

**DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**1100 DART Way – Des Moines, IA 50309
February 22, 2011**

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Bob Mahaffey, Gaye Johnson, Christine Hensley, Tom Gayman, Angela Connolly, Steve Van Oort, Ted Boesen; Steve Peterson for Steve Brody

Commissioners Absent: Steve Brody, Skip Conkling

Alternates Present: Steve Peterson and Ruth Randleman

Staff Present: Brad Miller, General Manager; Elizabeth Presutti, Chief Development Officer; Randy Ross, HR Director; Kirstin Baer-Harding, Advertising Manager; Jamie Schug, Chief Financial Officer; Tom Reynolds, Chief Operating Officer; Jim Tishim, Planning Director; Rebecca Lovig, RideShare Manager; Teresa Cashman, Scheduling Manager; Chet Bor, Paratransit Director; Debra Meyer, Capital Grants Manager; Randy McKern, Transportation Manager; P.J. Sass, Customer Service Manager; Gunnar Olson, Public Information Officer; Suzanne Robinson, Clerk to the Commission; Clifford Swartz, Legal Counsel

Others Present: Dana Conn, TMA; Dylan Mullenix, MPO; Mary Benetti, John Halsband; DART employees Mike Kaiser, Neil Hampton, Greg Schmitt

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Angela Connolly at 5:01 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Notice of the meeting was duly published.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Connolly called for corrections to the January 25, 2011, meeting minutes. There being no comments on the minutes, it was moved by Ms Christine Hensley and seconded by Mr. Ted Boesen that the minutes be approved. The minutes were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENTS SECTION

None

RECOGNITION OF NEIL HAMPTON, PARATRANSIT DRIVER

Chair Connolly introduced Neil Hampton, Paratransit Driver, and General Manager Brad Miller offered congratulations on Neil being selected to receive the DART Employee Recognition Award. Paratransit Director Chet Bor described how Neil has gone the extra mile while filling in so ably as the paratransit supervisor while the regular supervisor was on active duty with the US Army in Iraq.

PUBLIC HEARING ON FY-2012 BUDGET (FARE INCREASE AND TAX LEVY)

Chair Angela Connolly announced that a public hearing to discuss the DART FY-2012 budget and the tax levy to the cities was convened. Ms. Jamie Schug, DART Chief Financial Officer, displayed a powerpoint presentation (attached) explaining the ins and outs of the tax levy, and also presenting the results and recommendations produced by the DART Service and Budget Committee, which consists of DART member city managers. Ms. Hensley commented that while DART was balancing this budget by taking funds from its reserves, that this is not a good solution and certainly can't continue in upcoming budgets as a long-term strategy. She said that DART should schedule some planning sessions for the commission to look at all funding sources and make decisions about the future. Mr. Gayman agreed. Chair Connolly noted that if the legislature lowers the corporate tax rate as the Governor has requested, the cities will hard pressed to come up with the funds that will be lost as a result, making it even more difficult for DART.

Chair Connolly asked for comments from the floor. There were no speakers from the floor so Chair Connolly announced that the public hearing was adjourned.

Action Item 9A – Approve FY2012 Fixed Route Budget and Tax Levy Rates

It was moved by Mr. Boesen and seconded by Ms. Gaye Johnson that the DART FY 2012 Budget be certified as recommended and the FY-2012 Regional Transit Authority Tax Levy be approved as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT ITEMS

8A – FY-2012 Grant Approvals

8B – DART Land Sale to City of Des Moines

8C – January 2011 Financial Reports

It was moved by Ms. Hensley and seconded by Ms. Johnson that the consent items be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Action Item 9A – Amalgamated Transit Union 441 Agreement

Mr. Miller announced that an Agreement was reached with ATU Local 441 for the Commission's approval. He summarized the top issues:

- The Mediator ruled for a one-year time frame for the Agreement, even though DART had requested a longer time frame. This means that negotiations will begin again this Fall.

- Salaries will be raised 1% beginning June 1, 2010, and will rise another ½% six months later.
- If health insurance premiums increase, DART will pay the increase.

Ms. Hensley asked how many employees belonged to the Health Savings Account insurance program. Mr. Miller responded that about half the administrative staff, but very few drivers. He said that the provisions for short-term disability had also been improved for drivers, and this change was consistent with the DART budget. Ms. Hensley asked when DART would receive quotes from the insurance companies for health insurance costs, and Mr. Miller said these would come in sometime in April. Mr. Mahaffey asked if we had some idea of the amount of the increase, and Mr. Miller said that his prediction was around 18%. He added that DART's experience for the past year was a good one, and so there was room to negotiate.

Mr. Miller thanked staff and ATU negotiators for their time and hard work in making the process a productive one.

It was moved by Mr. Boesen and seconded by Ms. Hensley that the Commission approve a one-year labor Agreement with the Amalgamated Transit Union Local #441.

The motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 9B – March 8, 2011 Public Hearing on Pending Reductions to D-Line Service

Ms. Presutti announced that there will be a Public Hearing for the D-Line Service Change on March 8, 2011, at the Downtown Public Library during the Noon hour. Ms. Hensley suggested that DART also hold a Public Hearing at the State Capitol. Mr. Peterson suggested that it be held as soon as possible, and Ms. Presutti said she would check with the Capitol schedulers to reserve a room in the same week as the meeting at the library.

It was moved by Ms. Hensley and seconded by Mr. Mahaffey that the DART Commission approve holding a Public Hearing to reduce service on the D-Line route so that it will no longer serve the Capitol Complex, on March 8, 2011 at 11:30 a.m. at the Central Public Library, and a meeting at the Statehouse in the same week at a location as yet to be determined.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

10-A – Unlimited Access Program Update

Ms. Presutti displayed a powerpoint presentation (attached) on the specifics of the current Unlimited Access program, which allows eligible riders to access all of DART's fleet by showing their employer ID cards. Mr. Boesen asked if ridership is tracked. Ms. Presutti said that the drivers have a key on the farebox that they push for each Unlimited Access rider. Chair Connolly asked if there was any technology that would provide a more accurate count. Ms. Presutti replied that DART would like to obtain technology to read proximity cards. Mr. Miller added that funding for this technology is currently on the list of DART capital requests. Chair Connolly asked Ms. Presutti to list the companies that currently subscribe to the Unlimited Access Program, and noted the loss of ridership's correspondence to the building of parking garages by downtown employers and the City of Des Moines. Ms. Presutti also pointed out that all participating companies are focused on the cost/benefit per rider statistics, which limits DART's ability to increase fees. Ms. Hensley asked

how much revenue was generated by the program. Ms. Schug said approximately \$590,000 per year. Ms. Presutti said that DART will be negotiating with the three largest contributors to the Unlimited Access program later this year, and added that if gas prices go up there may be more room for negotiation with these companies.

Mr. Miller explained how important this program is to DART. He said that now about 78% of DART's suburban riders are riding free as part of this program. Mr. Boesen asked if there were any large downtown employers who have not yet subscribed to the program, and Mr. Miller said that Wells Fargo is a holdout. He added that DMACC would like to subscribe, but has so many potential riders that they can't afford the cost.

10-B – Sustainable Multi-Modal Transit Hub Update

Ms. Presutti displayed a powerpoint presentation with the Transit Hub in its current and final incarnation, stating that the design process is 95% completed. She said that a new name for the hub will be chosen from an extensive list of entries, with the Transit Riders Advisory Council picking from a refined list of entries at their next meeting, and the Commission would then approve the choice at its March meeting.

Ms. Presutti said that approval of the land acquisitions for the Hub will be presented at the March meeting, and that the Public Art portion of the design, which is funded through a federal grant in the amount of \$300,000, will begin with an RFP to artists and in-kind help from the Greater Des Moines Public Art foundation. She stated that artists will be interviewed in May and the Commission will approve the selection at its May meeting. She also mentioned that the joint development provision, regarding the 1,300 square feet of vendor space, has had a draft market assessment done which approves the viability of this portion of the Hub project, and the choice of vendor will go forward.

10C – Performance Reports

Mr. Miller noted that total ridership is up 7.1%, the first uptick in ridership in two years. He said that ridership on the express buses and for Ankeny and Altoona is back to their highest levels ever.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Mr. Miller highlighted the IPTA Legislative breakfast at the State Capitol on February 23, and invited all commission members to attend.

Mr. Miller announced that there would be a Commission Retreat prior to the April 26, 2011 Commission meeting. The Retreat will begin at Noon, and the Commission meeting will follow at around 3:00 p.m., with the meeting to adjourn prior to 5:00 p.m.

COMMISSION ITEMS

Ms. Hensley and Chair Connolly will be unable to attend the March 29, 2011 Commission meeting. Ms. Connolly's alternate will attend in her place.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

2011 Meeting Dates

Mar 29, Apr 26, May 24, Jun 28, Jul 26, No Commission Meeting in August,
Sep 27, Oct 25, Nov 22, Dec 20

Date: _____

Chair: _____

Secretary: _____