BOARD APPROVED 6/25/2020

PARTA
PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

Held Remotely Via Zoom

May 28, 2020

Board Members Participating:

Rick Bissler, President                  Dave Gynn, Vice President       Morgan Tipton
Marge Bjerregaard                         Virginia Harris                   Frank Vitale
Richard Brockett                           Michael Lewis                    Karen Wise
Debbie Davison                             Jeremy Moldvay, TPO

Board Members Not Participating:

Jeff Childers (1st excused absence)       Tim Lassan (3rd excused absence)
Brian Gray (1st unexcused absence)

Staff Participating:

Claudia Amrhein                          Kelly Jurisch                     Rebecca Schrader
Denise Baba                               William Nome, Legal Counsel      Brian Trautman
Marcia Fletcher                           Clayton Popik

Guests Participating:

None.

CALL TO ORDER

President Rick Bissler welcomed everybody to the May 28, 2020, PARTA Board of Trustees meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. An oral roll call followed, and a quorum was participating.

Moving on, Mr. Bissler said the meeting minutes for the February 27, 2020, Board meeting were distributed, and he entertained a motion to accept. Mr. Dave Gynn made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Jeremy Moldvay seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes, as presented, passed unanimously.

GUEST COMMUNICATIONS

None.

GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Bissler said the General Manager’s report was distributed and he asked Ms. Claudia Amrhein to provide details.
Ms. Amrhein thanked everybody for making the changes necessary due to the current times. She said *PARTA* has continued operating during COVID-19 with updates to Board members throughout these last couple months. She appreciates the Board’s trust. Service will be ramped up again on June 1 with a whole array of safety protocols in place for drivers and passengers. She concluded by saying she would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Dave Gynn asked if any employees from *PARTA* have been affected by or come down with COVID-19.

Ms. Amrhein said no.

Mr. Bissler asked if there was anything else for Ms. Amrhein. Hearing nothing further, he moved on to the committee reports starting with the Administration Committee. He asked Ms. Karen Wise to give an overview.

**ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Wise said the Administration Committee met this evening prior to the Board meeting. The members include herself, Mr. Richard Brockett, and Mr. Jeremy Moldvay. Terms are ending at the end of June for the President, which currently is Mr. Bissler; Vice President, which currently is Mr. Gynn; and Temporary Presiding Officer, which currently is Mr. Moldvay. The committee is looking for interested Board members for those positions; specifically, the Temporary Presiding Officer, which will be open. She asked any Board members who were interested in any of those positions to contact her outside of this meeting. She said there will also be another opportunity at the June meeting to speak up.

Mr. William Nome said nominations can be taken from the floor right up until the election. Having a slate of candidates ahead of time would be nice. If there was somebody who was disinclined to run because they didn’t want to compete with someone else, there will definitely be one (1) open seat. A decision does not have to be made tonight. Ms. Wise will bring this up again and she will be open to suggestions from anybody who wants to email or talk to her personally.

Ms. Wise said she will email all the Board members, so they have her contact information. Moving on, she said three (3) resolutions were discussed: 05-02, 05-03, and 05-04. Ms. Amrhein presented the three (3) resolutions and the Administration Committee approved recommending them to the Board for consideration tonight. That concluded the meeting.

Mr. Bissler asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he said the Finance Committee met on Tuesday and he asked Mr. Mike Lewis to provide a report.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Lewis said the Finance Committee met on Tuesday, with Mr. Gynn participating, along with staff. *PARTA* is amid the state audit right now, which is going well. Sales tax on April revenues is OK but will be impacted moving forward with the stay at home order. *PARTA* did receive $4 million in CARES Act money for operations, which will help. Professional Services is still a little higher than normal due to IT related matters. This has been discussed in the last couple meetings and is moving forward. Capital projects have not been affected, so that’s moving forward. The *PARTA* side looks good considering everything. Expenses are a little higher but still in line with what was projected. Kent Central Gateway (KCG) is a little different. Nothing is coming in and expenses are still going out because some staff are still working, which has resulted in a loss of about $16,000 in this last period. People aren’t coming downtown, they’re not using the parking, and they’re not going to the local businesses, which definitely affects KCG. People aren’t going to the hotel, so
those funds are down also. With businesses starting to open back up, hopefully there will be a
turnaround within the next couple months and that number will start rising to what was expected.
There is a little bit of a negative there due to everything going on. The committee also voted to
recommend Resolution #2020-05-01 to the Board for a vote tonight.

Mr. Bissler thanked Mr. Lewis and asked if there were any questions for him or Ms. Rebecca
Schrader. Hearing none, he moved on to Old Business.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

This committee did not meet.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

This committee did not meet.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Bissler said there is nothing under Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Bissler said there is nothing under New Business, so he moved on to the resolutions.

Resolutions

Mr. Bissler said the first resolution is 2020-05-01.

#2020-05-01: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE
GENERAL MANAGER, OR HER DESIGNEE, TO PURCHASE UP TO FIVE (5)
LIGHT TRANSIT VEHICLES (LTVs) OF WIDE BODY CONSTRUCTION,
OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT AND SPARE PARTS FROM TRANSPORTATION
EQUIPMENT SALES CORPORATION (TESCO).

Mr. Bissler entertained a motion.

Motion: Marge Bjerregaard Second: Debbie Davison

Mr. Bissler asked if there were any questions or discussion. Hearing none, a roll call vote was
taken.

Roll Call: Yes No Yes No

Karen Wise X___ Marge Bjerregaard X___
Virginia Harris (no response as she was still trying to connect to audio) Brian Gray UNEXCUSED
Jeremy Moldvay X___ Richard Brockett X___
David Gynn X___ Morgan Tipton X___
Frank Vitale X___ Jeff Childers EXCUSED
Michael Lewis X___ Debbie Davison X___
Timothy Lassan EXCUSED Rick Bissler X___

Mr. Bissler then moved on to Resolution #2020-05-02.

Mr. Bissler entertained a motion.

Motion: Debbie Davison       Second: Mike Lewis

Mr. Bissler asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Amrhein to comment.

Ms. Amrhein said this is a standard annual template resolution for FTA grant applications. It is passed every year so grant applications can be prepared.

A roll call vote was then taken.

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Mr. Bissler then moved on to Resolution #2020-05-03.


Mr. Bissler entertained a motion.

Motion: Marge Bjerregaard       Second: Jeremy Moldvay

Mr. Bissler asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Amrhein to fill in some of the details.

Ms. Amrhein said this is a similar resolution. It's an annual template that needs to be put in place every year so funding can be applied for through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). These are standard formula grants received and discretionary competitive grants that are submitted each year.
Mr. Bissler then moved on to Resolution #2020-05-04.

#2020-05-04: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO AMEND THE PROCUREMENT POLICY, SPECIFICALLY THE POLICY REGARDING CREDIT CARD USE.

Mr. Bissler said this has been discussed before, but asked Ms. Amrhein to talk about it again.

Ms. Amrhein said the Procurement Policy has been amended in compliance with a state auditor’s recommendation, particularly regarding the handling of credit cards to prevent fraud. Procedures were already in place, but they weren’t formally accepted by the Board into a policy document. This was discussed with the Administration Committee in February and a draft was provided. Due to the suspension of the meetings the last two (2) months, this wasn’t able to be brought forward until now. The committee is recommending the Board pass this resolution.

Mr. Bissler asked if there were any questions for Ms. Amrhein.

Mr. Brockett asked how many people on the staff were entitled to have a credit card.

Ms. Amrhein said there are four (4) credit cards but they’re on a sign-out basis so for the most part cards aren’t distributed. There are some gas cards that are used by maintenance but credit cards such as MasterCard are not.

Mr. Frank Vitale said he thought the policy was well written and comprehensive.

Mr. Bissler asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, he entertained a motion.

Motion: **Marge Bjerregaard**  Second: **Virginia Harris**

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Moving on, Mr. Bissler asked if there were any announcements.

Ms. Kelly Jurisch said there still is no word about whether the Portage County Fair will go on this year. As everyone knows, the golf outing for this year was cancelled.
ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bissler asked Ms. Jurisch to let Board members know when she hears about the fair.

Mr. Brian Trautman then used his phone to show Board members the building out back, which is only about a week behind schedule.

Mr. Bissler said it's amazing with all that's going on to only be a week behind. He hoped everybody had a great Memorial Day weekend and asked if anyone else would like to comment.

Mr. Gynn said on behalf of everybody in Portage County, he wanted to thank Ms. Amrhein and the staff for providing an essential service at a time when it was necessary for some people who would not have been able to make it to their doctors' appointments. It has been tough and he's glad that PARTA was there serving them in a wonderful way.

Mr. Vitale congratulated Ms. Amrhein on her promotion to president of the state association for transit companies. He asked Ms. Amrhein for a description of the organization and if the association was a political action group.

Ms. Amrhein said OPTA is the trade organization for transit in Ohio. It's an elective process and she was elected president this year. It's a matter of getting people to volunteer and it was her turn. The organization works with lobbyists who are at the General Assembly working on behalf of promoting transit in Ohio. The organization also provides education and resources.

Mr. Vitale asked if a lobbyist was hired to represent the organization in various issues.

Ms. Amrhein said yes, the association does hire the lobbyist, and it's a non-profit association.

Mr. Vitale asked if the first bill that the federal government passed for $3 trillion had a positive impact that trickled down to PARTA and if the second bill they're proposing will provide any benefit to the smaller transit companies.

Ms. Amrhein said PARTA did receive funding through the CARES Act, which has begun to be drawn down. The FTA did a tremendous job of processing that in a short period of time. They came up with an allocation formula for each transit authority; and once we submitted the application, it was received within a week. Expenses for COVID related work time and materials and products can be submitted through that grant, which will be done monthly now. That has been very helpful to stabilize revenue until the impact becomes clear because the sales tax lags three (3) months behind. March and April's impact won't be known until mid to late summer. To answer Mr. Vitale's second question, she said legislation is being followed and lobbying for additional funding is underway. She's not sure where that's at or whether anything will be received. It's not finalized.

Mr. Bissler asked if there was anything else.

Ms. Wise said she's learning new Zoom tricks every day, such as how to applaud. She proposed that all Board members snap their support for Ms. Amrhein and the team at PARTA.

Mr. Bissler concurred and said it's remarkable how the maintenance department was able to put the plexiglass up to separate the drivers. He thanked Ms. Amrhein for the emails that kept the Board up to date with all that was going on.

Mr. Vitale suggested that future meetings be held in the conference room. He said the back part of the conference room where the chairs are could be expanded and everyone could sit apart from each other. The room is a pretty good size, and everyone could wear a mask.
Ms. Amrhein said that will certainly be entertained moving forward. Right now, different facets of operations are still slowly re-opening. The recommendations of Governor DeWine and Dr. Acton are being considered. PARTA doesn't want to re-open too soon but still wants to keep services going. She is glad Zoom was launched tonight even with a little bit of difficulty. It would be preferable to meet in person and she would love to have that happen sooner rather than later, but PARTA will be very cautious and mindful of everyone's health and safety moving forward.

Mr. Vitale agreed that PARTA must be cautious. He asked if it could be mandatory for passengers to wear masks.

Ms. Amrhein said yes, it's going to be mandatory.

Mr. Vitale asked what would happen if a passenger came on the bus and didn't have a mask.

Ms. Amrhein said the first week or so will be used for transitioning. Drivers have been telling passengers that fare will be resumed next week and that facial coverings will be required. It has been posted and there will be a press release out shortly. It's a matter of health, safety and courtesy towards everyone. The bus is a public setting so social distancing is not always possible. Drivers are wearing masks or facial coverings. They are enclosed with the plexiglass shield and they're going to be given face shields for when they are in close contact with assisting a passenger with tying down their wheelchair and applying their safety belt. All passengers have been asked to wear masks particularly if they're in a more compromised state. A lot of time is spent researching this. With the CDC guidance that has continued to come out, the feeling is that this can be mandated. Some masks will be provided to passengers in the first week. Some free masks are on order from ODOT that can be passed out. If there is a problem with a passenger, a road supervisor will be called, and it will be resolved like any other behavior issue that is encountered. If someone can't wear a mask for a medical reason, that will be handled separately.

Mr. Bissler said this has been a major time-consumer for Ms. Amrhein and her management team. They have done their homework, but there's an awful lot to it. They've done a wonderful job and a lot of it is stuff that the Board doesn't see. It seems like they've done all they need to do to keep the drivers and passengers safe.

Mr. Lewis said the same type thing has been done at the bank and he was surprised at how willing everyone was to go along with it. Many people understand and it isn't something that's going to catch them off guard. There have only been a couple who have said they don't think they should have to do that. For the most part, the vast majority are going to be fine with what is being done.

Mr. Bissler then entertained a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Marge Bjarregaard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Virginia Harris seconded the motion.

Mr. Bissler thanked everyone for joining the Board meeting through Zoom. He said he knows there are a lot of people who are not into this technology and this has been a major step. He appreciates Board members taking the opportunity, stepping up and giving it a try.
Motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Fletcher
Executive Assistant