peak periods
- No restroom at the non-rail station end of the line
- Layover time at Civic Center averages 14 minutes; range is 5 to 33 minutes

### *Bus Operations Work Rules*

- Unauthorized Stops
  - Bus Operators are prohibited from stopping their bus while in-service during peak hours except in an emergency. In all cases the bus must not inhibit the flow of traffic.
  - Bus Operators may stop only at MARTA’s designated locations (marked bus stops, out of traffic) to use the restroom (bus must be safely secured with parking brake set, in neutral gear, four-way flashers on, engine off).
- Relieving the call of nature
  - Bus Operators are prohibited from relieving the call of nature on or around Authority vehicles or property or in any place other than an authorized restroom

### *Benchmark of Other Transit Agencies*

- WMATA
  - Coordinated restroom breaks with the Operations Control Center

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- Chapel Hill Transit
  - May stop along their route at authorized restrooms
- New York City Transit
  - Take a personal break upon arrival at the end of the line
- MUNI
  - Transit systems pay the merchants for restroom access
- Memphis Transit
  - Operators are allowed to find safe places along their routes

### *Solutions Suggested by Bus Operator*

- For those routes with lengthy running times and no restroom at the non-terminal end of the line:
  - Allow Operators to go off-route to access restrooms
  - Place portable restrooms at end of the line locations

### *Management Response to Suggestions*

- Allowing Bus Operators to take buses off route is a safety concern. All street configurations are not suitable to bus traffic. Also, taking buses off streets to locations such as parking lots is hazardous.
- It is unlikely that either neighborhood residents or the local jurisdictions would permit portable toilets to be installed (and we would incur costs for servicing the toilets).

### *Other Possible Solutions*

- For routes that do not have an end of the line restroom and have lengthy running times:
  - Modify lay-over time at stations to ensure there is adequate time to use restroom facilities (increases cost).
  - Assign staff to identify possible mid-route locations (gas stations, convenience stores, etc.) where buses can safely stop in urgent situations.

Mr. Orkin thanked Ms. Jackson for the briefing. He added that the issue of restroom access for operators is easy to handle; therefore, Board involvement is not necessary.

**Other Matters**

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Ms. Jackson announced that a MARTA bus, outfitted with a Plexiglas driver's barrier, will be on display in the Kiss/Ride area at headquarters immediately following the Committee meeting. She invited Board Members to board the bus and examine the barrier.

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Mr. Ferrell said that MARTA's Marketing and Bus Maintenance Departments, in concert with its Police Department, redesigned the MARTA Police Cars. The vehicles are striking in terms of what MARTA previously used. He asked that Chief Dunham have one of the newly redesigned cars on display in the Kiss/Ride area as well. He added that Board Members would be quite impressed by the talent of the departments responsible in putting it together.

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Dr. Edmond commented that rail service during the November 13th Atlanta Falcons game was delayed. It took 25 minutes for the train to arrive around 3:30 p.m., approximately 10 minutes before the game ended. There were some complaints from those waiting.

Mr. Ferrell said that he would follow-up on the matter.

**Adjournment**

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The meeting of the Operations Committee adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kellee N. Mobley  
Sr. Executive Administrator to the Board