

# **Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc.**

## **Meeting of the Board of Directors**

### **February 24, 2022 | 4:00pm via Zoom**

#### **Attendees**

Board Members: Bridgette Brady; Lisa Holmes; Dan Klein; Laura Lewis; Ducson Nguyen; Frank Proto; Gary Stewart; Denise Thompson

Absent: Jennifer Dotson

TCAT Staff: Susan Brock; Erik Amos; Taylor Hessler; Gian Fountain; Colleen Marsh; Curt Parrish; Patty Poist; Megan Pulver; Madlyn Schafer; Phil Smith; Pamela Torelli; Matt Yarrow; Scot Vanderpool; Nate Wells; Frank Howells

#### **Call to Order**

Chair L. Lewis called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

#### **Board Member Items**

There were no Board Member items.

#### **Public Comment**

There was no one present who had a public comment.

#### **Approval of minutes**

The minutes from the January 27, 2022 meeting and the February 16, 2022 special meeting were moved together by D. Thompson, second by F. Proto. Both sets of minutes were approved unanimously 8-0-0.

#### **Chair's Report**

L. Lewis delivered the chair's report and started off by thanking TCAT staff, especially drivers for their hard work during the last storm which occurred over Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. She also expressed thanks to all TCAT staff, and especially M. Yarrow, for his work on the TDP and his response during the January Board meeting and public hearing. The responses from TCAT staff were very helpful. There has been some discussion on the Transportation Agreement as well as the MOU with Cornell on bus passes. These will be brought up in greater detail at the March Executive Committee meeting, and then at the March Board meeting. The Transportation Agreement will expire October 2022 and the Cornell MOU expires in June of 2022. To end with a "good news" item, TCAT received a note, passed along by Shawna Black, Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature. The note was a resident note of appreciation/recognition for one of TCAT's drivers, Jesa (Scott). L. Lewis said it was very nice to have [the note] passed along from Shawna.

#### **GM Report**

##### **Systems Report**

January 2022 had just over 98,000 riders; in January of 2021, TCAT only had about 51,000 riders. Although these are lower numbers than we would like to be seeing, this can also be due to the delay of arrival of Cornell students, who make up a majority of TCAT ridership numbers. TCAT's 2022 Spring schedule has now gone into effect with some minor route changes and adjustments due to the completion of construction projects leading to the elimination of detours.

### Operations and Maintenance

We are at 70% on PM inspections and 90% for wheel pulls/brake measures. There were 6 road calls in January. There was a total of 239 missed trips in January. An overwhelming majority of these occurred over a single weekend and were due to a combination of driver and bus shortages. In January of 2022 there were only 2 incidents/collisions and both of which were classified as unavoidable; luckily there were no injuries in either case. Compared to the 6 collisions/incidents in January of 2021, 2022 looks to continue the downward trend of incidents and for safe driving to continue to rise.

### Human Resources

In January 2022, TCAT lost 4 bus operators. One of these was a long-term leave case. TCAT has 66 full-time operators and 8 part-time operators, and 122 overall staff.

Other Human Resource activities include:

Recruiting: Continued Recruiting for bus handlers, bus operators, a custodian, and diesel mechanics. They attended Cayuga Radio Group's job fair in Cortland, NY on January 26<sup>th</sup>; Leave Management – continue to oversee, manage, and provide information to employees on the leave management programs (i.e., FMLA, WC, DBL, PFL, etc.) We are scheduled to talk with the Pinnacle group (3rd party vendor) to review services; COVID related questions -- HR continues to be the resource for employees and supervisors with questions about vaccinations, potential exposures, quarantines, etc. We continue to manage/track potential exposures and testing as well as assess our protocols due to the current changes in NYS mask mandate; HR and Payroll completed many end/beginning of year tasks including updating PTO accrual accounts, reporting, etc.

### Marketing and Communications

January 2022 accomplishments included; Wrote press releases for spring service; board reorganization and updated information about TDP public hearing; Compiled materials for triennial review pertaining to Title VI; Updated website to reflect service changes; Modified format of website schedule page for better usability – based on driver feedback; Designed and produced poster notifying passengers of upcoming service changes; Updated maps and schedule & ride guide for Spring; Compiled feedback on TDP service cuts on Notion; Reformatted; Operator Evaluation Form into a fillable form; ADA paratransit coordination: 4 ADA applications reviewed.

### Information Technology:

IT Milestones included: Setup the new Service Development Analyst up with IT equipment and necessary accounts; GTFS is up and running with both Swiftly and Google; Setup TMS accounts; Upgraded MIP both server and workstations; Renewed the tcatbus.com domain for 5 more years; Distributed new cellphones out to internal staff; Fixed radio recordings; Continued to fix the facility camera system; Worked on writing PowerShell scripts for the Exchange Server; Addressed RideLogic issues; Setup network monitoring through FirstLight

Current projects include: Increasing computer security across TCAT; Re-Setup the Zoom Room in the LCR; Provide Faith Group with RFI's; Work with Purchasing manager and ensure all important documents, passwords, and other items are taken care of; Finish Setting up cameras at Green Street; Looking for an Anti-Virus Replacement; Create an Incident Response Plan; Documentation of IT resources on internal Wiki continuing; Technology Roadmap; Avail, RideLogic, TSI, and Maximo Support; Continuing to train new IT Help – John Greer; Continue to document everything and create SOPs; Improve Admin Wing WIFI Coverage; Create a new and improve IT Policy/Policies

Future Projects are: New database and reporting tools and technologies; build internal programming and development resources; better remote work options; considering VDI for remote users; explore bringing website hosting

## **Action Items**

**Resolution 2022-03 Adoption of the 2021 Transit Development Plan** was discussed and a technical change was made before being moved by B. Brady and seconded by F. Proto.

B. Brady talked about what a monumental moment it is to pull together a plan like this, saying "I've been through the planning process often and have witnessed varying degrees of success, and this effort was a success and I wanted to give you a bit of an idea as to why. The TDP objectives were succinctly aligned with the strategic plan and well considered, with a lens for refinement. They will not result in unnecessary disruption. Realistic implementation plan, demystifies some of the transit system, ...was developed agnostic to current resource constraints, but because efficiency was a primary objective, the recommendations are fiscally responsible. I just want to let the TCAT team know that planning...is a team sport and I really appreciate all the feedback and effort put into it. I don't know if Matt has jumped off the call, I couldn't see, but I really do want to second Laura's sentiments, but also acknowledge Matt's leadership in this. He remained very focused on the objectives, filtered noise, directed the narrative in a beyond difficult planning environment. Demonstrated considerable patience in the process, and switching hats as one of the community transportation stakeholders listed in this, I want to thank the team for their consideration and time, keeping this on track. I understand the recommendations will not please everyone, but I don't think this is going to be that disruptive. I look forward to helping the TCAT team implement and get feedback and so let's keep this going; it doesn't need to be a book on the shelf."

The resolution was then voted on and passed unanimously with a vote of 8-0-0 as follows:

### **RESOLUTION 2022 – 03 Adoption of the 2021 Transit Development Plan**

WHEREAS, the Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc. (TCAT) Board of Directors, the TCAT Transit Service Committee, and TCAT staff determined the need for a comprehensive route review in 2019, as the last comprehensive route study occurred in 2009, and significant developments in land use and travel patterns have occurred since then, and

WHEREAS, the TCAT Board issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) and, via a competitive bidding process, selected Sam Schwartz Engineering, DPC as the consultant to create a Transit Development Plan (TDP), and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, TCAT then entered into a contract with Sam Schwartz to perform the route review and other tasks, as outlined in the RFP's Scope of Services, and

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2020, the TCAT TDP Technical Advisory Committee, comprised of community transportation stakeholders, discussed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on TCAT's planning process, and decided TCAT should continue with the TDP given that it is a long-term plan, and

WHEREAS, Sam Schwartz Engineering and TCAT staff have performed significant analyses on recent demographic and ridership patterns to produce and revise several iterations of route recommendations, and

WHEREAS, TCAT staff and Sam Schwartz engaged in a significant public involvement process, including two one-month-long phases of public outreach (October-November 2020 and May-June 2021), during which time: online engagement tools were advertised and made available to the public; a transit ambassador program was organized to reach out to targeted communities; numerous public meetings and focus groups took place; and TCAT bus operators and other staff were asked to provide input, and

WHEREAS, Sam Schwartz prepared a final draft of the TDP dated December, 2021, and

WHEREAS, per TCAT's internal policy for major service reductions, TCAT held a formal public comment period beginning December 27, 2021, and extended to February 11, 2022, to receive comment on the limited number of changes proposed in the final draft TDP that involve a reduction in the number of bus miles, revenue hours or trips to a distinct geographical area or corridor by 20% or more, and

WHEREAS, at its meeting on December 2, 2021, the TCAT Board set a public hearing to be held via Zoom on January 27, 2022, at 4 pm, to hear all interested persons on the proposed major service reductions, and

WHEREAS, TCAT advertised and posted notices of the public hearing and public comment period as required by TCAT's policy, and

WHEREAS, TCAT held the public hearing via Zoom at said time and date to hear public comments the proposed major service reductions, and all persons who wished to provide comments were given the opportunity to do so, and

WHEREAS, all public comments received during the comment period and the public hearing were made available to the TCAT Board,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the TCAT Board determines that no changes to the proposed TDP are necessary, and the Board hereby adopts the 2021 Transit Development Plan.

Adopted by the TCAT Board of Directors on this the 24th day of February, 2022.

### **Discussion Items**

F. Proto wanted to clarify a statement he made at the January Board meeting. When he brought up the price increase for the yearly audit, he was not suggesting that TCAT should start to look for a new auditor, but was merely curious if the service was one that would require a bidding process. He wanted the Board to be aware of the price increase but was not urging a change.

### **Committee Report**

- **Executive Committee** – The Executive Committee met February 17 and discussed Priority projects, the NYPA contract, Combining committees, triennial update, service level update, and Title VI update.
- **Audit Committee** – The Audit Committee did not meet.
- **Budget Committee** – The Budget Committee did not meet.
- **Human Resource** – The Human Resource Committee did not meet. S. Vanderpool informed the board that Raymond Lalley has separated from TCAT. TCAT took it as an opportunity to reevaluate the position and what the team will need moving forward. The position formerly

known as Purchasing Manager, which encompassed a myriad of responsibilities, has been split into two positions; Accounting specialist, and a procurement coordinator.

- **Planning Committee** – The Planning Committee did not meet. D. Klein informed the board that, after some discussion, the Planning Committee will be suspended for the time being until there is a need for meetings to resume.
- **Transit Service Committee** – The Transit Service Committee met February 9 and discussed the Transportation Equity Coalition, the Route 83 update, the Youth Fare Program, the TDP review and final steps.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next regular Board meeting will be March 24, 2022.

#### **Adjournment**

Chair Lewis adjourned the meeting at 4:45pm, moved by D. Thompson and seconded by B. Brady.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Taylor Hessler, Recording Secretary, March 24, 2022.*