PARTA
PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

Held Remotely Via Zoom

April 22, 2021

Board Members Participating:

Marge Bjerregaard
Richard Brockett
Jeff Childers
Debbie Davison

David Gynn, President
Virginia Harris (arrived at 7:05 p.m.)
Michael Lewis, Vice President
Jack Murphy

Morgan Tipton
Frank Vitale
Karen Wise, TPO
Marvin Woods

Staff Participating:

Claudia Amrhein
Denise Baba
Marcia Fletcher

Kelly Jurisch
Justin Markey, Legal Counsel
Clayton Popik

Rebecca Schrader
Brian Trautman

Board Members Not Participating:

Karen Beck (1st excused absence)

R. T. Mansfield (1st unexcused absence)

Guests Participating:

None.

CALL TO ORDER

President David Gynn called the PARTA Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7 p.m. He asked Ms. Marcia Fletcher to call the roll.

Ms. Fletcher then called the roll, and a quorum was participating.

Mr. Gynn thanked everyone for coming and said the first item was the minutes from the March 25, 2021, meeting. He asked for a motion for approval. Ms. Marge Bjerregaard made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, which was seconded by Mr. Mike Lewis. Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions on the minutes. Hearing none, he asked all those in favor to say yes. He asked those who disapproved to say no. Hearing no opposition, he said the motion to approve the minutes, as presented, passed unanimously.

GUEST COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Gynn said there were no Guest Communications because of COVID-19.

Mr. Gynn said the General Manager's Report was next, and he asked Ms. Claudia Amrhein if she had anything to add. He said Ms. Amrhein and her staff have been very busy this last month with the Triennial Review and everything else going on.
GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

Ms. Amrhein said yes, it has been very busy, and everyone is looking forward to taking some time off in the next few weeks as this gears down a little bit. The Triennial Review went well this week, and a very good report is expected. She expressed her appreciation to the Board and Administration Committee for adding the two (2) resolutions to the agenda. She said that will help resolve some potential findings. Although they are minor, they are the recommendations that were presented.

As a side note, Ms. Amrhein said it is hopeful that Board meetings will go live in July. As of right now, that is when the current law change will expire in terms of permitting the online convening of public meetings. If it does not get extended, PARTA will have to comply, which means the annual meeting would be back here in the Board room. She asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Karen Wise asked Ms. Amrhein if she would consider the option of participating remotely, i.e., hosting a meeting on two (2) platforms.

Ms. Amrhein said unless the state changes the Ohio Revised Code, PARTA would not be able to do that. She deferred to Mr. Justin Markey but said the online provision is an exception because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the health emergency, and the inability to gather. Prior to this, only in person gatherings were permitted for public votes.

Mr. Markey said Ms. Amrhein was correct and there is some discussion about extending those indefinitely but there is no final decision yet.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Amrhein and her staff for all the work they have done. Moving on, he said there were two (2) committees that met. He asked Ms. Wise to report on the Administration Committee.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Wise said she met with Mr. Frank Vitale and Mr. Richard Brockett, representing the Administration Committee, as well as some other Board members who attended. The matter of Board officer positions being open was discussed. As a reminder, the Board has three (3) nominated positions: President, which Mr. Gynn is serving as; Vice President, which Mr. Mike Lewis is serving as; and Temporary Presiding Officer, which she is serving as. They are one-year annual appointments that began in July 2020. The first year of service is ending and nominations or requests to be considered for any of the three (3) officer positions are officially open. If anyone has an interest in nominating someone, including one of the three (3) existing officers, or would like to be considered themselves, she asked that they put that in writing and send it to Ms. Fletcher. She said nominations will remain open until the evening of the July Board meeting, as stated in the By-laws, at which time the three (3) officer positions will be voted on. She asked if there were any comments or questions.

Hearing none, Ms. Wise said the rest of the meeting was devoted to the four (4) resolutions, which were all approved by the Administration Committee for forwarding to the PARTA Board for consideration. Those four (4) resolutions are on the Board agenda this evening. There was no other business and the meeting concluded at 6:54 p.m.

Mr. Gynn noted that Ms. Virginia Harris joined the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Moving on, Mr. Gynn said the Finance Committee met on Tuesday and he asked Mr. Lewis to present the report.
FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Lewis thanked Mr. Gynn and said the Finance Committee meeting was quick because March was a little quiet on the accounting side. Some really good information was in the numbers. On the income statement, the two (2) big items were KSU Revenues, which was about $51,000 over budget, and Sales Tax Revenues, which continued to be strong and well above projected budget at about $111,000. All the expenses were in line. There were a couple things that were paid that will show a higher percentage, but they were paid upfront and are good for the year. That percentage will come down over the next eight (8) months, give or take. For the month, there was a Gross Operating Surplus of $227,773, which was $133,988 over budget. Year-to-date had a Gross Operating Surplus of $614,197, which was $399,964 over budget. Everything is looking strong and in line for a good start to 2021. There was a brief discussion about CRRSA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act), which will bring roughly around $3.7 million to PARTA for 2021. That is this year's equivalent to the CARES Act for transportation and other industries and will be discussed more in the next couple months when it starts hitting the numbers. The Capital Finance side was quiet. The final payment was made on the last LTV of $85,800 and $1 million was moved to Restricted funds for future use. Overall, PARTA was looking pretty good.

Moving on to the Kent Central Gateway (KCG), Mr. Lewis said the number of parkers was up for the month at 6,738, which was 35% higher than last month. The income statement was in line on the revenue side. The expenses were managed well, which helped with the Gross Operating Surplus of $2,342 for the year-to-date budget. That does not sound like a lot, but it is good to see after the last year. He asked if anybody had any questions on the finances.

Mr. Vitale asked if the $3.7 million under CRRSA had any restrictions and what that money would be used for.

Ms. Amrhein said operating expenses, like for the CARES Act, can be drawn down that are not already covered by another funding source, less any preventative maintenance or farebox that is already being drawn down.

Ms. Schrader said Ms. Amrhein is correct and at least half of it will be to reimburse PARTA for wages every month.

Mr. Vitale asked if PARTA would have a surplus at the end of the year since some of it is going for wages.

Ms. Amrhein said it could because PARTA would not have to rely solely on sales tax for all operating expenses. It is meant to help carry transit authorities through unknown, uncertain economic times. PARTA has been very fortunate that sales tax has remained steady and surprisingly went up a little bit last year. She does not know what the future will bring and thinks that is the force behind why this was passed, which is to make sure that transit can continue operating no matter what happens. For the first time, PARTA will have some money in the bank beyond one (1) to two (2) months of operating expenses. PARTA is fortunate to have this funding and it will be spent in accordance with FTA regulations, which is what was done with the CARES Act funding. As part of the Triennial Review that just finished, the reviewers looked at the CARES Act expenses that were drawn down and went through them with a fine-tooth comb. They expressed no concern, which showed that PARTA spent its CARES Act funding in accordance with FTA regulations.

Mr. Gynn said the Finance Committee was aware that PARTA has been operating close to the budget without much additional money for the last several years. Should any catastrophe hit, PARTA would be in real trouble. This does give a little bit of breathing room that will be nice going forward.

Ms. Amrhein said PARTA goes out for bid every year for fuel and health insurance, which can flux greatly. Having a cushion is a very good thing.
Ms. Morgan Tipton noted that the Statement of Net Position for PARTA reflected dates at the top of the first two (2) columns that were the same: 2/28/2021.

Ms. Schrader noted that the column on the left should be 3/31/2021 and the column on the right should be 2/28/2021.

Mr. Gynn thanked Mr. Lewis for his thorough report.

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Operations Committee was not scheduled to meet.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Personnel Committee was not scheduled to meet.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Gynn said there was no Old Business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Under New Business, Mr. Gynn said Mr. Clayton Popik would be providing an overview on the East Main Street Project.

Mr. Popik provided a PowerPoint presentation, which is attached to these minutes. After the presentation, he asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Vitale asked why it has taken so long to start this project.

Mr. Popik said it has taken a lot of community input and research. The city engineer is very thorough and wanted to have everything in order before going to the Citizens Advisory Committee. When the community is involved at that level, there is a lot of back and forth. The Citizens Advisory Committee throws out ideas, ARCADIS (the design firm) takes those back, incorporates what makes sense based on the safety data, and then that is brought back to the Citizens Advisory Committee. That is why the planning stage has taken so long. The funding is dedicated for certain years and would not be requested for next year because the project might not be ready. This type of funding is for shovel ready projects, which is currently not the case.

Mr. Vitale asked if it would start faster if they had the money from President Biden's infrastructure bill that might get passed.

Mr. Popik said he could not speak on that because that would be up to the city as to how they would want to handle moving money around, but right now the money is committed so they are probably going to stick with the funding sources that they are already tapped into.

Mr. Lewis asked if they knew about how long the project was going to take from start to finish.

Mr. Popik said probably at least two (2) years.

Mr. Lewis asked Mr. Popik to go back to the slide with the first roundabout.
Mr. Popik said this is the big intersection of East Main Street, Haymaker Parkway, and Willow Street, just east of KCG and downtown. These maps are some of the earlier concepts and may not look exactly like this in the final version. For example, the turn coming off East Main Street to Haymaker Parkway, that quick swoop to the right, will not be in the final design. Based on input, safety analysis, etc., some tweaks have been made. The idea is to reduce conflict points and make the roadway better.

Mr. Lewis said he was surprised at the short distance between the stop light and the roundabout because of the traffic that goes through there and the potential for backups.

Mr. Popik said he has sat through many discussions about the traffic analysis. The delays and peak times when the roadway would and would not be busy have all been evaluated. On a red light, there could be some backup in that circle, but the light cycles will also feed off activity on the side streets. If the side streets are not busy, that light will stay green. Backup will probably only happen two (2) times a day - first thing in the morning and again around 5 p.m.

Mr. Lewis wondered if Wendy’s using the side exit onto Lincoln Street would play into it also.

Mr. Popik said that was his first thought when he saw Wendy’s was redoing its driveway, but he does not think that is how it is exiting. He believes that will curve down the hill and move a little bit so Wendy’s will exit further back from the intersection than what the drawing is currently showing. Lincoln Street came down to saving the building on the corner where Starbucks’s is for historic preservation. KSU and the city have done a couple studies on the building. They acknowledged the historical significance so there was no adjusting the size of the intersection with Lincoln Street in that area. Then they looked to the east to see what land on KSU’s side could be taken to make things a little better on Lincoln Street. There are a lot of mature trees on that corner and the citizens said they would rather deal with some congestion throughout the day than see a lot of those mature trees and that building get moved away. So, Lincoln Street will stay as it is right now. He does not even think that left turn lane from the south going west will be in the final drawing. It was a matter of drawing a line between expanding the roadways to the point of welcoming more traffic and destroying the landscape around it and preserving the landscape around it and living with the condition as it is. Nobody knew how to address that intersection. It came down to trying to create a balance between traffic and the environment around it.

Mr. Childers asked if PARTA would be responsible for any more than the $95,000 in matching funds.

Mr. Popik said that is the only money PARTA is committed to at this point because PARTA chose to go after the transit dollars.

Mr. Gynn asked if anyone else had any questions. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Popik and said he looks forward to seeing how this project develops.

Moving on, Mr. Gynn said the next item of business was the resolutions. A roll call response is needed for each and they were all discussed thoroughly and approved by the Administration Committee at their meeting tonight. The first two (2) are routine resolutions and the second two (2) are housekeeping matters.

**Resolutions**

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2021-04-01.

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion for approval.

**Motion:** Marge Bjerregaard  
**Second:** Jack Murphy

Mr. Gynn said the Administration Committee discussed this in detail and it is a routine matter that is looked at every year. He asked if anybody had any questions.

Hearing none, Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Fletcher for a roll call vote.

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Mr. Gynn said the motion was approved unanimously. He then presented Resolution #2021-04-02.


Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to approve this resolution.

**Motion:** Debbie Davison  
**Second:** Morgan Tipton

Mr. Gynn said this was a routine resolution and discussed by the Administration Committee in detail. He asked if there were any questions.

Hearing none, Mr. Gynn asked for a roll call vote.
Mr. Gynn said the motion was approved unanimously. The next two (2) resolutions were the result of the Triennial Review and it is taking procedures and putting them into a policy. The first one is #2021-04-03.

**#2021-04-03: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AMENDING THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) POLICY.**

Motion: **Mike Lewis**  
Second: **Frank Vitale**

Ms. Amrhein thanked Mr. Gynn for adding these two (2) resolutions. She said they will help to resolve potential findings. This resolution included minor changes in the ADA Policy to better note the practices that are in place. The visitor issue has never happened, but the language that clarifies that it is 21 days of service within any 365-day period has been added.

Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Fletcher to call the roll.

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Mr. Gynn said the resolution passed unanimously. He thanked those Board members who attended the Administration Committee meeting and reminded the Board that any members can attend any committee meetings.

Mr. Gynn then presented Resolution #2021-04-04.

**#2021-04-04: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AMENDING THE PROCUREMENT POLICY.**

Motion: **Marge Bjerregaard**  
Second: **Marvin Woods**

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions or comments.
Ms. Amrhein said this adds language to the Procurement Policy that PARTA does not issue any procurements with exclusionary or discriminatory terms that would serve to discourage full and open participation. These words exist in the procedure but not in the policy. This is a housekeeping matter to state that affirmatively in the Board policy that is on record.

Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Fletcher to call the roll.

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Mr. Gynn said the resolution passed unanimously. Before the meeting was adjourned, he pointed out that Ms. Amrhein has been asked to join the Hattie Larlham Foundation Board of Directors. He said they are very fortunate to have her on their Board. He did not know until the other day that Hattie Larlham Foundation's bus fleet is larger than PARTA's bus fleet.

Ms. Amrhein said the Hattie Larlham Foundation operates in different areas throughout the state. They have three (3) offices: Mantua, Columbus, and Uniontown. They have their own fleet of about 80 vehicles and do all their own transportation for the day services and different programs that they offer. They have the same challenges that PARTA has with finding drivers and the logistics of transportation for a very large important service.

Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Amrhein and asked if there was any other business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing nothing further, Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Marge Bjerregaard made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Jack Murphy. Mr. Gynn asked all in favor to say yes. He asked any opposed to signify by saying no. Hearing no opposition, the motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Fletcher
Executive Assistant