

## Board of Director's Meeting Summary

**Meeting Date/Time: July 23, 2020, 6:30-9:00pm**

**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:** Matt Carpenter (CEO), Bryan Smith, John Metzinger, Forest Yang

**Meeting Chair:** Eric Mahler

Chairman Eric Mahler called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

Discussion Items
<b>1. OPENING ITEMS</b>
<p>1.1 Approve Agenda            Chairman Mahler requested that General Announcements be moved to agenda item number 1.2 and Public Comment be moved to agenda item 1.3. Mr. Rich Chang motioned to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Ms. Kyra Sims .            In support of the motion:            Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes            Mr. Chang: Yes            Ms. Sue Gott: Yes            Mr. Raymond Hess: Yes            Mr. Roger Hewitt: Yes            Mr. Ryan Hunter: Yes            Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes            Ms. Kathleen Mozak-Betts: Yes            Ms. Sims: Yes            Chairman Mahler: Yes</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The motion was approved.</p>
1.2 General Announcements
<p>1.2.1 Resolution: Ron Copeland's Retirement            Staff and the Board congratulated and sincerely thanked Mr. Copeland for his 46 years of service. Following this, Chairman Mahler read the resolution honoring his service.            Ms. Gott happily motioned to adopt the resolution, supported by several Board members.            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            Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes</p>

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Ms. Kathleen Mozak-Betts: Yes  
Ms. Kyra Sims: Yes  
Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion was approved.

***Resolution***  
**Honoring the Service of Ronnie Copeland**  
*July 23, 2020*

- WHEREAS, Ronnie Copeland is retiring after 46 years of tireless and visionary leadership as Manager of Bus Operations at The Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority; and*
- WHEREAS, Ronnie began his career as an operator and worked his way up through the ranks at AAATA; and*
- WHEREAS, Ronnie served as Manager of Bus Operations for more than 20 of his 46 years; and*
- WHEREAS, Ronnie has been an unrelenting advocate for the passengers, employees, and the communities in the AAATA service area; and*
- WHEREAS, Ronnie worked closely with the Transportation Workers Union to ensure a solid relationship with AAATA front-line workers; and*
- WHEREAS, oversaw the implementation of a 46% increase in service in 2015; and*
- WHEREAS, has dedicated innumerable hours of his professional and personal life to the betterment of the Agency and his community; and*
- WHEREAS, Ronnie has been an example of loyalty, dedication, and grace for all that have met him.*

*Now, therefore be it resolved this 23<sup>rd</sup> Day of July 2020, that the Board of Directors for Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority expresses their deep and abiding gratitude to Ronnie Copeland for his decades of service.*

*Eric Mahler*

Eric Maher, Chairperson

*Kyra Sims*

Kyra Sims, Secretary

### 1.2.2 August Service Changes Update

CEO Carpenter reported that over the last week or so, AAATA has received a lot of excellent feedback from the Ypsilanti community about AAATA's August service changes, in particular about the Heritage Park neighborhood on the south side of

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Ypsilanti in Ward 1. CEO Carpenter has spoken with Board member Jesse Miller, the public, and some elected leaders over the last week, who have all been very consistent and thoughtful in their messaging. They have reiterated to AAATA the importance of public transit in this neighborhood. This neighborhood has a significant low-income population that is heavily reliant on public transit. They have made it clear that the absence of transit in this neighborhood would be a particular hardship. Because of that feedback, AAATA has changed and adjusted the August service plan in order to restore Route 47 to the Heritage Park neighborhood this August.

CEO Carpenter noted that these are challenging times and thanked everyone who has reached out to AAATA and provided excellent feedback and perspective. AAATA will be hosting several virtual public meetings in the next few weeks and sincerely hopes that everyone at this virtual Board meeting today can attend and help to chart the next stages of the improvements to services.

### 1.3 Public Comments

George Waddles, Jr., pastor of the Second Baptist of Ypsilanti, expressed being happy to hear about the service changes and AAATA listening to the voice of the community. He noted that had that route been suspended, it would have kept people from being able to get to the grocery store as there is no full-service grocery store in the neighborhood anymore. It would also have kept people from being able to get to laundry services; work; and students to class who attend Eastern University, Washtenaw Community College, and UofM. He hopes that the service will continue to be improved and at some point, there will be some sort of shelters on those stops as there are no shelters heading south. He also hopes that there will be some consideration for how important it is to have quicker service between the terminal at Meijer on Carpenter Rd. and Washtenaw Community College. It currently takes almost an hour to get between those two points.

Edith Croake, who taught at Washtenaw Community College for 42 years, expressed that many of her students could not have attended classes had there not been the bus service. This is one of the reasons she voted for the recent millage. She asks AAATA to not cut back routes and to keep fares as low as possible. She was reassured to know that the AAATA Board had passed a Black Lives Matter resolution, specifically these phrases, "We need to make meaningful progress toward eliminating the endemic problem (racism) and have to start with the institutions created to service the public." She noted a remark about being an agent of change. She wanted to remind AAATA that the people who most benefit from these services are often those of lower income, black, brown, and white, and Revered Waddles has pointed out the kinds of things that are affected – church, grocery, getting to school, getting to a job.

Jim Mogensen of Washtenaw County mentioned Title VI. He knows that these are temporary changes. He noted that the challenge of temporary changes is that sometimes they slide towards the usual. While AAATA is not required to do the Title VI analysis for the temporary changes, it is important to recognize that eventually they will. As AAATA moves towards figuring out a longer-term service plan, he encourages AAATA to use that tool to identify when these kinds of issues come up. On page 22 of the Board meeting packet, in the Finance Committee minutes, it was asked, "What would happen if the UofM students would not be back in the classrooms in person? Mr. Smith reported that extra operators and buses are planned for the students returns. Those might be used for other aspects of the community if the students do not return." Mr. Mogensen does not blame the AAATA for the systemic racism in the county. The challenge is how to respond in a way that addresses it in a community that often times has some resistance or barriers to

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accommodating that kind of analysis. He also does not take this personally. He does not personally attack people as somehow not understanding. He stated that some of the decisions made in the past are not the full reasons why these service changes are happening. The initial expansion in 2014 solved some of the Title VI issues that he had identified at that time. He expressed that when the millage was first created in 2014, they attempted as best they could to only ask for as much money as it was going to take, but it took more money; we should recognize that most of the people have now retired from that time. He thanked Mr. Copeland for his service.

Matt Hampel of Washtenaw County congratulated Ron Copeland. He grew up and was a student in Ann Arbor. He understands that the Board is discussing a return of fares. He would like to ask that the Board postpone the return of fares to a time when the pandemic is no longer the defining factor in everyone's lives. He believes that doing so will keep the drivers and riders safer. He expressed that it also feels like the amount of fares collected is so low and really impacts the front line workers, who have to be out there and ride the bus the most, the people that aren't able to quarantine the most, whose safety is paramount.

Joel Batterman, Board member of the Motor City Freedom Riders and student in Urban Planning at UofM, spoke to the decision to reinstate fares. He expressed that this was a decision made with little notice. Although he is glad that the public meetings are planned to discuss the service plan going into the Fall, he is not sure why the decision to reinstate fares was not also subject to public discussion. He understands that transit agencies around the country are facing budgetary challenges, many of them much more severe than TheRide, but he does not understand the logic of that decision at this time when facing an uptick in COVID-19 cases and when ridership is still low. It would seem to him that the benefits of any sort of additional revenue to be gained through fares at this time would be relatively minimal, especially considering that even during normal circumstances fare revenue does not make up more than 16% or so of TheRide's operating expenses. He shared that the folks riding right now tend to be lower-income folks and essential workers. He expressed that it is also a question of fairness that those folks should be asked to pay a full fare when service has been dramatically cut back. He urged the Board to consider postponing this reinstatement of fares.

Leaha Skylar, Chair of the Young Democrats of Michigan, Campaign Manager for Denise Kirchoff for County Commissioner, and a member of the Washtenaw County Executive Dem Board. She expressed that from the moment that this even started being a rumor, she has had an endless amount of community members reaching out to her terrified, saying things like, my job just opened and if I miss this bus I'm going to lose it. She asks that AAATA look into a way to have much more and better community representation. Whether it is celebrated or not that line is reopening, there was a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety put on people that are already dealing with a lot of stuff. We need to find a way to improve that. She would love to see way more reaching out to the community to get feedback: surveys, e-mails, something on the county website. She also asked what is going to happen with the area near Schooner Cove. She is ecstatic to hear the south side of Ypsilanti is reopening, but Schooner Cove has a lot of young families in it. People fly down Huron River drive, and it is not a safe area to be expecting people to walk to from another lower-income family area that is cut off from their Kroger up on Whittaker Road without that bus line, cut off from medical services, possibly from their job. She hopes that this line remains open as not to forget about the members in Ypsilanti Township. She would also like to see reports released as to where the \$20.7M from the CARES Act has gone. There are reports that AAATA has only spent between \$3M-\$4M, and she is concerned to see that lines are being cut already when there should still be almost \$16M to work with. She is hoping for transparency on that along with reports so that more

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communities don't have this terror or wake up and realize that they can't afford to get to work, realize that they are already late on rent, can't get to their doctor's appointment that they finally have, and are scrambling to find a car ride. She expressed that this is not what we should be doing to our community. She is looking forward to seeing what is done with Schooner Cove, which she sees as the same scenario. She is also looking forward to seeing how AAATA works with the community better and is excited that they will hopefully reach out to more organizations. She is looking forward on Denise's side to creating community oversight Boards for these specific situations, to make sure that we have the voices of the community in the center and stop making decisions in closed doors in Board's meetings.

Amin Lanseur, resident of Ward 1 precinct of Ypsilanti for 10 years, expressed that he has relied on AAATA for getting to and from work for years, which has been amazing, and he thanked AAATA for their work over the years in what his experience has been a great public transportation option. He shared that more access is needed in the community, and he is happy to hear the line in the south side of Ypsilanti has been restored. He expressed that coming to the conclusion to cut that line comes with a position of no real connection to that community. As a transportation authority, he feels AAATA could do a better job of understanding the communities that they service, because it is only when those communities are understood that they can be serviced in the way that is in their best interest. He saw how one could extend the \$3 ride down into that neighborhood, or that it is not super far of a walk to the Michigan Ave. stop or YTC. For certain people in those neighborhoods who have special needs or may be elderly and it is January with a foot of snow, that idea coming up without anyone within the organization swatting it down freaks him out. It shows him that there is not a lot of connection between the decision making on the Board and the communities it serves. He thinks some oversight Boards would be great. He expressed his view that it took public pressure and a rumor spilling out into the public in order for the south side service to be restored to be problematic.

Jeannette Hadden, an Ypsilanti resident, works with Ozone House who is happy to hear that the service to the Ypsilanti south side has been restored. Being partners with AAATA and working in the community, Ozone House really appreciates AAATA reconsidering that suspension. Young person Skip Walls expressed that he learned the bus system when he was 17 and has been using it for a long time. He is happy that it is out there now because it helps him a lot to get around.

Edward Dance, Washtenaw county native, echoed appreciation for AAATA not suspending the route that would take individuals back and forth from Ypsilanti's south side. He also echoed the sentiment that everything possible should be done to ensure that the idea of cutting these routes is more or less circumvented and there is an increased dialogue with the community in terms of ensuring that all perspectives are present for AAATA to tap into and understand. He expressed that Schooner Cove is a community that really needs the route that goes from Ypsilanti Township. He noted that to be a community that has a lot of Section VIII consideration and there should be an oversight created in some capacity within either the governments of Ypsilanti / Ann Arbor that is in partnership with AAATA in order to ensure that this discussion is kept within the realm of the community and there are individuals within AAATA that can reach out to the community to ensure that any decision they make is within consideration and acceptance by the community, even though there might be economic constraints to that. He expressed that it would be great to see a further increase in dialogue in terms of community members within Ypsilanti and the areas at large.

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Diana Gonzalez, a resident of Washtenaw county for 15 years, originally from New York, expressed that she decided to stay and raise her family here in large part because of TheRide and access to mass transit. She is a special education teacher at Ann Arbor Academy and lives in Ypsilanti. She expressed being really frightened for her community and for herself when she heard about the initial decision to stop service to the south side and that anybody would consider it. While someone said that AAATA is not to blame for systemic racism, she expressed that we all live in it, and we need to make intentional interrogations of our actions and decision-making every day if we are actually to impact the racism and discontinue harming black indigenous and people of color in this community. She has been chronically ill and has relied on TheRide to get to and from work, to the grocery stores, to doctor appointments, and to raise a family so she knows how difficult it is to reach bus stations and wait in the cold. She hopes the services get expanded in terms of shelters and bringing stops closer to under-served communities and those that need them the most. She expressed that you cannot say that you are not racist and that you care about everyone in our community unless you make very intentional decisions. AAATA should interrogate and even create some sort of questions that they are asking every single time it is decided to change policy or service. How is this going to affect black indigenous, people of color, disabled people, older members of our community? She expressed that if AAATA does not ask those questions, then they do not care.

Mason Hurstborn, an organizer for the Motor City Freedom Riders, expressed being really troubled and astonished by the decision to restore fares. He asserted that he does not think there is any way for that to be done safely. If there is any surface that thousands of people are coming into contact with every day, where there is no real possibility of sanitizing it between people who come in contact with it, and also just intensifying the degree of contact between drivers and riders, he expressed that this is a recipe for dramatically increasing the amount of COVID transmission that takes place on bus lines. He described switching to fare free to be a pretty cost effective way of making transit much safer, ensuring that essential workers are able to stay healthy and keep staff in grocery stores, hospitals, and everything else that our public health response depends on. He believes that it makes transit service a lot better in other ways, being able to have a rear door boarding, less time wasted at each stop, etc. He would like to strongly urge AAATA to reconsider this, that it is a public disaster that places an unnecessary burden on the riders.

Michelle Barney reported her understanding that the July and August LAC meetings have been cancelled. She expressed that someone may not want that group to meet or talk about what is being done. One of the things she described being done that she objects to is that as of August from what she has heard, the ARide drivers used to walk people to their door. She says they are going to stop that, and for people who are blind, especially during ice and snow, that is going to be very dangerous and difficult. She expressed that whoever is making these decisions has no knowledge of handicap transportation needs. She would like the Board to look into what is being done with LAC and the changes made allegedly to cut down the number of drivers and time it takes, but this is not good. Ms. Barney expressed not knowing until last week that AAATA received \$20.7M, but she is wondering why that is not enough to hold back the fare rises and does this have Title VI requirements. She described constricted hours stopping at 6:45pm as the last pick-up, and the problem is that many of the essential places like Meijer are open until 10pm, but the buses do not go early enough. Their hours for high-risk shoppers are 7-9am in the morning, but the ARides do not start early enough so that she can go at those hours. So, she is going in the afternoon. She may need more time to shop and wants to go in the evening, especially in hot weather, and she understands it cannot be done because the hours stop at 6:45pm. She stated it being obvious that Brian Clouse is gone and whoever is looking into these

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matters now does not have the interest of the disabled and the elderly and the black indigenous persons at heart.

Tajalli Hodge, the Sugarbrook neighborhood watch coordinator, thanked the Board for their work and also the elected officials who were able to get word out to the community so quickly about the routes that were intended to have the fares reinstated for. She is very glad to hear that Route 47 is going to be fully reinstated at the end of August. She would also like to urge the Board to consider reinstating Route 68 that services Harris to Ford. This route is right in the middle of two neighborhoods, Sugarbrook and Vault Village, which gets those residents to the Kroger on Michigan Ave. Without this route, residents have to go over an hour on two buses to get to a grocery store. She described being in a food desert, and during this pandemic, it is not helpful to be segregated even further from fresh groceries, and this is a systemic problem. She noted that this is a short route that does not go to Ann Arbor, but it services these neighborhoods that have close to 2,500 households and having healthy foods promotes healthy individuals; TheRide can help to do that. She would also like to urge the Board to use all the money available to them during this pandemic, as it is especially hard on those that have no access to food. She described that it is not easy to walk 3 or 5 miles to a grocery store in any weather, much less the current warm temperatures. She would like the Board to consider reinstating that route in partial or in full.

Maurita Holland introduced Roger Chard, who lives at the far end of Route 33. He reported that he has written letters to CEO Carpenter, the Board, and Mr. Smith and is disappointed that other than CEO Carpenter, he has not had an acknowledgement from anyone else who received his letters. In regard to Route 33, it covers all of northwest Ann Arbor, from north of Miller and west of Main, all the way out almost to Newport and Maple area. To eliminate Route 33 eliminates coverage for all of northwest Ann Arbor. When school comes back to session, that also means a route that covers three schools along Newport. Route 33 already had a little bit of a shortage in terms of its coverage since it did not have service on Sundays and its time was cut to stop routes at 8:30pm in the evening rather than 2 hours later like a lot of other routes. CEO Carpenter advised him that he could take ARide since he is totally blind; for everybody else in the neighborhood, AAATA was working on the FlexRide system to potentially ferry people from the bus stop out to the bus stop of the next closest route, Miller/Maple (1  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles away). So, would either have to ferry people with some sort of reservation system, which he believes seems awfully awkward, or people have to walk. He noted that a lot of that would be walking on the street or on broken sidewalks because there are considerable gaps. In his letter, Mr. Chard reported that CEO Carpenter told him that the pandemic may last indefinitely, and certainly 6-12 months is more of what is being looked at. Combining that with what has already been cut off from back in early March, he perceives that AAATA is looking at cutting off this route entirely for 12-18 months, which begins to sound like something more than temporary. He described that when the millage was passed in 2014 and renewed in 2018, comments came from the Chairman of the Board and CEO Carpenter indicating that the support received indicated how good a job AAATA had done, and it would enable AAATA to strengthen their fixed routes. He noted that Route 33 is a fixed route and to take it away entirely does not seem like strengthening it. In regard to ARide, if AAATA eventually has to consider redrawing their maps and have to limit their ARide coverage to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile in radius from the closest fixed route, that means that ARide would eventually disappear from there all together because there won't be a fixed route. He expressed that this does not seem like a very promising prospect. He strongly urges restoring as much of Route 33 as possible.

Althea McGlory, an operator at AAATA, thanked CEO Carpenter and the Board for reinstating Route 47. She expressed that as a driver, they care about their passengers

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very much, some that they know personally or see on a daily basis. She suggests that since WalMart is no longer a store reachable by Route 47, bring Route 47 to Meijer on Carpenter Rd. Also, they could transfer to Route 5 and 6 there to go down Packard or Ellsworth into Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti vice versa.

Erane Washington, an attorney, Ypsilanti Township resident, and a candidate for 14B District Court Ypsilanti Township, thanked the Board for reinstating the Heritage Park route. She urged the Board to consider reinstating Route 68. The area that she lives in is with the Schooner Cove area. She expressed her excitement when that particular route to Schooner Cove was added a few years back and the reason she was excited was she had witnessed people walking down the street trying to get to Kroger and a lot were elderly and even in wheelchairs. She thinks that cutting that route is going to do a huge dis-service to the people in the Schooner Cove area which includes the elderly and a lot of younger families. She hopes AAATA will reconsider that route and the route over by Gault Village and Sugarbrook.

Rebecca Ackerman, a resident of Ann Arbor, expressed concern about AAATA restoring fare collection. She would like to urge AAATA to not start collecting fares again any time soon. She described recently released research that found the majority of low-income households have no emergency savings. In the current climate of skyrocketing unemployment, it seems cruel to start charging fares on TheRide. Her understanding is that less than 20% of AAATA revenue comes from fares, so collecting fares will not get TheRide out of any COVID-related budget crisis. She expressed that even the options that AAATA has given disproportionately harm low-income neighbors. She was quite happy to hear that TheRide has declared publicly its support for racial equity. She grew up here and that fits with TheRide that she grew up with, but AAATA's options for how people can pay for rides has a major blind spot on racial equity; she stated that in the US, black Americans are unbanked at almost 5 times the rate of whites and underbanked at 3 times the rate. For people without a bank, paying with a phone is almost impossible, which is the only fully no-contact option TheRide has offered. Otherwise, she described that TheRide has offered tokens or day passes which seem no safer than cash and cost more upfront.

Heather Roe, a trustee of the Ypsilanti Township Board, expressed her concern for the cuts in services specifically to Schooner Cove. She described that she has lived in Ypsilanti Township her entire life and has used the AAATA as a young adult to not only finish her GED at Washtenaw Community College but also to go to work, doctor appointments, and pick up groceries. The service was very important to her, especially when talking about Schooner Cove; many of the people living in those apartments and town homes need that service to access education, grocery store, and work. She also expressed that senior citizens and moms with children absolutely have to have access to those services and this sort of shows again that the eastern Washtenaw side of the county is always a little overlooked or under touched. She described that having liaisons that help AAATA stay connected to the community would be helpful. She added that many of the local representatives were not aware of these changes until they found out through media, and that includes the state representative Ronnie Peterson who she says has made a wonderful statement. And two of the county commissioners Ricky Jefferson and Ruth Ann Jamnick to her knowledge were not informed of these decisions until they had already been presented. She requested more communication with the township and county representatives on the eastern side of Washtenaw County. She thanked Althea for her story. She reported that the township board has also been working for the past few years to try and get a bus stop shelter there.



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Monica Ross-Williams sits as an Ypsilanti Township trustee and on the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study. She expressed being glad that the route on the south side of Ypsilanti has been reinstated, as it is a critical route to get people connected to their jobs and economic stability. She also wanted to express her disappointment in regard to not knowing what the plan with the Schooner Cove route was. She knows that a shelter has been allocated from their Board for that area, and public should not have been able to learn about that was the plan from social media. As a member of WATS, she was disappointed in that and communication could definitely be improved. She expressed that the Gault Village route is equally important and hopes there is some way to get that looked at fairly. She thanked Ryan Hunter for reaching out to her and letting her know what was the AAATA's perspective on this. She understands that every community is going to be facing some difficult economic times, especially not knowing the level of support coming out of the federal government for monetary revenue, and what the state will have to do as a result. She understands that there is a squeeze there, but there is also a squeeze on the people who depend on the services to get to and from through transportation and we have to take in totality and try to see what all of us can do in order to make sure that the people who need the services are not the first impacted.

Chardae Korhonen wrote in that it sounds like the Schooner Cove route is still changing. She asked if AAATA could summarize exactly what is and is not happening at this point.

SJ Gaines wrote in that he strongly supports reinstating and increasing bus service on the east side of Washtenaw County. He lives in Ypsilanti Township. He is also an attorney in Washtenaw County. Many of his clients live in Sugarbrook, Gault Village, and the Schooner Cove areas. These areas are some of the more affordable areas in the county. Bus service is necessary for the seniors, young families, students, and youth aging out of foster (who he represents) to obtain food, medical care, and to get to school and work.

## 2. CONSENT AGENDA

### 2.1 Board Meeting Minutes and Committee Meeting Reports

Mr. Allemang motioned to move the Board meeting minutes and Committee meeting reports into the record, seconded by Mr. Chang.

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

The motion carried.

## 3. STRATEGY & OPERATIONAL UPDATES: CEO

### 3.1 Covid-19 Recovery Plan Updates

CEO Carpenter started by expressing his gratitude for so many engaged comments from the public in this Board meeting.

He went on to describe how after the pandemic arrived, the public transit industry across the country had to make a series of rapid and sudden decisions – reducing service,

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ceasing fare collection – that were simply unprecedented. The speed with which decisions were necessary and the communications challenges have been significant. AAATA recognizes that to be an area of improvement.

Since then, AAATA has developed a COVID-19 Recovery Plan that is available on the website. We are through the period of first reaction and settling in for a long-haul period of perseverance.

In this meeting, AAATA presented many of the crucial details of that Recovery Plan, dealing with their finances and services.

CEO Carpenter stated that we are facing a public health crisis for which we were not prepared. This has created new priorities; TheRide needs to keep staff and passengers safe, while also reopening services and helping the communities get back on their feet. Recently, across the country there are examples of many people trying to behave as if the pandemic is over. It is not, and we all may have another 12-18 months to go. AAATA staff believes we are in a marathon, not a sprint.

He noted that we all face a very uncertain economic future as well. TheRide's finances have already been damaged, and AAATA does see some dark clouds on the horizon. He expressed that it is imperative that this institution remains financially strong enough to continue to provide services for the communities. AAATA is not a for-profit business that makes money. It is a not-for-profit, heavily subsidized unit of local government. We are seeing worrying signs from other transit agencies in other cities that they are burning through their funding so fast that they may soon run out and will have to take drastic measures. That is a future AAATA believes they are able to avoid.

AAATA's approach has been to reduce internal costs and restore services as funding becomes reliable. AAATA has chosen to incrementally phase services back in starting with the most heavily used services – a difficult decision when one neighborhood gets service, and another does not. AAATA understands that difficulty and thanks the community for bearing with them as they restart their services.

Behind this strategy are questions that AAATA cannot yet answer:

- Will the state cut the transit budget?
- Will the feds provide a second transit bail out?
- Will there be a second wave of infections?
- How long will we have to make our funds last?

AAATA does not have answers to many of these questions at this time but expects more information over the next few months, and AAATA will remain flexible as the situation evolves. If that means changing course because of new information, AAATA will be open to that.

This strategy is also intended to preserve AAATA's ability to choose its own destiny. If they have resources, they can choose to restore services faster. If they run out, they lose the ability to choose, and their decisions will be made for them by circumstance.

CEO Carpenter does believe that this situation is temporary. AAATA's financial situation will become clearer over the coming months, in particular in September when the state's budget comes down. August services are intended only as temporary, interim measures to get through this pandemic. AAATA appreciates the public's patience and CEO Carpenter expressed being genuinely sorry if AAATA has caused anyone any unnecessary stress.

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He announced that there will be more information about upcoming public involvement sessions and AAATA genuinely looks forward to hearing from the public.

### 3.1.1 Draft Budget Preview

Mr. Metzinger presented a budget preview to the Board, which is an early draft of the FY2021 budget. He noted that the basis of the budget preparation is the COVID-19 Recovery Plan, which is available at [theride.org](http://theride.org) under the performance link.

He described that the pandemic brought about new priorities for the organization:

- Promoting health and safety of riders and employees
- Long-term financial sustainability of AAATA

Mr. Metzinger noted that AAATA has taken a very conservative and careful approach to make sure to know more about what AAATA's financial situation is before making decisions regarding how CARES Act funds will be fully expended.

Mr. Metzinger pointed out in the Recovery Plan is that this is a long-term timeline. The plan lists phases and timing of how staff thinks this will go. The current phase shows expected community demands placed upon AAATA to expand service. On the other side of that pressure is the need to contain the virus. There is going to be a back and forth conversation concerning expansion versus potentially pulling back on service during this time.

A key theme in developing the 2021 budget is the word uncertainty:

- What will happen with the state budget?
- When will businesses, schools, and universities reopen? Will they reopen? Will they open and then close again?
- Will there be another wave of virus spread?
- When will the pandemic end?

Mr. Metzinger walked the Board through a chart produced a year ago that shows the adopted 2020 budget amount of \$47M and the financial forecast presented a year ago that shows the normal course of escalating costs through inflation, no change in service, just the straight line of inflation.

Then he showed a chart that plots the 2020 budget and the financial forecast based upon where AAATA is at today. The impact of the pandemic has already been severe. Immediately the revenue and expenses dropped as service was scaled down due to the pandemic and AAATA stopped collecting fares. At the onset of the pandemic, ridership had dropped 90%. Services were reduced due to lower demand, but also because of the Executive Order to provide essential transportation services only. Fare collection was temporarily suspended and other earned revenues like contract revenues with Purchase of Service Agreements and Purchase of Fare Agreements stopped coming in.

It is important to note that AAATA is not a private, for-profit corporation. It is a public organization, a unit of local government, that does not earn a profit. AAATA does have reserves, but those reserve funds are only enough to help survive for 2.5 months. AAATA relies upon earned revenue, which includes fare and contract revenue. Those are important, though they add up to about 16% of AAATA's annual operating revenue, AAATA does rely upon every dollar to provide service to the community.

The budget draft shows that AAATA's 2020 actuals will be right at about \$41M, compared to the \$47M that was budgeted. The 2021 rough draft has been updated a

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little bit with the decision to restore service for Route 47.

The current draft budget for 2021 is at \$40.6M. This is not a full-service restoration. AAATA does not anticipate a full restoration of current service levels until FY2022.

Mr. Metzinger pointed out that steps were taken in April to tighten AAATA's belts:

- Laid off internal office staff and drivers. In total, 42 positions were laid off.
- Reduced service

He stated that going forward, AAATA is being very careful to preserve the organizations financial solvency today so they can be here to serve the public tomorrow. Some of the questions ahead are:

- What happens if funding is cut?
- What will happen with the state of Michigan revenue?

Mr. Metzinger reported that what has been heard from the state of Michigan is that their economists are fully expecting the pandemic impact is going to have a long-lasting economic impact on state revenue. AAATA relies on state revenue to fund 30% of the operating costs. That budget impact is going to have serious impacts for 2021, 2022, and possibly even into 2023. Once more is known in September, they will be modifying their plans accordingly.

If needed next year, amendments to the budget are possible.

AAATA does hope that they can restore services more quickly. They are trying to create the financial capacity that will allow them to do that. Financially, they would rather be on this side of the table than on the other side of the table, which means in an emergency where there is no choice but to cut because of decisions they are unable to control. AAATA would rather be able to ramp up more quickly than have to scale down services as rapidly as was done last March.

Good news and information in April of the CARES Act funds awarded has been brought in terms of transparency to the Board and public in this Board meeting every month since April when the federal government adopted the CARES Act funds. AAATA received \$20.7M in federal aid from the CARES Act. The annual operating budget is around \$50M, so \$20.7M is not an infinite amount of money, but it is certainly a lot of money that is welcome and being used for all the purposes eligible under the law, primarily for measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The approach of expenditure is to use prudence and discipline to ensure AAATA's long-term sustainability. 70% of the CARES Act funds (about \$14.8M) will be expended upon operations through the pandemic and pandemic recovery. That will reserve about \$5.9M of CARES Act funding for capital projects, like the permanent barriers being installed between the driver and the fare box and the mobile ticketing pilot, as well as other projects we do not know about yet.

Mr. Metzinger noted that if AAATA finds themselves able to restore services more quickly than anticipated, they can certainly bring more CARES Act funds into operating assistance earlier and would be happy to do so.

For 2020, about \$2.6M of the CARES Act funds will be spent on operations in total. AAATA has spent about \$1.3M so far on payroll related costs and purchased services, materials, and supplies, which include cleaning of vehicles and facilities and PPE for drivers. Some people in the community may have expected that AAATA has already

## Discussion Items

spent \$4M. At \$1.3M, AAATA has been spending about \$9K a day since the pandemic first emerged.

Next steps on the budget include the public input period that began at this Board meeting. There is a public input period for a month where public can send AAATA an e-mail through their website regarding the budget. There is a public hearing scheduled for next month just before the Board meeting on August 20th, along with a formal introduction of the draft budget for additional input from the Board and public, prior to the time that a final recommended budget would come before the Board for adoption in September.

Mr. Metzinger emphasized that state law and the Board's policy does allow staff to come back with recommendations for any budget amendments. Staff can and will do that if it is found that it would be prudent and advisable to expand service more rapidly or take on additional costs. Staff will be more flexible next year, perhaps more so than in years past.

Mr. Hess asked for an explanation of the dip down from the budgeted \$45M down to to the budgeted \$41M. Mr. Metzinger remarked that the Q3 Finance Report being presented next month reflects the impact of the pandemic and will depict more clearly where the losses are found. Fare and contract revenue are the biggest drop. Service cuts have just begun to lower expenses in July. As those costs drop, so will reimbursement from state operating assistance. The budgeted \$41M is a forecast based upon where AAATA was a couple weeks ago. If fare collection is restored, that revenue will come up a little. Normally fare collection is about \$7.3M a year, and AAATA will probably hit around \$3.5/\$4M this year.

Ms. Gott asked why the savings is not showing up. While revenue has dropped, some expenses should have dropped. Mr. Metzinger remarked that one of the main issues why the savings has not been realized until July when the layoffs were announced at the end of April is that the collective bargaining agreement has a period of time that is required for layoffs. Those layoffs, though announced at the end of April, were not effective until the end of June.

Mr. Miller asked how AAATA is documenting the CARES Act fund expenditures. Mr. Metzinger described that AAATA's accounting system now has new posting accounts for both the revenues and costs. Finance created a category for emergency-related materials and supplies costs, and emergency-related services costs. In the budget that comes to the Board next month, there will be a new revenue line item for the CARES Act funds that are anticipated for the operating budget. In any of the expense reporting, it will be indicated where those costs were actually called out. In regard to COVID-19-related employee costs in the payroll system, those are coded separately so they can be pulled out for transparency sake.

Ms. Sims asked if the property tax revenue will be received in August. Mr. Metzinger confirmed that property tax revenue is normally received in July and by the end of August. AAATA has already started to see some of that trickle in. In his communication with the Treasurer of Washtenaw County, Mr. Metzinger reported that the economic effects of COVID-19 may be affecting people's ability to pay property taxes on time, which would affect AAATA's receipts.

Mr. Miller pointed out that the CARES Act operating revenue for 2021 was \$4.4M and the anticipated fare revenue was \$3.3M. It seemed to him that there was a correlation between the CARES Act funding and the anticipated loss in fare revenue.

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He asked if any budget projections have been drawn up to show what the budget would look like if CARES Act funding was used to continue not collecting fares for the next 6-12 months. Mr. Metzinger explained the planned timing of expenditures in the budget. He noted that the CARES Act funds are working as a funding source to back fill any gaps in the budget that emerge during the pandemic. If AAATA did not restore fare collection, they could use CARES Act funding to back fill that gap. The downside of that is that the funding would be used more quickly and less would be available for further down the road. But this is a decision that can be made once it is seen what happens with the state budget and budgeting forecast. If the state funding sources are going to be less risk than predicted, conversations can be had about how to use CARES Act funding to offset any of the operating costs that are there.

Mr. Miller expressed not feeling good about reinstated fare collection in August when what is happening with the state budget will not be known until September. Mr. Metzinger responded that the actual revenue is expected to be \$7M less than the budgeted operating costs. That decline in revenue is nearly all fare revenue. He reminded that fare revenue is important to AAATA's budget. But the comments made earlier in public comment are certainly something for AAATA to think about. There are some operating concerns that also make the case for fare collection. There is a lot of internal desire to restore fares, not only for financial reasons, but also to help promote social distancing aboard buses by ensuring that those passengers without a destination are not loitering. Mr. Metzinger mentioned that he has been surprised internally while preparing for this, how difficult it has been to get ready for fare collection. AAATA has been working very hard to make it as safe and sanitary as it can be for people, including new measures to ensure that fare boxes are cleaned, and that drivers and passengers are protected by barriers. That has been done at the AAATA facilities and aboard their vehicles.

### 3.1.2 Service Restoration Timeline & Process

Mr. Smith shared the [presentation](#) that the public will see at public meetings this August to outline the routes and give details of what AAATA is going to do. He started by describing the process as absolutely upside down to not have public feedback before implementing these service changes. This is only in response to the pandemic and only meant to be temporary as AAATA tries to get through this stage.

Beginning on August 30<sup>th</sup>, AAATA will introduce a restructured network of interim routes that focuses on essential destinations and increased frequency on busy corridors. These temporary changes are being made to allow for social distancing and to remain financially sustainable during the pandemic. While AAATA is not able to restore all services this August, the hope is to do so once the course of the pandemic and its financial impacts become clearer. Later this year, AAATA will reach out for public feedback on future changes.

After Mr. Smith's presentation at each of the public meetings throughout the month of August, the public will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments, time permitting. The public will also have the ability to send AAATA forms online at [TheRide.org/maps-schedules/service-changes](https://TheRide.org/maps-schedules/service-changes). They can also call 734-794-1882, send e-mails to [planning@TheRide.org](mailto:planning@TheRide.org), or mail a letter to: Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority, ATTN: Temporary Service August 2020, 2700 South Industrial Highway, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Mr. Miller asked how these changes are being communicated to the public. Mr. Smith reported that there will be notices on the rear of seat backs on buses. There will be some paid advertising and media across both regular media and social media. At

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each of the bus stops that have changes, there will be notices there, as well as at the transit centers. In addition to that, there will be direct mail to targeted communities to let them know about the changes.

Mr. Hess encouraged staff to start sharing benchmarks or performance measures as to when AAATA will reconsider reinstating service. He described that good transit begets more transit riders. He noted that suspending 15 routes, 11 of which are in Ann Arbor, may have dire consequences for the agency. While he understands AAATA cannot operate in the red and the books have to be balanced and they need to continue to provide a service, AAATA also does not want to lose people that have relied on the system. That is a risk when certain areas stop receiving service. He asked will AAATA re-evaluate in September once it is known if the state funding is whole or not? When fares are reinstated, when they are at 50% or 75% or 100% of what they were, when will AAATA really start phasing things back in. He does not want to wait until August of next year before reinstating routes is considered. Mr. Smith assured him that there will be some iterative steps that can be considered before waiting that long. Mr. Hess emphasized that the Board, public, and riders need to know that.

Mr. Hess noted that the CARES Act funds were roughly projected to be spent in FY2020 in the realm of \$2.5M, FY2021 was around \$4M, and FY2022 was around \$7M in operating assistance. He expressed that this seems inverted of what the need would be. He asked that when certain performance measures are met when it comes to budget, that AAATA quickly looks to reinstate service. Mr. Metzinger explained that the reason the greatest amount is used in 2022 is because that is the year that full-service levels would be restored, and yet the forecast still shows deficits in state funding. So that would be the point that the funds could really be utilized in order to restore service. If in September it is learned that there is a different scenario coming from the state, better or worse, AAATA will be able to plot that a little bit further. The CARES Act funds at this point are being reserved for the long-term financial sustainability of the organization. Those costs are incurred in the current model in 2022.

CEO Carpenter expressed that AAATA wants to get as much service back on the road as soon as possible. If the financial situation stabilizes and AAATA feels comfortable doing it, staff will move to put more service back faster and not wait until August 2021. The forecasting window that Mr. Metzinger has provided is very flexible. He described the complexity of determining the matrixes for reinstating service in a pandemic. He expressed AAATA's desire to get as much service out as soon as they can, and doing so in the fairest, most transparent rational manner possible. He wants to explore this idea of performance markers and see how that can be built upon.

Ms. Gott thanked staff for the presentations - the effort and transparency that went into the materials. She also thanked staff for listening and responding to what has been heard from the public, adjusting based on that input. She asked how public comments will be collected and used to make decisions going forward. CEO Carpenter expressed that what AAATA wants to hear most from the public is what they should do next, what is the next greatest priority. He expressed that making a lot of decisions without feedback from the public has been uncomfortable and does not feel right. Mr. Smith expressed that the approach over the summer has been to add service as the need is found via input from drivers and rider feedback, and service has been added along the way where possible when a need has been found. That is

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part of what will be done with the August service change town hall meetings, which will all be recorded. Mr. Forest Yang noted that the next service change cycle will be in November. These town hall meetings will be a great opportunity for AAATA to collect feedback to be ready for November.

Ms. Mozak-Betts referred to policy 2.10.4 which talks about failing to reasonably engage the public, residents, and stakeholders when considering major changes to service programs and fares. Because this process is currently backwards, she expressed feeling uncomfortable and fears AAATA may have damaged the relationship with the public a little bit. She is hoping that during this August period of town halls, AAATA might learn how to use this situation to better the organization in the future. CEO Carpenter expressed that policy 2.10.4 was not fulfilled this time. His explanation is that the pandemic made it very difficult when decisions had to be made and public meetings could not even be held, and he was still trying to figure out what Zoom was. He hopes non-compliance in this particular moment will be taken with a grain of salt due to the extenuating circumstances. Now that there is more ability and understanding of how to do this, AAATA wants to engage the public. The large number of meetings being held in August is one example of doing that, with plans that the next change coming in November this year is informed by the public. He expects that AAATA will still have to rely heavily on technology to collect that information, though regular mail and phones are still in place. Ms. Mozak-Betts expressed her opinion that staff proved that they listened to the public by reinstating Route 47, and she thanked them for doing so.

Mr. Miller asked if CARES Act funding is unused, does it have to be given back? Mr. Metzinger responded that all of the rules for the formula of Section 5307 apply to the use of the CARES Act funds. Section 5307 funds are available for five years from the year that they are apportioned, which applies to the CARES Act funds. The current forecast does show a rather slow burn, but once more is known, AAATA can be bolder with their plans to utilize those funds. CEO Carpenter remarked that it is his preference to have a conservative approach that leaves the opportunity for AAATA to choose its own destiny and make improvements quickly, rather than spend the money too fast. If for any reason staff feels the need to accelerate the funding use, they certainly will.

### 3.1.3 Additional Public Comment

Michelle Barney noted that the information shared about the service changes needs to go into the August Ride Guide and/or made widely available. She also asked that the call takers and ride schedulers be especially well-trained going forward.

Jim Mogensen described that the public meetings in August will be explaining what is going to happen at the end of August and getting information moving forward. When there are more formal changes to all of the routes, AAATA may be able to incorporate some of the information gleaned from the online public town meetings. There will need to be additional public meetings when changes become more permanent. He mentioned that the CDC has put out guidelines on public transit saying that businesses should find ways to encourage people not to take shared rides or public transit, but to use single-use vehicles, which many have been doing to mitigate risk.. The 10% of people using the buses for essential services had no other choice.

Mark Hymes of AACIL asked about the ARide coordination. He asked if there are any foreseen cuts to the ARide. Mr. Smith responded that there are not any foreseen cuts to the ARide itself. Typically, complimentary paratransit service might be within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of mile of the fixed routes, but because of the temporary nature of this, AAATA decided



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early on to not change any of the ARide service area. All of the same level of service is available throughout. It will match the service timeframes of the fixed route service, but whenever the fixed route service is not running, the late-night service with FlexRide will be running. That is available and the accessibility of that fleet is significantly increased over the previous service that AAATA had. The daily ARide service has not changed and at night should be improved using the FlexRide.

### 3.2 Mobile Ticketing Pilot Contract Authorizations

Mr. Metzinger walked the Board through a request for authorization for a two-year pilot project intended to promote safer cashless and contactless payment methods that allow the launching of a mobile app for fare payments. He pointed out that this is very much about providing safer ways to pay and AAATA's learning as an innovation and pilot project in terms of how the mobile realm can work for fare payments. There are equity concerns regarding mobile fare payments. Not everyone has access to a mobile device or to the wireless technology to be able to purchase a ticket.

He reported that AAATA found in the fare study that was completed in 2018 that people from all age ranges and income brackets do have access to mobile tickets, not everybody, but many people do have access to a mobile device that would be capable. The cost of this project would be reimbursable under the CARES Act, and it is AAATA's intent to do that. He noted that time is going to be spent evaluating the project in terms of its equity affect via a Title VI analysis and also for a return on the investment. He went on to describe joining NEORide and implementing EZFare as offered by Masabi.

Mr. Hewitt pointed out that there is a \$15,000 annual fee and then AAATA would be paying 7.9% of the fares plus the credit card charge, meaning AAATA would be paying about 10% of fares. He asked what percentage of AAATA's total fare revenue this might amount to. Mr. Metzinger responded that he estimated in normal times it to be upwards of \$300,000 if 60% of riders used a mobile ticket. He noted that part of the return on investment analysis will include an impact on ridership. Did more riders choose to use public transportation because they did not have a dollar in their pocket but did have a smart phone and then decided to hop on the bus instead. Additional fare sales and ridership could be a way to see a return on investment. Another piece that AAATA still needs to quantify is to understand the cost of handling traditional fares.

Ms. Mozak-Betts shared that many people do not have access to banking and asked how everyone will be handled. Mr. Metzinger expressed riders will still be able to use cash in the traditional way to pay a fare on the bus or to buy a bus pass at one of the sales offices. He confirmed that there is a higher incidence of people who are not banked among minority populations, which is a concern. The Masabi solution also has the ability to implement a smart card for AAATA in the future. He offered the example of being able to go into a store like 7/11 and digitize cash onto a smart card or mobile device.

Mr. Chang asked if there are statistics around mobile device usage in this area. Some research he has seen indicates that many have cell phones but do not have smart phones? He would like to see if Masabi would be willing to wave the \$15,000 annual fee because ridership may not be at a level to be able to give any true data upon which decisions can be made, even after 2 years during this pandemic / pandemic recovery. Mr. Metzinger expressed his belief that Masabi would be willing to negotiate with AAATA on this. In AAATA's procurement process, they always go back to the vendors and negotiate.

Mr. Hess expressed that he is excited about the mobile ticketing pilot with Masabi and all of the concerns raised thus far are all valid. But he sees it a little differently, that it offers a new

## Discussion Items

fare collection option. There will still be the traditional fare collection box that people have always used, but now there is another option. He described that a lot of communities are trying to figure out how to do seamless integrated mobility, how you can transition from different types of mobility – from a bus to Uber to EScooter to EBike. When some smart options become available, new riders may be attracted to the system. There may be better connections with other transit agencies and a start of thinking about regional connectivity.

Mr. Chang shared his support of the pilot project with caution that the ridership data may not show how well it is received considering current circumstances.

Mr. Miller asked about obligations attached to joining NEORide. Mr. Metzinger described NEORide as a council of governments. About 15 transit agencies in Ohio and Kentucky are a part of this. NEORide is leading the way in this part of the country in terms of bringing transit agencies together for the purpose of procurement. They are working on several projects that AAATA could take advantage of as being part of their organization. AAATA will have a seat on their Board and will not only be able to participate in this project but will be able to help shape the future workings of NEORide.

Ms. Gott asked if the LAC has been consulted about this. CEO Carpenter indicated that the LAC meetings have been a great strength that has traditionally met monthly in a very crowded room, some of whom have pre-existing health conditions. He accepted responsibility for suspended the LAC meetings as he did not see how they could be done safely. For a while now he has been thinking that a way to hold them again needs to be found. This might be a great agenda item to bring to them once it is figured out how to restart the LAC meetings.

Mr. Miller motioned that Resolution 05/2020 be moved into the record, seconded by Mr. Allemang .

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.

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Resolution 05/2020

RESOLUTION TO JOIN NEORIDE

**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 (AAATA) hereby finds and determines that all formal actions relative to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of the AAATA Board of Directors, and that all deliberations of the Board of Directors which resulted in formal actions were taken in meetings open to the public, in full compliance with applicable legal requirements, and

WHEREAS, Section 167 of the Ohio\* Revised Code provides that a political subdivision may, pursuant to the extent that it considers necessary, join with other political subdivisions in establishing and maintaining a Council of Governments for purposes including, but not limited to, promoting cooperative arrangements and coordinating actions among its members, and

WHEREAS, a need has been identified to plan, promote, and further enhance transportation options within and between the jurisdictions of the members by encouraging cooperative arrangements and coordinating action among the members and between the members and other governmental agencies, private persons, corporations, or agencies, and

WHEREAS, the AAATA Board of Directors has determined that it is in the best interest of AAATA to become a member of NEORide, a Council of Governments, to explore coordination options and join with other political subdivisions to benefit all involved.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the AAATA Board of Directors, that:

Section 1: The AAATA Board of Directors authorizes the CEO or his designee to execute a Membership Agreement and Bylaws of NEORide, a Council of Governments, to explore coordination options and join with other political subdivisions to benefit all involved.

Section 2: AAATA's Manager of Procurement is appointed as the primary voting member and AAATA's Manager of Information Technology is appointed as the alternate voting member to represent AAATA on the NEORide Council of Governments Board.

Section 3: This resolution is effective immediately upon its adoption.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Board of Directors of the AAATA does hereby authorize the CEO or his designee to sign and enter into on behalf of the Authority the above mentioned Agreement, as well as any other necessary documents relating to the project.

Approved by vote of the Board of Directors on Thursday, July 23, 2020.

*Eric Mahler*

Eric Mahler, Chair  
July 23, 2020

*Kyra Sims*

Kyra Sims, Secretary  
July 23, 2020

\*Note: This resolution language is required by NEORide, which is a Council of Governments residing in Ohio. Ohio Revised Code applies to political subdivisions established in the state.

Mr. Hess motioned that Resolution 06/2020 be moved into the record, seconded by Ms. Mozak-Betts.

In support of the motion:

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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.

Resolution 06/2020

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE PROCUREMENT OF EZFARE

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

WHEREAS, the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA) wishes to launch mobile ticketing as a two-year pilot project to promote safer cashless and contactless fare payments in response to the coronavirus pandemic, and

WHEREAS, a Fare Study completed in 2018 indicated that public transportation users want to pay for services without cash by using mobile devices, and that a wide range of riders including elderly and low-income riders have access to mobile devices, and

WHEREAS, Board Policy 2.5.6 prohibits the CEO from authorizing contracts not anticipated in the current budget with a value greater than \$250,000, and

WHEREAS, this project was not anticipated in the FY2020 budget, and operating costs including annual licensing fees, credit card fees, and sales fees (not to exceed 10% of the price of the fare paid) could cumulatively exceed the CEO's board-established contracting threshold, and

WHEREAS, the Federal CARES Act, which has provided operating support for coronavirus-related costs, will fund 100% of project costs

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Board of Directors of the AAATA does hereby authorize the CEO or his designee to sign and enter into on behalf of the Authority an agreement with NEORide for its EZfare mobile ticketing solution, as well as any other necessary documents relating to the project.

Approved by vote of the Board of Directors on Thursday, July 23, 2020.

*Eric Mahler*

Eric Mahler, Chair  
July 23, 2020

*Kyra Sims*

Kyra Sims, Secretary  
July 23, 2020

### 3.3 CEO Report

CEO Carpenter described that one item consuming a lot of attention is ventilation on buses. He reported that Nova Bus is trying very quickly to incorporate any new ideas,

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including additional air intake. The buses have already been retrofitted with much better filters. The CDC is advising to get air out of confined spaces as quickly as possible.

He reported that there will probably be some additional delay to the arrival of the first Nova Bus because staff are not able to safely travel to the factory to watch the first bus be assembled and provide real-time input.

CEO Carpenter also shared that there was an initial intent to experiment with windows on the buses that do not open. The idea was that it allowed for more consistent climate control within the vehicle and allowed getting rid of hanging pull cords, replaced with nicer buttons. In retrospect, staff have decided to revert back to windows that tilt open. But this first bus is so far through the procurement process that it will have windows that do not open. It will still be able to be used for staff training. If the filters prove to be affective, it may be able to be used in full service.

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

### 4. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT

#### 4.1 Committee Meeting Discussion

There were no questions or comments from the Board..

#### 4.2 Monitoring Reports

##### 4.2.1 Policy 3.6.4 Discussion

CEO Carpenter described his conversation with Ms. Rose Mercier who described Policy 3.6.4 as an appendix that is routinely no longer included.

Chairman Mahler motioned that the Board eliminate Policy 3.6.4, 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

The motion passed unanimously.

##### 4.2.2 Policies 2.8.5.2 & 2.8.5.6 Discussion

Policy 2.8.5.2 – Chairman Mahler reported that Committee discussions indicated that this policy is redundant with the Ends.

Chairman Mahler motioned that the Board eliminate Policy 2.8.5.2, supported by Mr. Hewitt.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

## Discussion Items

Mr. Hewitt: Yes  
Mr. Hunter: Yes  
Mr. Miller: Yes  
Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes  
Ms. Sims: Yes  
Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion passed unanimously.  
Policy 2.8.5.6 – Chairman Mahler offered the suggestions to eliminate it all together, reword it, or reword it and move it to Communication and Support to the Board. Another suggestion was to have an annual technology and innovation report.

Mr. Hewitt expressed being in favor of re-writing the policy and moving it to Communications and Support to the Board. He does think that it is good for the Board to be informed of what major trends in technology are taking place on an annual basis.

Mr. Hess opposed the elimination unless it is placed somewhere else in policy. He would like annual reporting just of what innovation and technology has been pursued perhaps in Communications and Support to the Board. Mr. Miller agreed with Mr. Hess. He wants to make sure that the Board and organization is aware of emerging technology and planning thoughts.

Mr. Hewitt suggested that the Service Committee rewrite the policy and put it under Communications and Support to the Board. Chairman Mahler was in support of that.

The discussion will be put on the agenda of the next Service Committee meeting. The Service Committee will report back in the next 2-3 Board meetings on the policy.

### 5. EMERGING ITEMS

None.

### 6. CLOSING ITEMS

6.1 Topics for Next Meeting:  
Q3 Service Report  
Q3 Finance Report  
Chief Governance Officer Role (Policy 3.5)  
Scheduling of a public hearing for the budget next month

#### 6.2 Public Comment

Jim Mogensen remarked that Rose Mercier was working on a fare policy. As it develops, he thinks it would be a good idea to have some public input on it. Regarding ADA changes that are emerging, there has been confusion between paratransit ride and ARide. He also reported that some individuals apply for GoldRide instead of ARide because it is not as complicated to apply for. He advises that AAATA work to not lose riders who previously qualified for GoldRide but may also apply for ARide but do not realize what is happening.

He suggested that AAATA will need to find ways to help communicate complicated messages moving towards the service changes in November.

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

#### 6.4 Adjournment

Mr. Hewitt motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Chang.

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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

It was unanimous to adjourn. Chairman Mahler adjourned the meeting at 10:04pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Keith Everett Book

Approved August 20, 2020