

Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc.
June 27, 2019 Board of Directors Meeting
4:00pm – TCAT Large Conference Room
737 Willow Avenue, Ithaca, NY

Attendees

Board Members: Bridgette Brady; Deborah Dawson; Jennifer Dotson (arrived at 4:15); Dan Klein; Laura Lewis; Ducson Nguyen; Frank Proto; Denise Thompson

Absent: Gary Stewart

Staff Attendees: Rick Andrascik; Agnes Beck; Susan Brock; Gian Fountain; Dan Hill; Raymond Lalley; Patty Poist; Megan Pulver; Maddy Schafer; Bob Sherman; Phil Smith; Pamela Torelli; David Wiles; Scot Vanderpool; Matt Yarrow

Other Attendees: Bill Gray; Duane Shoen, CPA, representing Insero & Co. (arrived at 4:30)

Call to Order

Chairperson Ducson Nguyen called the meeting to order at 4:10pm.

Board Member Items

D. Dawson spoke of the Audit Committee's concerns over Mortgage Recording Tax (MRT) amounts that seem to be somewhat low. She went to a Board of Realtors luncheon where she specifically asked about the MRT. She was told that due to the influx of home buyers moving into the area from places with inflated housing markets, they are able to buy a home in Ithaca with cash, which means no Mortgage Recording Tax. She just wanted us to be aware of what she learned.

Approval of minutes from May 23, 2019 Board of Directors meeting

A request was made to change the word "Shareholders" to "Stakeholders" on page 3, ***Committee Reports, Executive Committee***. With this change, a motion to approve the minutes was made by F. Proto, seconded by D. Dawson. The minutes of May 23, 2019 were approved unanimously (7-0).

[Jennifer Dotson joined the meeting]

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Nguyen called for an executive session regarding personnel matters; and announced Newman Municipal Golf Course will allow all TCAT employees to join at the city rate which is half of the regular rate.

Public Comments

TCAT Bus Operator Agnes Beck was in attendance. She reported hearing many passengers talking about the press release that TCAT is getting more buses, and they are hoping and wondering if more frequent trips to Groton would be add. She's heard them say people who live in Groton would like to get jobs at the mall, etc., but they can't because they wouldn't have a way home. She also said how thrilled they are at the elimination of fare Zone 2. She asked if it would be possible to extend the time of transfer vouchers because in her experience some riders have trouble making their connection; She suggested a survey to find what people think, want and need. She also spoke about people wishing to volunteer for

community events, but because service to Groton ends earlier, they are unable to. She wonders if it were possible to have later service for city events.

General Manager's Report

S. Vanderpool reviewed the attached Systems Report. Of note: Ridership is about the same as May 2018, but there were two fewer class days at Cornell, so it's actually a positive. Overall ridership is up 7% over last year at this time, so ridership continues to increase. In year to date ridership - all categories are up, including rural routes.

Vanderpool asked M. Yarrow to provide an update about the upcoming shortage during the fall service period. Yarrow stated that whereas a peak pullout of 43 buses in the fall is optimal, he believes we have the ability to only put 40 buses on the road during peak hours in the fall. Three missing buses during the peak time will be felt, but there is no way around it right now. The Service team is looking into how to best accommodate that. Since we are taking delivery of nine new buses that will be ready for service in late October, we're planning on doing two Fall Service periods. The first would run from 8/25 to 10/26, then a second one where we will be able to go up to 43 buses for peak pull out. Because there will be two bid periods, this has already been discussed with Union representatives.

[Duane Schoen from Insero & Co. joined the meeting.]

Vanderpool continued with the monthly systems report: Cost of parts was a little over \$68,000. Road calls averaged out to 19 calls per 100,000 miles, which is the lowest average since 2013. On DOT inspections, our 18 month pass rate is at 82.1%; we are still working toward hitting 90%. The first inspection in June was 100% (5/5 buses passed) and the overall number should be going up. Accidents - there was 1 non-preventable accident with no injuries in May, which is a fantastic month for any transit agency; we stand at 21 accidents for the year which ties us with 2017, which is the best rate going back to 2012. We've had a good year so far. Missed trips - May is not listed due to issues with data; we expect to have May and June's numbers at the July meeting, and numbers are expected to be similar to April with 90 missed trips. Part of the reason for this is that we're trying to catch up on PM service, which takes a bus off the road for most of the day. Fuel costs are trending up slightly, but nothing to worry about yet.

Bus operators - through May we had 83 full-time and 4 part-time operators. We had a new class of drivers begin on June 3, so we are now at 87 full-time and 5 part-time operators, which is an all-time high. An EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) report was distributed showing a dramatic increase in minority employment at TCAT. We are proud of our HR department for working on this effort.

Linkedin Learning has been a huge success. It came on line June 3; between June 3 and June 27, eighteen employees have logged in and viewed a combined total of 68 hours of content, completing 59 courses already. These are employees who are taking the initiative on their own to find and view courses that interest them.

In the administrative corridor, there is a large cork board on the wall where we are adding the photographs of all of our employees. Assistant GM Matt Yarrow has been taking great photographs of staff, and it looks really cool. If you haven't seen it, you should talk a walk down there and check it out.

New bus operators were introduced and welcomed to the company: Quinton Richardson, full-time; Jerome Pelto, full-time; David Gross, part-time; Lee Poole and Jennifer Thurston, both full-time.

The new operators left the meeting after their introduction.

Information Technology - there's a lot going on in the IT department at TCAT, a lot of concern and need for updates, so check out the IT section of the report.

Action Items

Chairperson Nguyen asked F. Proto to present **Resolution 2019-08 – Acceptance of Independent Auditor Statement for the National Transit Database Uniform System of Accounts**. Every ten years we must prepare a report for the FTA confirming we are submitting information appropriately in order to meet the National Transit Database accounting system requirements. Insero & Co. performed the audit and Duane Schoen from Insero is here today. The audit revealed there were no exceptions found in any of the categories; the report has been submitted and was accepted. Moved by F. Proto, seconded by D. Dawson, Resolution 2019-08 was approved unanimously (8-0) as follows:

RESOLUTION 2019-08
Acceptance of Independent Auditor Statement for
National Transit Database Uniform System of Accounts

WHEREAS, every 10 years Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc. (TCAT) is required to submit to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) an Independent Auditor Statement for Financial Data (IAS-FD), for which the auditor reviews all financial forms to ensure that TCAT's accounting system follows the Uniform System of Accounts (USOA), the system uses accrual accounting or uses a directly-translatable method, and all financial data are compliant with the USOA, and

WHEREAS, the auditor must identify in the IAS-FD any data that cannot be translated to the USOA or do not conform to National Transit Database (NTD) requirements, and TCAT must address any discrepancies identified by the auditor before TCAT certifies the D-10 form and submits its annual NTD report with the IAS-FD, and

WHEREAS, Insero & Co. CPAs, LLP performed the required procedures and prepared TCAT's IAS-FD with no findings of deficiencies, and

WHEREAS, at its June 19, 2019 meeting, TCAT's Audit Committee reviewed and discussed the IAS-FD and recommended the TCAT Board accept it, and

WHEREAS, at its June 27, 2019 meeting, the TCAT Board reviewed and discussed the IAS-FD, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the TCAT Board accepts the IAS-FD and authorizes General Manager Scot Vanderpool to execute all documents associated with its submission to FT A.
Adopted by the TCAT Board of Directors on this 27th day of June, 2019.

F. Proto continued with the Audit Committee report, going through the reports provided by Insero & Co.

Following the Audit report, Duane Schoen left the meeting.

Chairperson Nguyen asked D. Thompson to present **Resolution 2019-09 – Elimination of Fare Zone 2**. General Manager S. Vanderpool read an excerpt from one of several emails received by TCAT:

I've been a TCAT rider for years and I think it's a wonderful service to our community. Lowering the Zone 2 price is a great idea and I thank you; it will make a small difference in the life of most, but a big difference in the lives of those who have the least. Good job.

Chairman Nguyen noted social media response was “outstanding”, and remarked it was great to have positive feedback. Moved by D. Thompson, seconded by D. Dawson, Resolution 2019-09 was approved unanimously (8-0) as follows:

**RESOLUTION 2019-09
Elimination of Fare Zone 2**

WHEREAS, the high cost of housing in the Ithaca urbanized area has pushed lower income households into rural areas and outlying villages where they now have to pay a higher Zone 2 bus fare on inbound trips and contend with less frequent bus service; and

WHEREAS, recent American Community Survey data indicates that at the county level, bus riders have the second lowest household median income (second only to those who walk to work); and

WHEREAS, many lower income families depend on transit and are disproportionately affected by the higher Zone 2 fare; and

WHEREAS, for these reasons, TCAT is considering elimination of the Zone 2 fare so all single ride cash fares for trips within the system cost the same regardless of boarding or destination locations; and

WHEREAS, elimination of the Zone 2 inbound fare structure and its replacement with a \$1.50 single ride adult cash fare and a \$0.75 single ride youth cash fare and half-fare cash fare would reduce the inbound cash fare for Zone 2 boardings from \$2.50 to \$1.50 (adult) and from \$1.25 to \$0.75 (youth and half-fare); and

WHEREAS, the outbound cash fare for trips originating in Zone 1 is the same regardless of destination in Zone 1 or 2, so no changes are proposed to that fare structure; and

WHEREAS, due to the decrease in Zone 2 inbound fares, the minimal number of outbound riders whose trips originate in Zone 2, and TCAT's desire to simplify its fare structure, TCAT will consider whether to treat all outbound trips the same; this would increase the outbound single ride cash fare for trips originating in current Zone 2 from \$0 to \$1.50 (adult) and from \$0 to \$0.75 (youth and half-fare); and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes to the Zone 2 fare structure are estimated to be revenue neutral because TCAT expects the reduced Zone 2 fare revenue to be offset by increased ridership, which will bring in fares and State Transportation Operating Assistance associated with the increased rides; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the TCAT, Inc. Board of Directors approves the elimination of the Zone 2 inbound fare and approves the following single ride cash fare structure for all inbound

trips and for all outbound trips except those originating in Zone 2, with these changes effective August 25, 2019:

Adult (ages 18-59)	\$1.50
Youth (ages 6-17)	\$0.75
Child (5 and under)	Free
Half-fare (seniors age 60+)	\$0.75
Half-fare Medicare / persons w/ disability	\$0.75

and be it further

RESOLVED, the TCAT Board of Directors will hold a public hearing on July 25, 2019 at 4:00 pm in the large conference room in TCAT's facility at 737 Willow Avenue, Ithaca, New York, where all persons may be heard concerning a proposed increase in the outbound single ride cash fare for trips originating in current Zone 2 from \$0 to \$1.50 (adult) and from \$0 to \$0.75 (youth and half-fare); and be it further

RESOLVED, the TCAT Board of Directors directs that the public comment period on the proposed increase will close 30 days after public notice of the proposed fare increase is posted on buses and advertised in The Ithaca Journal.

Adopted by the TCAT Board of Directors on this 27th day of June, 2019.

General Manager S. Vanderpool asked for verbal approval from the Board to raise the employee referral bonus from \$50 to \$500 in an attempt to assist in finding qualified mechanics, "which has been close to impossible." The bonus applies to any TCAT employee who refers a successful candidate (in any department) as described in the Employee Referral Program Procedures. **A motion to adopt the Employee Referral Program Procedures subject to the approval of the attorney was made by D. Dawson, seconded by L. Lewis and passed unanimously (8-0).**

Discussion Items

Facility Site Selection Update

Chairperson Nguyen asked D. Klein for an update on the facility site selection process. Klein reported that we received the preliminary report from Wendel. They used a weighted scoring process which resulted in the four site options (our current location, the former Vanguard site, the Airport and Southwest Park) were basically equal. Wendel said that shows that we did our due diligence in screening sites ("we didn't give them anything crazy to work with"), and it also shows that each site has its advantages and disadvantages, working out to an equal score; now we have to determine which of those advantages and disadvantages matter most. We need to narrow down those four sites to 2 sites for Wendel to do their final analysis. We are still waiting on a few things from Wendel; a report of probable or possible funding sources, and a peer review of the financial numbers to verify the financial information. Once we have an idea of what we might reasonably expect from outside funding along with confirmation of what these different sites would cost both immediately and long term, it should be enough information for us to narrow it down to 2 sites.

S. Vanderpool spoke about the Executive Committee meeting where there was discussion about the fatal flaws of our current site, 737 Willow Ave, and how we could eliminate it from the list at this point due to those issues. Issues cited are: area development, DPW development, the railroad tracks, we're

landlocked, and the boneyard is on property that isn't ours. Vanderpool asked for comments from the group and asked if there was agreement that we could eliminate 737 Willow Ave. from the current list of four sites. F. Proto inquired if we could leave it on the list, but rank it #4. Chairman Nguyen said we were charged with narrowing the list down to two sites. D. Dawson questioned if we asked Wendel to evaluate 3 sites instead of two, would there be a cost impact on our contract with Wendel. Vanderpool responded he didn't think so, but he'd check with them. J. Dotson said she sees value in having them do all 3, even if there is an added cost. Chairperson Nguyen asked if we were prepared to move forward with the three sites, Vanguard, Southwest Park and the Airport. All were in agreement.

TCAT/Cornell MOU

Chairman Nguyen thanked J. Dotson for bringing it to our attention that the TCAT/Cornell MOU must be signed at the start of 2020, so we need to form a team and get started on that. After some discussion, D. Klein moved F. Proto, B. Gray, and D. Dawson comprise the MOU negotiating team. The motion was seconded by L. Lewis, and was approved by a vote 6-0-2 with D. Thompson and B. Brady abstaining. Kelley Yeomans at Cornell will pick the Cornell MOU negotiation team and B. Brady will ask Yeomans to get in touch with Recording Secretary P. Torelli to set up the meeting(s).

Committee Reports

- **Executive Committee** – The Executive Committee met June 21 and discussed the Wendel Site Evaluation update and next steps; Maintenance Update; Reflections on Transit Awareness Day; Meeting with Underwriters (Formerly known as the Annual Budget Presentation) and the TCAT/Cornell MOU (draft of a subsequent agreement is needed.)
- **Budget Committee** – The Budget Committee met on June 18 and discussed Revenue Expenditure for May 2019; the 2019 Operating Budget and the 2019 Capital Budget.
- **Human Resources Committee** – The Human Resources Committee met June 5 and discussed maintenance department needs.
- **Planning Committee** – The Planning Committee met on June 13 and reviewed the current version of Wendel's recommendations. The meeting was followed up with a conference call to Wendel who addressed the questions raised during our review.
- **Transit Service Committee** – The Transit Service Committee met June 12 and received updates on Route 22 rack cards; bus shelters; First/Last Mile Pilot; Farebox RFP; Zone 2 fare change and discussed permission for Cortland Transit to pick people up on their two routes that enter Tompkins County; and the maintenance challenges and fleet constraints, and our approach to fall service planning.
- **Audit Committee** – The Audit Committee met on June 19 and reviewed the 2018 Audited Financial Report and the 2018 NTD Audited Report. F. Proto made a verbal motion to accept the audit as presented; J. Dotson seconded; the motion was unanimously approved 8-0.

Executive Session

An executive session was called to discuss Personnel matters. Motion to enter Executive Session made by B. Brady, seconded by D. Dawson. The Board entered Executive Session at 6:39pm. No actions were taken. Motion to adjourn Executive Session made by D. Dawson, seconded by J. Dotson.

The Committee arose from Executive Session at 7:37pm.

A verbal motion was made by J. Dotson and seconded by L. Lewis to award General Manager Scot Vanderpool a 4% salary increase effective retroactively to January 1, 2019. **Resolution 2019-10** –

Approval of Salary Increase for TCAT, Inc. General Manager was approved unanimously (8-0) as follows:

RESOLUTION 2019 - 10
Approval of Salary Increase for TCAT, Inc. General Manager

General Manager Scot Vanderpool will receive a 4% salary increase effective January 1, 2019, based on his most recent performance appraisal.

Next meeting: 4:00pm, July 25, 2019

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn open session made by D. Dawson, seconded by B. Brady. Meeting adjourned at 7:38.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Pamela Torelli, Recording Secretary, July 25, 2019.