

## Board of Director's Meeting Summary

**Meeting Date/Time: June 18, 2020**

**Location:** Remote

**Board Member Attendees:** Raymond Hess, Jesse Miller, Kyra Sims, Roger Hewitt, Kathleen Mozak-Betts, Richard Chang, Mike Allemang, Sue Gott, Ryan Hunter, Eric Mahler (Chair)

**AAATA Staff Attendees:** Bryan Smith, John Metzinger, Mike Blackston, Rosa-Maria Njuki

**Guest Attendees:** Melvin Muskovitz

**Meeting Chair:** Eric Mahler

Chairman Eric Mahler called the meeting to order at 6.31pm.

### 1. OPENING ITEMS

#### 1.1 Approve Agenda

Chairman Mahler added agenda item 4.3 Closed Session into the agenda. Ms. Mozak-Betts motioned to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Mr. Hewitt.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes

Mr. Rich Chang: Yes

Ms. Sue Gott: Yes

Mr. Raymond Hess: Yes

Mr. Roger Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Ryan Hunter: Yes

Ms. Kathleen Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Kyra Sims: Yes

Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### 1.2 Public Comment

None.

#### 1.3 General Announcements

Ms. Gott shared that UofM is closely monitoring the decisions to re-open as they are made by UofM's leadership. UofM will be sharing information about their own operations and partnering with AAATA to provide whatever information will be useful for helping TheRide make operational decisions in the Fall.

Mr. Smith announced that he is sitting in for CEO Carpenter at this meeting.

### 2. CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Minutes and Updated Appointment for Ann Arbor Transportation Commission  
Mr. Allemang motioned to move the minutes into the record and approve the updated appointment for Ann Arbor Transportation Commission, seconded by Ms. Mozak-Betts who added a typo correction in the minutes on page 5, paragraph 3, line 1. It needs to read COVID-19 (not COVID-10).

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Sims: Yes

Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion carried.

### 3. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Resolution Discussion

Chairman Mahler presented the Board Resolution for Supporting Black Lives which was drafted at the Governance Committee level. Ms. Sims thanked Chairman Mahler for doing the lion-share of the drafting on the resolution. She expressed that it really reflects at least the conversation that was had at the Governance Committee meeting and seems like it echoes the sentiments of the Service and Finance Committees. She asked that it be read out loud for the benefit of the public.

Votes were taken in support of the resolution:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes

Mr. Miller: Yes

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Sims: Yes

Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion passed unanimously. Below is the signed resolution:

Resolution 04/2020

Board Resolution for Supporting Black  
Lives

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ANN ARBOR AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority recognizes the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and an unjustifiable number of others as crushing, avoidable and yet all too common tragedies;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors recognizes that the systemic and normalized structural racism and over- policing of Black people in America has led to irreconcilable social, economic and legal consequences for Blacks and other people of color;

**WHEREAS**, in response to the current and historical disparate treatment of the Black community under the law and in the disbursements of equal opportunities in society, both a local and nationwide movement aimed at shining a light on these centuries-old maladies has begun;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority supports the public demonstrations across America and here in our local communities to raise awareness of these inequities;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority recognizes that any meaningful progress toward eliminating the endemic problems described herein must start with the institutions created to serve the public;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority declares that the lives of its Black patrons, riders, owners, stakeholders and the citizens of our communities unshakably matter and is committed to: (a) the protection and safety of its riders and the public at all times in support of their rights, (b) prohibiting anyone from being discriminated against with respect to AAATA's services or with regard to employment by the AAATA and (c) partnering with our owners to educate ourselves and our communities to be the agent of this change and implementing the needed changes insofar as it has the authority to do so.

*Eric Mahler*

Eric Mahler, Chair  
June 18, 2020

*Kyra Sims*

Kyra Sims, Secretary  
June 18, 2020

### 3.2 Committee Reports

#### 3.2.1 Governance Committee

Chairman Mahler asked for feedback in regard to moving the Committee Reports to the consent agenda.

Mr. Chang supported this if Committee members have the option of bringing forth highlights. Ms. Mozak-Betts, Mr. Hewitt, and Mr. Allemang agreed with this.

Mr. Miller asked that Committee reports continue to be as detailed as possible. Mr. Hunter asked if Mr. Miller was requesting transcriptions of the meetings. Mr. Miller expressed that he did not think a verbatim transcription was necessary, only that they be detailed

Ms. Sims noted that as long as the Board stays in the habit of concluding the Committee meetings with items that need to be brought back to the Board for further discussion and reading the Committee reports beforehand, she supported the suggestion. She expressed that this would allow for having the meaningful discussions needed while saving time for more policy and big picture items that the Board would like to focus on in relation to the Ends.

Mr. Allemang suggested that all Board members be allowed to ask about anything that is in the Committee meeting reports. Chairman Mahler suggested keeping an agenda spot for Committee discussion without the formal report. Mr. Hess agreed that this makes sense procedurally.

Chairman Mahler will move the Committee meeting reports to the consent agenda and keep a Committee Discussion item on the agenda as well.

3.2.2 Finance Committee  
There were no questions.

3.2.3 Service Committee  
Mr. Hewitt highlighted an extensive discussion of the Board Resolution for Supporting Black Lives. In regard to the Fare Policy discussion, he described that the Committee generally discussed their wish that fares be kept as low as possible and any loss of revenue therein be made up by some other revenue source without reducing operations or cutting budget. Chairman Mahler noted that there is only state funding, federal funding, local property tax revenue, and POSA revenue, of which the Board does not have a great deal of control over. They both agreed that increasing revenue sources is a challenge.

### 3.3 Monitoring Reports

3.3.1 Governance Policies 3.1, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8  
Policy 3.1 - Ms. Mozak-Betts asked if Board members could reach out to new Board members more regularly, to form connectivity.  
Policy 3.6 – Mr. Allemang pointed out policy 3.6.4 (Committees are to avoid over identifications with the organizational parts). He explained that TheRide has committees that are structured basically for organizational parts, i.e. the Finance Committee. He suggested that this policy be discussed for modification or elimination. Chairman Mahler agreed that this should be added to next month's discussion.  
Policy 3.7 – A discussion of Policy 3.7.2 regarding the Executive Committee was initiated by Ms. Mozak-Betts, but her internet connection was lost before she was able to expound further. Chairman Mahler described that the Executive Committee has been discussed by the Governance Committee as probably something that could go away and the duties under the Executive Committee are things that could probably be distributed to other Committees. He expressed that in the future the Governance Committee will look at redistributing those duties to the extent that another committee is needed to look into emergency CEO Succession or planning. The Executive Committee may be dis-banned, particularly since there is no Treasurer right now. The way that the Treasurer is currently described in the Articles of Incorporation does not fit with the Board's model.  
Policy 3.8 – Mr. Miller expressed that continued Board education could possibly be improved upon.

3.3.2 Emergency Succession (Policy 2.9)  
Mr. Smith briefly described the policy to the Board. There were no questions.  
  
Ms. Gott motioned that the Board accept the CEO as (A) in compliance, supported by Ms. Sims.  
In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes  
Mr. Chang: Yes  
Ms.Gott: Yes  
Mr. Hess: Yes  
Mr. Hewiitt: Yes  
Mr. Hunter: Yes  
Mr. Miller: Yes  
Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes  
Ms. Sims: Yes  
Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

### 3.3.3 Asset Protection (Policy 2.8)

Mr. Metzinger described the policy to the Board, highlighting that the CEO has expressed that Policy 2.8.5.6 is so broad that satisfactory evidence seems impossible, aside from documenting every staff decision.

Mr. Metzinger pointed out that another area covered is dealing with technology systems and procedures that are in place to protect the security of information. While all of those systems were not specifically listed in the public document for obvious reasons, he did want to let the full Board know that those systems are in place and network security is a continuous effort by the IT department.

Mr. Allemang expressed that eliminating 2.8.5.6 was discussed in the Finance Committee. He noted that policy 2.8.5.2 was also discussed for elimination for the same reason, as well as for redundancy. He expressed that the Committee was in agreement to eliminate both policies.

Ms. Mozak-Betts motioned that the Board accept the CEO as (B) in compliance except where noted, supported by Mr. Chang.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes  
Mr. Chang: Yes  
Ms.Gott: Yes  
Mr. Hess: Yes  
Mr. Hewiitt: Yes  
Mr. Hunter: Yes  
Mr. Miller: Yes  
Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes  
Ms. Sims: Yes  
Chairman Mahler: Yes

Mr. Allemang moved to eliminate policies 2.8.5.6 and 2.8.5.2, supported by Mr. Chang.

Mr. Hess expressed that when he sees ignoring the exploration of innovation or opportunities that open capacity for the organization, that feels to him like something the Board should continue to strive for, to always advance the organization, not just be stuck in status quo, which is what he thinks this policy gets at. He understands how it can be a little ambiguous but explained that is why there are interpretations. He expressed not feeling comfortable on voting for removal unless there is something that addresses the spirit of what this policy is trying to get at as a replacement.

Chairman Mahler asked if Mr. Hess had any thoughts on amending it, but Mr. Hess expressed that he did not come prepared to amend it.

Ms. Mozak-Betts asked where else in the manual these policies may be covered. Ms. Sims expressed her understanding that the sentiment of not ignoring innovation is reflected in the new Ends policies. She noted that this policy pre-dated the revision of the Ends.

Mr. Miller expressed similar reservations to those of Mr. Hess. He offered his support to discuss this at another meeting once all are more prepared.

Mr. Allemang withdrew his motion to eliminate the policies. Mr. Hewitt expressed that these policies are probably better handled as part of the Ends because it is what the Board wants to do in the future, not necessarily what they are doing right now.

Chairman Mahler pointed out that innovation as an End has been discussed in the past. He described the Ends as “why do we exist type of statements”, and TheRide does not necessarily exist to innovate and that is why it didn’t end up as an End; innovation is a means to an end, which is why it was put in the means of the Executive Limitations. He suggested putting this as an agenda item for next month.

Ms. Gott asked for discussion of these policies at the Committee level before the Board meeting. Ms. Sims suggested that it might be helpful to see CEO Carpenter’s previous interpretation for reference in these discussions.

#### **4. STRATEGY & OPERATIONAL UPDATES: CEO**

##### **4.1 Covid-19 Recovery Plan Updates**

###### **4.1.1 Financial Update**

Mr. Metzinger reported that there seems to be confirmation from outside sources on the general timeline of the pandemic and economic recovery. UofM economists are predicting either a “v” shaped or a check mark shaped recovery for the economy which looks like sharp drops in economic activity this year and the recovery beginning to swing back upward in mid-2021 to 2022. These assumptions are predicting that the economy will be back more quickly if additional federal bail outs can be secured. He noted that this is particularly of interest to local and state government revenues. Other reports are showing how the lock down in Michigan is helping to contain the virus in a much better fashion than elsewhere in the nation. Both Michigan and New York are leading the nation with virus containment. Epidemiologists are saying that a second wave of infections are likely later this year, the severity of which will depend upon the behavior of people. He explained that this why TheRide is doing their part to ensure social distancing can occur while riding in transit.

Mr. Metzinger explained that TheRide is relying heavily upon the CARES Act given that fare revenues are not being collected, and other revenues are down. To date CARES Act expenditures have been \$1.2M, which paid for employee leave, incentive pay for front employees who at work during the early stages of the pandemic, and several projects that are under way, including installation of more permanent style barriers between the driver and the fare box. TheRide is also discussing the quick launch of a mobile ticketing platform. Mr. Metzinger explained that more information will be coming to the Committees and Board on that next month as this could be an exciting opportunity to reduce the reliance upon cash payments and be a key step toward being able to restore fare collection in as safe a manner as possible.

Mr. Metzinger reported that the cash position is strong thanks to CARES Act funding. TheRide is right at about \$11M in cash, so there is a strong cash flow. The third quarter is wrapping up this month and next month the first draft budget preview will be offered to the full Board. The third quarter report will also be reported to the full Board next month.

Chairman Mahler pointed out that it may be difficult to understand the assumptions of projects and budget, revenue, etc., and it may depend upon a potential second wave which may cause another dip. He noted that certain financial steps were taken to put TheRide on a trajectory that flows with the ups and downs but leaves the organization in a fairly healthy position, all things considered. He asked if staff are considering any models where a second dip in this is recovering and would they consider bringing the Board a backup budget with different assumptions than the primary budget.

Mr. Metzinger expressed that this is one of the most challenging moments in his career with regard to budgeting simply because there is so much uncertainty. It is unknown what will happen with state revenue for operating or capital assistance. Those are the two biggest areas of uncertainty in the budget. In the first draft of the budget preview that will come to the Board next month, the staff are running with their best assumptions based upon what is heard from Congress and other experts, which is running along the lines of the modeling that had been done previously. In terms of bringing a second budget option to the Board, Mr. Metzinger expressed that to be something he will certainly give some further thought to. He pointed out that there will be a budget preview in July, the first draft budget introduction in August along with a public hearing at that time, and then the final budget recommendation will be brought to the Board for adoption in September. He does think that it is very possible that as we move into FY2021 that there may very well be other impacts to the budget and there may be a need to come back to the Board for a budget amendment at that time. This will be a way to help build the bridges as they are crossed.

Chairman Mahler expressed his assumption that the projections take into account the opening up of the university, etc., and counting on that to tap.

#### 4.1.2 Service Restoration Timeline & Process

Mr. Smith referenced the Recovery Plan shared with the Board and the stakeholders. He expressed that what had been planned is happening over the summer, which is using the extra board operators that are on standby to add service where it is seen to be necessary. Trips have already been added to Rt. 4 and 6, for example, to accommodate an increase in ridership seen. A limited park and ride shuttle has begun from the park and ride lots on Miller, Plymouth, and State St., in anticipation of different aspects of the university and the hospital opening back up. They are starting to do parking enforcement again, so they needed to have access. Those shuttles have started there just at peak times. The plan is to continue with that, adding service on an as needed basis through August 30<sup>th</sup> because the time was needed to be able to put into the technology solutions something that would show up in real time. For this August, there will be a more detailed and robust level of service. The service running right now is a Sunday plus, with the plan to get back to an expanded level of service by August 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Smith could not stress enough that this is still a pandemic response plan for the service. In no way is this meant to be a permanent plan. TheRide intends on having what everyone would be used to in the normal, transparent public

process as it can. There are still limitations, still very much a limited capacity on TheRide's vehicles. The plan that will share details next month will focus on a fixed route system that is easy to add service to as needed. There are fewer interlines in the routes. It will appear significantly different than what the existing route structure is, but trying to keep in place as much coverage as possible while still planning what used to be a full bus of 60 people will now probably be 20 at the peak, depending on the set up of the bus. TheRide is working to make that number as high as possible while still maintaining a level of safety and social distancing on the routes.

Mr. Smith reported that Mr. Metzinger is leading a fare group right now discussing when TheRide can start restoring fare collection procedures, but when talking about collecting items from the public, one must make sure they have all of the PPE that would be needed, that processes are in place so customers feel comfortable purchasing fares and supplying fares on the bus. Staff is looking forward to presenting what is planned for August 30<sup>th</sup> to the Committees in the next round of meetings.

Mr. Hewitt asked how late the buses are currently running in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Mr. Smith reported that it runs until 7pm, and the NightRide service has been suspended temporarily as well. At the moment, there is no plan to do anything past 7pm, but part of the nature of what TheRide is doing is to be flexible in their response. Mr. Smith expressed that staff may reconsider that end time if that is something that would help the public out, as long as it can be done with enough vehicles and response so that distancing can be maintained and it is financially sustainable. It is not out of the realm of possibility that TheRide would start that before August 30<sup>th</sup>, but it would have to be examined.

Ms. Mozak-Betts reminded the public that TheRide has an e-mail dedicated to the pandemic issue called [tellus@theride.org](mailto:tellus@theride.org), which would be a good way for the public to give more guidance and information that they are hoping will transpire as transportation opens up. Mr. Smith added that the public can also call or use the website to provide feedback, which is highly encouraged.

Mr. Miller asked if it is determined that public transit is indeed safe like some studies have shown in Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea, what would that say for how TheRide might be able to increase service safely. He asked if assuming everyone is wearing a mask, can NightRide be spun up with larger vehicles instead of cars perhaps. Mr. Smith described having vending machines for masks to make them easily available, but not open in a box to grab where they may end up being taken in mass. He also described the cleaning of the buses at each terminal. In regard to how many people can be on a bus or any kind of vehicle, Mr. Smith expressed not finding any concrete guidance that he has seen, but he will continue to search for it, and opening up NightRide with a larger vehicle is certainly one possibility.

#### 4.2 CEO Report

Ms. Mozak-Betts asked about the A2Zero and where the AAATA comes into play with that. Mr. Smith discussed that the plan broadly discusses the electrification of the AAATA fleet and going toward all battery buses as one option to reduce the carbon footprint. Mr. Hess added that in broad terms the A2Zero plan has two overarching principles related to transportation. The First is to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 50%, with the idea there to drive people to transit, bicycling, walking, and other more sustainable forms of transportation. The second part is to transition the remaining vehicles on the road to no emission vehicles. There are strategies related to personal, crate, and transit / other service type vehicles.



Mr. Miller asked about the temporary park and ride shuttles, about when they are running and their aim. Mr. Smith described that they started operating on June 15<sup>th</sup>, running from the Miller Rd. park and ride through to the university and the Plymouth Rd. park and ride. Those two are connected in order to run into the university and then the health center and then past the VA. Then that bus heads over to Plymouth and turns around and comes back to the Miller Rd. From the State Street lot, it comes to the university and the Rackham Center. They run every 20 minutes starting at 6am and run until 8:45am. They run again in the afternoon. TheRide got indication from the university and medical center that they were going to start doing parking enforcement and so their employees needed ways to get to and from work. They are not on the real time due to the limitation of the software, so they are run simply every 20 minutes.

Ms. Mozak-Betts asked when the permanent barriers for the drivers will be in place and if the temporary barriers have been installed on all of the buses that are currently running. Mr. Smith reported that the order has been put in, expected to arrive August/September, fully installed on all buses in October. The temporary barriers are on all the current buses being used. The Nova bus pilot is delayed until October but will have a permanent barrier installed by TheRide. The remaining 7 Nova buses will arrive in February 2021 and will come with the permanent barrier installed at the factory.

#### 4.3 Closed Session

Chairman Mahler advised that the Board go into a closed session to discuss a legal matter. He conducted a roll call vote for this.

In support of the closed session:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes

Mr. Miller: Yes

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Sims: Yes

Chairman Mahler: Yes

The Board went into the closed session at 7:45pm. At 8:31pm, the Board voted unanimously to come out of the closed session.

### 5. CLOSING ITEMS

#### 5.1 Topics for Next Meeting:

Draft Budget Preview

Emergency Policy Discussion

Policy 2.8.5.6, 2.8.5.2, and 3.6.4 revision or deletion.

#### 5.2 Public Comment

Mr. Tim Hull commented on the service restoration plan. With ridership and revenue down and the risk of COVID-19 still very present, he understands the need to proceed slowly with service restoration. But he is concerned that the first and only major service to be added following the end of the stay-at-home order at least until the end of August is the park and ride express. He expressed that his service is only useful to a small segment of the rider population. Meanwhile, general fixed route service remains on the same base schedule as during the stay-at-home order, which means

some routes start at 9am and there is no service after 7 or 8pm. With businesses reopening, he asked AAATA to consider adding service on regular routes prior to the end of August. He suggested using the Saturday schedule as the weekday basis instead of Sunday with earlier, more frequent trips added where necessary. He also suggested that these routes could be adapted to service the park and rides as well, as they usually do not on weekends, in lieu of running the dedicated shuttles. He also expressed being curious about the plans for August, asking will there be significant changes to pre-pandemic schedules, and will there be public meetings regarding these changes.

5.3 [Board Assessment of Meeting \(Electronic\)](#)

5.4 Adjournment

Ms. Gott motioned to adjourn, supported by Mr. Hewitt.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes

Mr. Miller: Yes

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Sims: Yes

Chairman Mahler: Yes

It was unanimous to adjourn. Chairman Mahler adjourned the meeting at 8:38pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Keith Everett Book

Approved July 23, 2020