

Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc.

Meeting of the Board of Directors

September 23, 2021 | 4:00pm via Zoom

Attendees

Board Members: Bridgette Brady; Jennifer Dotson; Dan Klein; Laura Lewis; Ducson Nguyen; Frank Proto; Denise Thompson

Absent: Deborah Dawson; Gary Stewart

TCAT Staff: Susan Brock; Tom Clavel; Julie Ellis-Grove; Gian Fountain; Raymond Lalley; Colleen Marsh; Curt Parrish; Patty Poist; Megan Pulver; Madlyn Schafer; Mike Smith; Phil Smith; Pamela Torelli; Matt Yarrow

Public Attendees: Fred Schoeps

Call to Order

Chair D. Klein called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

Board Member Items

L. Lewis reported Mayor Svante Myrick has appointed Faith Vavra as chief of staff. She is coming from Broome County and is said to have terrific experience and will be starting in early October.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the August 26, 2021 meeting and the August 31 special meeting were moved together by F. Proto, second by B. Brady. Both sets of minutes were approved unanimously 7-0-0.

Chair's Report

Chair Klein mentioned the TCAT to Trails initiative - he saw a lot of publicity last month in three different newspapers; we got a lot of good coverage. Chair Klein extended his thanks to everybody involved in the effort.

GM Report

In General Manager S. Vanderpool's absence, Assistant General Manager Mike Smith delivered the GM Report.

Ridership

Although numbers appear down from 2019, one of the important things to notice is that we've changed a lot of routes since 2019, which accounts for some of it. Route 30 is a good example; ridership is up a little from 2019 because we had a lot more buses on that route, and it is serving a much larger student population. We had been at capacity on that route multiple times of the day; we are now providing backup on that route, resulting in an increase in ridership.

Ridership overall is down 30%, much better than it was in July and previous months with students coming back. We also lifted our capacity restrictions, which has been helpful.

Monthly ridership is trending upward; compared to 2019 we are headed in the right direction; we are climbing at the same rate, just with lower numbers; much more promising than the 2020 numbers.

Bus statistics

Of note, our new monitoring system, Viriciti was installed at the end of August; it shows battery capacity and current status while they're out on the road and in the yard. It also will give us all the fuel and mileage information from this point forward, so in September we should have more information.

Operations and Maintenance

We are 90% on PM inspections and 100% for wheel pulls/brake measures. That has been pretty much the average -- very admirable and appreciated for our Maintenance department. They've worked hard to keep that number consistent for a long time. Staying at 90% and above is excellent and has helped with the DOT inspections.

Road Calls

In August, we had eight road calls, which has been the average for the last few months.

Missed Trips

Third month in a row that we have not missed a trip.

Cost of parts

Cost of parts were around the average of \$47,000 for the month, which is average for year-to-date as well.

Revenue and Expenditures

August fuel costs are up a bit; reasons for that include more buses on the road, an earlier start-time, running a bit later, and providing more backups that were not needed during the summer and all of 2020.

Safety Department

Tom Clavel, working with Phil Smith put together some great graphs. Since 2015, our accidents have been going down steadily. Overall, the trend is going downwards; 2021 year-to-date is far below where we used to be in 2014 and 2015. We typically see an increase in minor accidents in August with the increase in students and people moving in. There were six minor collisions in August. The noticeable down-trend is excellent and something that the Safety Department has worked very hard on with "Safety Blitzes" and new ways to put out information reminding people to be safe.

We have been moving forward with the development of the ELERTS Employee Safety Reporting application. This new technology will allow employees to immediately report safety concerns either directly or anonymously. The software will keep a record of all active and closed safety concerns. The Safety Department has completed the onboarding questionnaire and collateral request form, and ELERTS is in the process of building the app for TCAT. More to come on this.

TCAT has offered to be the host city for NYS DOT Bus Accident Investigation Training For Identifying Safety Hazards (BAITFISH) training, presented by NYS DOT Public Transportation Safety Board Investigators on September 27-29. TCAT has 3 staff members attending, and Phil will assist the investigators in different capacities of the training when needed. This training is primarily for bus accident investigation. On Tuesday, September 28, the class will reconstruct an accident scene at a parking lot that Phil secured. This training will be held at the Ithaca Marriott on the Ithaca Commons.

Human Resources

Through August 2021, we have 74 full-time operators and 7 part-time operators.

We lost 3 bus operators and of course Rick, our Controller in August; we brought in 1 Marketing Intern and 1 Bus Operator, giving us a total of 131 employees.

Action items for the month of August

- Continued/Started searches for:
 - Full Time Bus Operators
 - Part Time Bus Operators (Nights and/or Weekends shifts)
 - Temporary Casual Bus Operators
 - Parts Room Temporary Clerks
 - Diesel Mechanic
 - Temporary Customer Service Representative
- Employee Leave Management - Increased need for medical leaves in recent weeks requiring communication, education and coordination with Pinnacle HR to start leaves
- Started Anti-Harassment Training in accordance with NYS law with Bus Operators
- Scheduled the annual Flu Shot Clinic to be held on-site in the Large Conference Room on October 5th for all TCAT and Gadabout Staff
- Completed meetings with Paycom to include additional services (background checks, geolocation on timecards)
- Attended Tioga County Job Fair – August 25th

Marketing and Communications

August 2021 Accomplishments:

- Issued press releases for fall service and TCAT to Trails guide.
- Continued distribution of Tconnect flyers in Dryden area to include Poet's Landing, Agway, and other Dryden area retailers.
- Website work for fall service (connecting links to routes for press release, updating schedule tables, map images, & schedule PDF's).
- Updated route maps and printed schedules for Fall.
- Designed ride guides for incoming students at Cornell, IC, and TC3
- Designed and produced poster notifying passengers of upcoming changes.
- Participated in Trumansburg Firefighters Parade August 28 with TCAT Bus Operator Agnes Beck.
- Arranged video shoot for Rural Health Network of New York to demonstrate rider securing wheelchair on both TCAT and Gadabout buses.
- Designed ad for Ithaca Times Newcomers Guide.
- ADA paratransit coordination: 8 ADA applications reviewed.

Information Technology

Milestones:

- Configured DNS properly on the Domain Controller
- Pushed new updated DNS settings across the network
- Pushed updates on all of the Servers
- Ordered RAM and Hard Drives to upgrade the Hyper-V Machine
- Ordered new Camera System for Green Street Hub
- Put up a secondary DC/DNS for redundancy
- Expanded our Hyper-V environment to allow more virtual servers
- Reviewed current backups and ensure everything is set correctly
- Recycled old Technology Equipment – Computers and Printers
- Finished setting up the LCR as a Hybrid Meeting Room

Current Projects:

- Increasing computer security across TCAT.
- Documentation of IT resources on internal Wiki continuing
- Technology Roadmap – consolidating previous plans, updating documentation
- Avail, RideLogic, TSI, and Maximo Support
- Continuing to train new IT Help – John Greer
- Setup new Camera System at Green Street
- Continue to document everything and create SOPs
- Scheduled a time for TSI to come in to provide TCAT with a Network Heat Map
- Setting up a redundant internet connection through Spectrum
- Setup new computer at Green Street
- Setup Tablets for Road Supervisors
- Setup Tablets for upcoming shop Clerks

Future Projects:

- Need to restructure backup systems for new computers and laptops
- New database and reporting tools and technologies
- Build internal programming and development resources
- New certificate server to replace the one that died in early 2017
- Enterprise Wireless Infrastructure
- Better remote work options; considering VDI for remote users
- Explore bringing website hosting in house

Action Items

Resolution 2021-1 - On-site Support for Proterra Electric Buses was moved by B. Brady, second by L. Lewis and was passed unanimously with a vote of 7-0-0 as follows:

RESOLUTION 2021 – 15 ON-SITE SUPPORT FOR PROTERRA ELECTRIC BUSES

WHEREAS, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc. (TCAT) needs maintenance and support of the seven Proterra Electric Buses which were acquired in 2021, and

WHEREAS, TCAT previously implemented a six-month on-site maintenance and support commitment with Proterra, Inc., with an additional six-month option for said services as part of the electric bus on-boarding, and

WHEREAS, the current maintenance department is currently not fully staffed and trained to support the bus electric vehicles, and

WHEREAS, to continue transit services and operations with the electric buses, management (Mike Smith, Scot Vanderpool) has requested to continue with the maintenance and support agreement, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the TCAT Board of Directors selects to continue the maintenance and support agreement with Proterra, Inc., and be it further

RESOLVED, that the TCAT Board of Directors authorizes the General Manager to release a purchase order to Proterra, Inc. for continued service for a six-month duration for the amount of Sixty-Six Thousand Dollars and No Cents (\$66,000.00).

Adopted by the TCAT Board of Directors on the 23rd day of September 2021.

Resolution 2021-16 - IURA Urban Bus Stop Upgrade Project was moved by B. Brady, second by L. Lewis, and was approved unanimously with a vote of 7-0-0 as follows:

RESOLUTION 2021 – 16

IURA Urban Bus Stop Upgrade Project (Solar Lights) – Authorization of Funding

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2021, TCAT, Inc. (TCAT) applied to the FY 2021 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) administered by the Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency (IURA) for a total of \$19,950 of HUD funding for TCAT's Urban Bus Stop Upgrade Project, 2021-12 to purchase and install solar lights at 12 bus shelters in the City of Ithaca, and

WHEREAS, due to receipt of other funds, TCAT thereafter reduced its funding request to IURA to \$17,100, and

WHEREAS, on July 22, 2021, TCAT received a funding commitment letter from the IURA to fund \$17,100 of the project from HUD funds, and

WHEREAS, the IURA's funding commitment letter requests that TCAT's Board of Directors provide a board resolution authorizing the execution of the project/program funding agreement and funding amount, and

WHEREAS, TCAT staff provided the TCAT Board of Directors a project scope and budget of \$29,241, of which \$17,100 would be provided by HUD CDBG funds through the IURA and \$12,141 would be provided by in-kind TCAT staff time, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the TCAT Board of Directors authorizes the bus shelter solar lights project, and it further approves and authorizes the Board Chairperson and General Manager to sign on behalf of the organization, consistent with the budget described above and subject to the approval of TCAT's attorney, the IURA's funding commitment letter, a program funding agreement with IURA describing the terms and conditions of this project with the IURA, and any and all other appropriate documents required to accomplish a contractual agreement with the IURA for \$17,100 of CDBG assistance.

Adopted by the TCAT Board of Directors on this the 23rd day of September, 2021.

I, Denise Thompson, certify that I am the Secretary/Treasurer of the corporation and that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at a regular meeting of the corporation held via Zoom on September 23, 2021, a quorum being present.

Resolution 2021-17 - Extend Transportation Agreement through October 9, 2022 was moved by B. Brady, second by L. Lewis. After discussion surrounding the impact of ending the "joint venture", Resolution 2021-17 was approved unanimously with a vote of 7-0-0 as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-17

**APPROVE EXTENSION OF TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT
THROUGH OCTOBER 9, 2022**

WHEREAS, the City, County and Cornell entered into an agreement dated April 1, 1998 (the "Consolidation Agreement"), to form a joint venture that did business under the name of "Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit" (the "TCAT Joint Venture") to provide

public transportation services, as authorized by section 119(s)(1) of the New York General Municipal Law; and

WHEREAS, from 1998 through 2004, the TCAT Joint Venture operated a coordinated public transportation system in Tompkins County and surrounding areas, with its staff employed by the City, County and Cornell; and

WHEREAS, TCAT, Inc. was incorporated in 2004 to be the single employer of the staff and to provide public transportation services in Tompkins County and other areas beginning January 1, 2005; and

WHEREAS, the City, County, Cornell, TCAT, Inc. and TCAT Joint Venture entered into a Transportation Agreement, with effective dates of January 1, 2005 through October 9, 2021 ("Transportation Agreement"), pursuant to which TCAT, Inc. has provided such public transportation services from 2005 through the present; and

WHEREAS, the City, County, Cornell and TCAT, Inc. wish to extend the Transportation Agreement on the same terms and conditions for one year, through October 9, 2022, while the parties negotiate a modified or new agreement; and

WHEREAS, Section 1 of the Transportation Agreement states "The City, County and Cornell agree that as of January 1, 2005, the terms of this Agreement shall supersede those of the Consolidation Agreement, except the TCAT joint venture shall continue to exist and its Board may continue to meet as necessary until such time as the City, County and Cornell jointly agree to formal termination of the Consolidation Agreement. Once the Consolidation Agreement is formally terminated, the TCAT joint venture shall cease to be a party to this Agreement."; and

WHEREAS, the City, County and Cornell wish to terminate the Consolidation Agreement and the existence of the TCAT Joint Venture;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it RESOLVED, that the TCAT Board authorizes the Chairperson of the Board and the General Manager to sign the Agreement to Extend Through October 9, 2022 the Transportation Agreement among City of Ithaca, County of Tompkins, Cornell University, and Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc. and to Terminate the Consolidation Agreement, subject to the approval of TCAT's attorney.

Adopted by the TCAT Board of Directors on this the 23rd day of September, 2021.

Discussion Items

As a continuation of last month's discussion, possible amendments to the advertising policy is up for discussion.

S. Brock spoke. At the last Board meeting, there were questions about the meaning of one of the provisions. Brock put together some alternatives for the Board to look at; she provided several different options, which accomplish different things, and sent them via email to the Board last week.

J. Dotson said she reviewed the policy approved at the August meeting and she noticed two things; did we mean to limit the ad prohibition for tobacco and cannabis to inhalable? This struck her as odd, because tobacco and cannabis are not just inhalable. The other thing she noticed is the not-for-profits

allowed list did not include those related to emissions or pollution reductions. These were just things she noticed and wanted to say to the Board.

F. Proto asked now that the moratorium has been lifted, will there be an appointment of a review team to discuss any sensitive issues that come up?

S. Brock said the approved policy notes the process for such a team: The Board Chair will designate a committee. The policy does not specify when the committee is designated; it could be on a case-by-case basis as needed, or the Chair could appoint one to have on stand-by for when it might be needed.

D. Klein said as we don't have an ad on the table to review at this time; if one comes up, he will take action. If anyone wants to take this up in a future meeting with a specific resolution to amend the policy, we will review it then.

Committee Reports

- **Executive Committee** – The Executive Committee met and discussed the service contingency plan; President's executive order; a ridership update; a VW settlement update; extending the Proterra contract; and the Transportation Agreement.
- **Audit Committee** – The Audit Committee did not meet, but Committee Chair F. Proto reported a meeting is scheduled for September 24 to review drafts with Controller Julie Ellis-Grove and Duane Shoen from Insero.
- **Budget Committee** – The Budget Committee met on September 21 and discussed the Revenue Expenditure Report August 2021; and 2022 received a preliminary capital update.
- **Human Resource Committee** – The Human Resources Committee met on September 16 and discussed recruiting updates including the new hire class of 9/7 (5 new bus operators), vaccines/executive order and how it relates to TCAT operations, leave management, and a Paycom update that includes the streamlining and cost-efficient background check module that we implemented.
- **Planning Committee** – The Planning Committee met on September 21 and discussed a review of the facility planning process from 2019-now; a ridership update; grant applications/infrastructure money focus; maintenance and projects needed at Willow Ave; and EV charging for supervisor and employee cars.
- **Transit Service Committee** – The Transit Service Committee met September 8 and discussed the TDP presentation by Holly Chase of Sam Schwartz; fare-free essential questions; a fall service update and a Tconnect update.

Next Meeting

The next regular Board meeting will be October 28, 2021.

Adjournment

Chair Klein adjourned the meeting at 5:18pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Pamela Torelli, Recording Secretary, October 28, 2021.