

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
**September 3, 2015**

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on September 3, 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**

Roberta Abdul-Salaam  
Robert F. Dallas  
Jim Durrett, *Chair*  
Jerry Griffin  
Freda B. Hardage

MARTA officials in attendance were: GM/CEO Keith T. Parker, AICP; Chief Operating Officer Richard A. Krisak; Chief of Staff Rukiya S. Thomas; Chief Financial Officer Gordon L. Hutchinson; Chief Administrative Officer Edward L. Johnson; Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill; AGMs, Wanda Dunham, Robin Henry, Ming Hsi, Reginald Mason, Ryland McClendon and Donald Williams (Acting); Executive Director Ferdinand Risco; Sr. Director Rhonda Briggins; Directors Lyle Harris and Carol Smith; Manager Kelly Hayden; Manager of Executive Office Administration Tyrene L. Huff; Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Frederick Askew, Abebe Girmay, Nicholas Gowens, Robin Salter and Srinath Remala.

Also in attendance Jack Buckingham of MATC.

**Consent Agenda**

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- a) Approval of the August 6, 2015 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

On motion by Mrs. Abdul-Salaam seconded by Mr. Griffin, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a vote of 3 to 0, with 3 member present.

## **Individual Agenda**

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### **Briefing – Public Hearing Results**

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Ms. Briggins briefed the Committee on the results of the Public Hearings held on August 24, 25 and 27, 2015 for the proposed service modifications for December 2015.

#### *Efforts to Streamline Public Hearing Process*

- Reduced the cost for advertisement
- Reduced staff attendance
- Reduced number of hearings
- Produced video of the service changes and posted on website
- Created online fillable comment card
- Results:
  - Public hearing advertisement savings: \$15,000
  - Location savings: \$1,200
  - Hits to online public hearing information:
    - Website - 1,200
    - Video - 123
    - Comment forms - 0

#### *Public Hearing Locations*

- Fulton County Government Center
  - Monday, August 24th at 7:00 PM
- Maloof Auditorium (DeKalb County)
  - Tuesday, August 25th at 7:00 PM
- Frank Bailey Senior Center (Clayton County)
  - Thursday, August 27th at 7:00 PM

#### *Advertisement*

- AJC
- ACE III/Champion

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- Clayton Daily News
- Crossroads & So DeKalb County
- Neighbor Newspapers
- Mundo Hispanico
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, website)

*Electronic Notice Distribution*

- Distributed to all 26 Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) within the City of Atlanta
- Senior Centers (63)
- Email Blast to Outreach Database

*Flyer Distribution - LEP Communities*

- Chinese Community Center
- Dinho Super Market
- Vietnamese Market/Buford Highway
- Hong Kong Market - Jimmy Carter Blvd.
- Super H-Mart - Doraville/Peachtree Industrial & 1-285
- Happy Valley Restaurant - Jimmy Carter Blvd.
- Buford Farmers Market Media Distribution Desk
- Asian American Resource Center Gwinnett
- Korean Community Center - Buford Highway
- Ho Pin Market Media Table
- Atlanta Chinese Community Church
- Center for Pan Asian American Community Services

*Flyer Distribution - Bus Routes*

- Route 4
- Route 155
- Route 15

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- Route 191
- Route 32
- Route 193
- Route 55
- Route 195
- Route 143
- Route 800

*Public Hearing Attendance*

- Fulton County Government Center
  - Attendance – 7
  - Speakers – 4
  - Media – 0
- Maloof Auditorium (DeKalb County)
  - Attendance – 8
  - Speakers – 5
  - Media – 0
- Frank Bailey Senior Center (Clayton County)
  - Attendance – 23
  - Speakers – 12
  - Media – 1
- Total
  - Attendance – 38
  - Speakers – 21
  - Media – 1

**Additional Public Hearing Comments**

- Public Comment Line (Voice Mail) - 0
- Emails – 0

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- Petitions – 1 (202 signatures) – Rt. 192 requesting from East Point crossing over Old Dixie to Tara Boulevard's Justice Center
- Letters – 0
- Public Comments (written) – 2

### *Comments During Public Hearing*

- Realign Rt. 75 to connect with Gwinnett County Transit
- Route 192 should connect to a rail station
- President of Bethesda Woods wants no bus along Rt. 314
- Route 32 to extend to connect with Rt. 15 and Rt. 195
- Route 8 bus stops are too far apart
- Route 194 to have the alternate route to remain permanent because it connects to Southlake Mall, Kaiser and rail station
- Route 4 - 2 comments each meeting - more service in the evenings and on weekends
- Bus stops need to be repainted. The drivers can't see them in the dark and miss passengers
- Route 38 - restore the service from Lindbergh Station on Pharr Rd. to serve seniors
- Route 192 - continue the route to East Point Station (this was backed up with a petition signed by 202 people)
- Routes 33 & 47 - is there any way that these two routes can be modified to have one route serve the entire north and south access road rather than be split with each route serving half from different stations
- General comment that the meetings were not well advertised; what is done to reach out to the public

Mr. Durrett asked how does MARTA respond to Public Hearing comments.

Ms. Briggins said staff communicates directly with the community. Oftentimes, staff is able to provide feedback immediately following the Public Hearing. Also, MARTA has a Community Exchange before each hearing and many times questions from the public are

answered then. However, they may be asked to restate them during the hearing for the record.

Mrs. Abdul-Salaam said MARTA should consider using radio PSAs to advertise Public Hearings.

### **Resolution Authorizing the Service Modifications for December 12, 2015**

Mr. Hayden presented this resolution for Board of Directors' approval authorizing the General Manager/CEO or his delegate to implement service route modifications or additions to Bus Routes 4, 32, 143,155, 192, 194; and Mobility complementary ADA service.

On motion by Mr. Griffin seconded by Mrs. Abdul-Salaam, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 5 to 0, with 5 members present.

### **Briefing – Ridership Initiative Update**

Mrs. McClendon briefed the Committee on the Authority's Ridership Initiative Update.

#### *Ridership Incentives*

- Rewards Program - August 15 - September 14, 2015
  - Designed to reward riders who use the system frequently by adding giving rewards based on the number of trips (greater than 60) that customers take; riders received a specified number of Breeze Tickets
  - Criteria: Registered Breeze card; no pass backs; no employees, vendors or contractors; no fraudulent circumstances; trip defined
  - Information Technology (IT) counts the trips taken
  - Promotion runs for 30 days
- Free Fare Day - September 2015
  - Ride free all day on Labor Day Holiday Monday - September 7, 2015
  - Incentive for non-riders to try the system
- Discount Fare for 30 day pass - October - December 2015
  - Offer the 30 day pass at a reduced rate of \$71.00 for a 2 week period
  - "Sale" priced Breeze cards will be available in the BVMs, website and Ticket Office machines

- Holiday Pass - beginning January 2016
  - IT and Finance to make the Breeze tickets available for the M.L. King Holiday; family can purchase up to 5 one day tickets in a single transaction for \$35.00

*Marketing Plan*

- A Marketing plan will be developed for each element to inform the community and maximize participation
- All of these elements will be measured to determine effectiveness
- Additional efforts that will also be underway by Marketing:
  - Miller Coors promotion for September 14<sup>th</sup> Falcons game; free tickets distributed
  - Expansion of the UPass 30 day program to other colleges/universities; BVMs at GA State & GA Tech
  - Aggressive Sales Program - UPass and Conventions
  - Airport Awareness - second phase
  - Explore other promotions and evaluate effectiveness

Mrs. Abdul-Salaam said people are really excited about the Ridership Incentives.

Mr. Parker said MARTA finished the fiscal year positively; however, Ridership has experienced significant declines as a result of the service cuts and fare increases years ago. This is a testing opportunity to see if the Authority can incite riders. MARTA wants to hold on to its customer base as well as gain new customers.

Mrs. Abdul-Salaam asked about the cost of Breeze cards.

Mr. Parker said it is a one-time fee; cards last for three (3) years and have enhanced technology and security.

**Briefing – FY15 Quality of Service Survey**

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Dr. Salter briefed the Committee on the FY15 Quality of Service (QOS) Survey.

- The Quality of Service (QOS) Survey is a comprehensive survey that tracks customer satisfaction and perceptions of MARTA's service attributes throughout the year
- The FY15 QOS annual presentation reports on findings from 7,455 surveys of passengers on the fixed bus and rail system from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015
- The analysis includes comparisons to previous fiscal years
- Highlights of the survey include the following:
  - Overall satisfaction has increased since FY14; the percentage of dissatisfied riders has been decreasing since FY13
  - While recent trends in satisfaction have been positive, the current satisfaction level falls short of the late 1990's
  - Weekday rail-only riders are most satisfied with MARTA overall
  - Least satisfied patrons are those surveyed on Sundays who have to make transfers between bus and rail
  - FY15 saw improvements in a wide variety of performance areas
  - Perceptions of weekend service continue to decline
- Recommendations:
  - Continue improvements in areas where patrons are noticing positive changes
  - Identify ways to facilitate transfers
  - Identify ways to improve weekend service, particularly on Sundays
- Next Steps:
  - Move forward with Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) recommendations; 60-foot buses
  - Research & Analysis will continue to track improvements in the transfer process

### **Other Matters**

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Mrs. McClendon announced the following events:

- MARTA Police Full Scale Exercise – Sept. 12

- City of Atlanta Jurisdictional Briefing – Sept. 16
- Multi-Agency Exchange (MAX) Program MARTA Host Week – Sept. 21-25

**Adjournment**

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The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.