

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

February 28, 2019

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on February 28, 2019 at 9:36 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6th Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

Board Members Present

Roberta Abdul-Salaam
Robert F. Dallas, Chair
Frederick L. Daniels, Jr.
William 'Bill' Floyd
Freda B. Hardage
John 'Al' Pond

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Jeffrey A. Parker; C-Suite Team Members Chief Administrative Officer Luz Borrero, Chief of System Safety, Security, & Emergency Management/Police Wanda Dunham, Chief Financial Officer Gordon L. Hutchinson, Chief of Staff Melissa Mullinax, Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill and Chief of Capital Programs, Planning & Innovation Franklin Rucker; AGMs Elayne Berry, LaShanda Dawkins, Virgil Fludd, Benjamin Limmer, Emil Tzanov and Tom Young (Interim); Executive Director Paula Nash (Interim); Senior Director Jennifer Jinadu-Wright; Directors Robin Boyd, John Cochran (Acting), Jonathan Hunt, William Taylor, and Don Williams; Managers Stephany Fisher, John Remillard and Jim Robinson; Sr. Executive Administrator Kenya Hammond; Department Administrator Debra Oliver. Others in attendance Hunter Abel, Adrien Carter, Abebe Girmay, Andy McBurney, Courtne Middlebrooks and Akio Turner.

Also in attendance Erik Burton and John Saxon of HNTB, Stephan L. Gresham of GTS, Megan Morello and Rich Polich of GDS, Trey Paris of TE Decisions, Emily Ritzler of WSP and Cara Vojdani of Arcadis.

Approval of the January 31, 2019 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

On motion by Mrs. Hardage seconded by Ms. Abdul-Salaam, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 6 to 0, with 6 members present.

Briefing – Media Impressions Quarterly Update October – December

Mrs. Fisher presented an overview of the media coverage from October to December of 2018.

Cheers for Big News

- MARTA produced 17 press releases and media alerts
- More MARTA Atlanta expansion vote
- New Board of Directors leadership
- Atlanta United MLS Cup win

Talking Numbers

- Reached an audience of 82.8 million people
- MARTA was mentioned 8,400 times through media monitoring sites
- Media coverage had an advertising value equivalent of \$20M

Percentages on Parade

- 29.3% Positive News Coverage
 - 2,500 total positive clips (Super Bowl preparedness efforts)
- 43.2% Neutral News Coverage
 - 3,600 total neutral clips (More MARTA Atlanta vote)
- 27.5% Negative News Coverage
 - 2,300 total negative clips (Bus Operator shortage)

MARTA Mentions

- Clayton Commuter Options
- Dome Drill
- Talking Preparedness with the Press
- Vine City Visuals
- 35th Annual Holiday Toy Joy

Briefing – GA 400 Transit Initiative Update

Mr. Limmer presented an update on the progress of the Georgia 400 transit initiative.

GA 400 Background

- Board adopted Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in July 2018
 - 12-mile BRT line between North Springs MARTA rail station to Windward Parkway
- Intent of BRT is to operate in Express Lanes on GA 400

What is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

- FTA BRT Definition
 - “high-quality bus-based transit system that delivers fast and efficient service that may include dedicated lanes, busways, traffic signal priority, off-board fare collection, elevated platforms and enhanced stations”
- ATL BRT Definition
 - Under development in coordination with MARTA and all regional transit operators
- MARTA BRT Definition (*preliminary*)
 - “... fixed-route bus mode operating in a dedicated right-of-way during peak periods, emulates rail through defined stations, traffic signal priority, short headways, bidirectional services, pre-board ticketing, platform level boarding, and separate branding...”
- MARTA Freeway BRT Definition (*preliminary*)
 - BRT service operating in limited-access and/or managed lanes with specific stations designated for transit services

GA 400 Transit Schedule

- Planning Alternatives Analysis and Scoping (2011 – 2014)
- Environmental NEPA / Concept Design (2015 – 2021)
- Engineering Project Development (2019 – 2021)
- Construction Construction (2022 -2024)
- Operation Operation (2025)

GA 400 Potential Station Locations

- Windward Parkway (Off-Line)
- Old Milton Parkway (Inline)
- North Point Mall (Inline)
- Holcomb Bridge Road (Inline)
- North Springs

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GA 400 BRT

- BRT in express lanes
 - Under development by GDOT
- 12 miles: Windward Parkway to North Springs
- Capital costs = \$245M - \$329M
 - State funds = \$100M
 - Potential Federal CIG = \$100M
 - Potential Fulton sales tax = \$45M - \$129M
- O & M costs = \$156M - \$234M (30 years)
 - Existing MARTA sales tax = \$.01

GA 400 Construction Phasing and Costs

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>GDOT Express Lanes Project</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Right of Way- Station Access & Foundations- Communications Duct Bank- Lighting▪ \$95M - \$129M | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>MARTA BRT Stations</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Station Structures- Station Lighting- Shelters & Amenities- Fare Collection- Pedestrian Bridges- Elevators & Stairs- Park & Ride ROW and Lots- Park and Ride ROW• \$150M - \$200M |
|---|--|

MARTA / GDOT / Fulton Coordination

- Design
 - Right of Way requirements
 - Station design criteria
 - Environmental constraints
- Funding
 - \$100M in General Obligation bonds for BRT infrastructure
 - Potential BRT funding form FTA's Small Starts Program
 - Potential local BT funding through Fulton County

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- Other potential sources: STP Urban, Highway Flex Funds, Local and State Partners
- Operating & Maintenance Cost: Existing MARTA sales tax

Fulton Mayors' Meeting Outcomes

- Update to Fulton County Mayors and Board of Commissioners
 - Held February 22, 2019
- Provided status update on
 - MARTA Transit Initiatives in Fulton County
 - GA 400 and South Fulton Parkway
- GDOT provided and Express Lanes project
- Meeting Outcomes
 - Fulton County Mayors and Commissioners evaluating funding options
 - Follow up meeting to discuss potential referendum anticipated in May 2019

Next Steps

- Secure local funding commitments
- Preserve station areas within context of Express Lane Project
- Complete the environmental review process
- Consider interim operations until full build out
- GDOT public meetings on Express Lanes Project

Mr. Daniels said utilizing "transit terms" such as BRT minimizes the concept of various transit vehicles. It would be a great marketing tactic for MARTA to create a term on how to market express transit vehicles.

Mr. Limmer said staff will work with the Marketing Department to create a customer-oriented term for express transit vehicles.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam thanked Mr. Limmer for his presentation and asked if mid-road BRT is similar to San Diego's transit system that goes down the center of the road.

Mr. Limmer said yes, MARTA is seeking to install a center-line transit project similar to San Diego and Minneapolis transit systems.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked for examples of vertical transportation.

Mr. Limmer said vertical transportation is simply another term for elevators, escalators and stairwells.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked if the tram from Hartsfield Jackson to the Georgia International Convention Center (GICC) is considered vertical transportation.

Mr. Limmer said no; vertical transportation is used to get where transit is located.

Mr. Daniels said there is a great deal of escalation relating to construction cost in the Atlanta region. He asked if the construction phasing cost included material related escalations.

Mr. Limmer said the phasing costs is listed in year of expenditure dollars and the cost is anticipated the date of materials are purchased.

Mr. Floyd asked if MARTA could consider outside funding sources to assist with the phasing cost.

Mr. Limmer said yes, MARTA would secure local funding, then, explore additional funding options and grant programs.

Resolution for Approval of MARTA's 2019-2022 Title VI Program

Mrs. Nash presented a resolution for approval of MARTA's 2019-2022 title VI program.

Every three (3) years, MARTA is required to submit an updated Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Agency (FTA).

The Title VI Program is part of the Civil Rights Act that prohibits discrimination on race, color or national origin. No person, in any federally-funded programs, policies, or activities shall be:

- Excluded from participation
- Denied benefits
- Subjected to discrimination

Title VI Objectives

- Ensures level and quality of transportation service is equitable
- Identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects against member of the protected class
- Inclusive public involvements by underrepresented populations
- Prevent the denial, reduction of, or delay in benefits related to programs
- Ensures meaningful access to services and activities to individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Recipient vs. Subrecipient

- Recipient
 - Transit Agency
 - State DOT
 - Any public or private agency, institution, department or other organizational unit receiving funding from the FTA
- Subrecipient
 - Any entity that receives FTA financial assistance as a pass-through from another entity
 - DeKalb and Cobb Counties are subrecipients which are monitored by MARTA

How Does Title VI apply to MARTA?

- MARTA must submit a Title VI Program every three (3) years to the FTA
- All MARTA sub-recipients must submit Title VI reporting to MARTA quarterly
- Non-compliance with Title VI can cause federal funds to be withheld

Required Elements

- Title VI Notice to the Public
- Title VI Complaint Policy and Form (posted on website)
- Maintain a list of Title VI Complaints, investigations and lawsuits

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- Provide a racial breakdown of members of MARTA Board of Directors and Accessibility Committee
- Provide a Language English Proficient Plan (LEP)
- Public Participation Plan
- Conducting Equity Analysis, fare change or any major service change (FTA looks at most closely)

Necessary Board Actions

- Certain elements within the Title VI Program must have Board approval prior to the 2019 plan update:
 - MARTA's Service standards – presented every year
 - Major service change policy and fare change policy
 - Any major service and fare changes

Significant Changes

- Subrecipients: DeKalb and Cobb Counties
- Demographics: Increase in Asian Ridership
- New Mode of Transit: Streetcar
- New Projects: MORE MARTA, Clayton County Initiative
- Amenities: Wi-Fi, Mobile Ticketing

How has MARTA Done

- Successfully monitored subrecipients
- Encouraged public participation through service changes
- Pop-up and scheduled information sessions for public
- Townhall Meetings and conduct surveys
- Give a voice to the riding public
- Provide information in multiple languages other than English

Mr. Daniels asked who conducts internal audits for MARTA's subrecipients.

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Mrs. Nash said Diversity and Inclusion and the Grants Department process internal audits for MARTA's subrecipients.

Mr. Daniels asked who receives the internal audit reports.

Mrs. Nash said Diversity and Inclusion and the Grants Department creates a checklist to ensure a Title VI policy has been posted to MARTA's website. The report is then submitted to the FTA.

Mr. Daniels asked how is equity analysis reviewed to ensure compliance standards are met.

Mrs. Nash said equity analysis studies are completed by the Planning Department during mark-ups. The studies are kept on file then, presented to the General Manager/CEO.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked to review the Title VI checklist provide by both departments.

Mrs. Nash said the checklist will be provided.

Mr. Floyd asked what is MARTA's Accessibility Committee (MAC).

Mrs. Nash said MAC is a twelve (12) member advisory committee of disable individuals. The committee is responsible for advising Diversity and Inclusion of reported issues on MARTA's system.

Mr. Daniels said MARTA is the recipient for DeKalb and Cobb Counties. He asked if the City of Atlanta, Clayton and Fulton Counties receiving direct funds from the FTA.

Mrs. Nash said DeKalb and Cobb Counties are listed as the subrecipients of MARTA's current grants and there are no obligations to monitor additional jurisdictions.

Mr. Dallas asked which grant represents Clayton County.

Mrs. Nash said it is the Freedom Grant which provides transportation to the elderly and disabled in Clayton County.

Resolution for Approval of MARTA's 2019 – 2022 Title VI Program

Mrs. Nash presented this resolution authorizing submission to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

On motion by Mr. Pond seconded by Mrs. Hardage, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 6 to 0, with 6 members present.

Briefing – Results of Public Hearings on Service Modifications for April 2019

Mr. Williams provided an update on service modifications for April 2019.

Public Hearings were held various locations:

- January 22, 2019 – Clayton County Board Room, Jonesboro, GA 30236
- January 23, 2019 – DeKalb County Library, Decatur, GA 30030
- January 24, 2019 – Fulton County Government, Atlanta, GA 30303

Community Exchange Meetings

- January 7, 2019 – Cleveland Ave. Branch Library, Atlanta, GA 30315

Advertisement via Print Publication

- Atlanta Journal Constitution
- ACE III / Champion
- Crossroads & South DeKalb County
- Mundo Hispanico
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Atlanta Voice
- Clayton Daily News
- Neighbor Newspapers
- On Common Ground

Notice Distribution

- City of Atlanta Neighborhood Planning Units – 26
- Senior Centers / High-rises – 139
- Outreach Email Database – 2700+
- Library Systems (Atlanta-Fulton, DeKalb, Clayton)
- Station Outreach – 4 stations / 6500+ flyers distributed
 - Five Points
 - North Avenue

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- Westlake
- H.E. Holmes
- Sent to various communities in different languages other than English

Public Hearing Attendance

- Attendance – 27
- Speakers – 10
- Media – 1

Additional Public Hearing Comments

- Emails – 1
- Letters – 2
- Petitions – 0
- Public Comment Line - 5

West Atlanta – Three (3) Service Modifications

- Routes: 50, 850 and 853
- Resolves over-crowding conditions at UPS Distribution Center
- Responds to neighborhood and city Councilmember concerns regarding buses on a particular road

Ted Turner – One (1) Service Modification

- Provides continuous service along the Ted Turner Drive corridor
- Improves access to the Richard B. Russell Federal Building
- Minimizes duplication of service along Trinity Avenue and Forsyth Street
- Delayed proposed changes due to construction on MLK and Mitchell Street

Bus Operators Task Force

- Currently a shortage of bus operators
- Chief Administrator, Luz Borrero will lead the Bus Operators Task Force seeking to:
 - Address the shortage of bus operators
 - Improve ways to recruit, retain and sustain MARTA's Bus Operators

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- Create short-term, mid-term and long-term goals improving how MARTA maintains the workforce and ensure there are enough operators to provide service to existing and potential services

Ms. Abdul-Salaam acknowledged and thanked Mr. Williams for extending Old National Bus Route 89 on behalf of Clayton County resident, Keith Parker. She asked when will the next rounds of proposed service modifications begin.

Mr. Williams said the next proposed service modification will be held in August 2019.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked what contributes to the high turnover in drivers.

Mr. Williams said today's economy, competitor's flexible schedules and hiring salaries are a few factors that contribute to sustaining bus operators. MARTA's Bus Operator Task Force is currently working to identify probable solutions.

Mr. Daniels asked what is the time frame for hiring a Chief of Bus Operations.

Mr. Parker said MARTA is currently interviewing and plan to select a candidate within the next few months.

Mr. Daniels asked if the potential candidate will be prepared to provide input before the December 2019 mark-up.

Mr. Parker said he has intentions for the potential candidate to make changes and provide input. The upcoming plan for FY20 is to focus on improving MARTA's bus service.

Mr. Dallas said he attended the DeKalb Public Hearing and commended MARTA's staff for setting a positive image engaging with the public.

Mr. Floyd said modifying a bus route for two (2) weeks and monitoring how patrons react is a great way to analyze proposed modifications. MARTA could create a plan to predict future utilization, adjust and improve the transit system.

Resolution to Adopt Service Modifications for April 2019

Mr. Williams presented a resolution requesting the Board of Directors adoption of the April 2019 Service Modifications for Routes 49, 50, 850 and 853.

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On motion by Mrs. Hardage seconded by Mr. Floyd, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 6 to 0, with 6 members present.

Briefing – Media Impressions

Mrs. Fisher presented an overview of the media relations activities for Super Bowl LIII, February 3, 2019.

For the past year MARTA's messaging to the public for Super Bowl week was to avoid traffic. Patrons received the message and they rode in record numbers. From the reviews shared via the media, MARTA delivered world class customer service.

For the ten (10) day operational period surrounding the Super Bowl (Saturday, January 26th – Monday, February 4, 2019)

- MARTA was mentioned 763 times in new stories
- Reached an audience of 8.6 million people
- News coverage received an ad equivalent to \$2M

MARTA shared the service plan, message of safety and security and Know Before You Go information with local and national news outlets, trade publications and other agencies involved in the Super Bowl.

Through interviews with MARTA's GM/CEO, Chief of Rail Operations and Chief of Police, MARTA successfully spread the message far and wide.

A derailment on January 15th and a bus operator sickout threatened to overtake conversation around Super Bowl. With MARTA's consistent messaging around servicing, safety, how to ride, combined with outstanding customer service provided by Team MARTA neutralized the possibility of overwhelming negative news coverage.

* * *

Adjournment

The meeting of the Operations Committee adjourned at 10:50 a.m.