

Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority
12/6/2022

1. Call to Order:

Board Chair, John Waltman, called the December 6, 2022 meeting of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority Board to order at 10:32 a.m.

2. Roll Call was taken:

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Waltman, Nicholas Huyck, Phyllis French, Joe Henne, and Lynda Garlitz

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

3. Additions/Deletions to Agenda: It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Nick Huyck	Approve Change Agenda New Business Vice Chair Discussion to Table Election of Vice Chair to February
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MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Joe Henne	Approve Add Addition of Bus Survey Results, Union Negotiations, Sugar Island Ferry Winter Schedule
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MOTION: Phyllis French SECOND: John Waltman	Approve Addition to Discussion Letter Received from Board to Answer Questions
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4. Public Comment:

- None

5. Minutes: It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Nick Huyck	Approve the November 1, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.
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6. Finance Director Report:

- Finance Director Gordon reviewed the October 2022 Financials
 - Gordon presented the Electronic Funds Report and Accounts Payable Report for October. Robinson and Son payment is hull and liability insurance
- Auditors began their field work and be here all week.
- Additional testing and separate Single Audit for federal funding received over 750K. This is due to vehicles purchases and facility costs.
- Bussing: MDOT emailed asking for numbers in regards to ridership pre-COVID and we let them know that currently we are at 75% pre-Covid ridership. The shift of decreased ridership is partly due to contracts with NTI and HBH that have not been reestablished since COVID. The two entities are currently doing their own transportation for safety. The current highest customer base is prison guards and non-emergency medical care transportation (Rides to Wellness).
- Ferry: Ridership is 99% to pre-Covid numbers. There is a decrease of 2% for vehicles, passengers were up 3%, and revenue down 8%. CRRSA funding has been replaced with ARPA funding, so you will see the differences in the appropriate line items.

7. Director's Report:

- Facility Update: Thankfully, Mother Nature is working with us. Our hope is weather will hold tight. The administration building is closed in and they will be able to work in there throughout the winter. The roof is 75% complete. Snow and rain cannot get in. They are pouring footings with a cold weather concrete. The Structural Steel Inspector on site today for the garage. They are currently placing Styrofoam on admin building. The project is going very well. The back garage is closed in to store materials. They will continue to work through winter in the inside. The project is currently on schedule with no over runs at this time.
- Cashless Update: Continue with weekly meeting with consultant and Bytemark, finding bugs in system, battery life issues. The solution to the battery life issue was Bytemark provided us with extra devices for each ferry, at no extra cost. Our IBI consultant states the process takes this long and this is normal for such a complicated and new system and to work out errors, and bugs. There is not an expected end date currently. There was not anything in the contract for length. The contract was a lump sum, delivered product. It did not cost on time and material. We have an extremely unique system.
- Drummond IV Update: This project is coming along. We are hoping a week or two. Steel work is almost done. Priming and painting to be completes and the Fire system will be completed by the mechanics. That will take a week. Painting and priming mainly in compartments of boat.

- 2023 Meeting Dates. It was moved and carried by unanimous vote

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Phyllis French	Approve: The 2023 Board meeting dates as presented
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8. New Business:

- Election of Vice Chair Discussion: Tabled

MOTION: Choose an item. SECOND: Choose an item.	TABLED
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- Union Negotiations – The Union Contract expires January 31, 2023. We will begin entering a new 3-year contract. The board would like a member on the negotiation panel. Nick Huyck offered to be on the negotiations panel and Lynda will be back up. Pete will let everyone know dates of negotiations.
- Sugar winter schedule: Last year Sugar Island Ferry went to a winter schedule. Pete would like to do this again this year. After a few tweaks last year, we had no comments. This small reduction in the schedule will save on wear and tear on the boat. Traffic is down during this time of year.

It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Phyllis French	Approve: Utilizing winter schedule at Sugar Island Ferry in 2023, using the same schedule that was used for 2022 and is currently posted on the website.
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- Bus Survey. EUPTA rated very high on the MDOT bus survey. Pete provided a copy to board members. The customer satisfaction portion was very high. We rated high on all categories. There were a few final recommendations. MDOT prompts this survey and consults it out. They do this for all transit agencies in the state. Results for the ferry have not been reported yet.
- Sugar Island Ferry hit the dock during high winds. The USCG is currently assessing the damage. There was damage to the boat. The ramp on boat was damaged and fixed by mechanics. The functionality of the ferry was not compromised. The king post was bent, and a crack in the deck. We will know more of what needs to happen with fixing this, once the USCG inspects the ferry. Board discussed necessity of life jackets during harsh weathers. It is always the captain’s discretion of when to run and when not to run. There are a lot of variables of running the ferry.
- Request to address questions from letter to the board –

- Cashless system in limbo as stated in report.
- Facebook page for Neebish. We will investigate implementing this but we need someone to update on site. This was not included in the description in current contract. Social media needs to be done immediately and completed by a someone that has access and understanding. It is much better to have someone that is there for reporting and posting to have the immediate information as social media requires. Please note, not everyone has service or has Facebook someone still may not get the information. We will implement this as a requirement for next contract. Discussed variable including rave system. Discussed the problem of waiting 15 minutes and that this is the way of life. Making too much of an issue for only 15 minutes. Phyllis French stated - When something happens at the ferry need to know. Communication is our responsibility. Some type of vehicle to get information to the people and would like to work it out. Director Paramski responded - We can only do the best we can do. We will work on Facebook site going forward.
- EMERGENCY specials. Jamie has right to charge for emergency specials. Jamie's is not expected to have the ability to access medical emergency. Who makes that decision? Anyone can say they are having an emergency. Discussion. Address all in contract with new provider. There will be 14-15 months and there will be a new provider. Trustee stated her thoughts that an ambulance should not be the stipulation. The threats and confrontations with CCRC need to stop. The crew needs to figure out how to get there if the weather is bad, it is part of captain's job. Discussion. Director Paramski stated this is a personal issue with captain and some others and professionalism on all parts should prevail as well composure on all sides. There are two sides to each story. Director Paramski discussed CCRC and EUPTA's good standing relationship. There are some issues going on between others and relationships are not great. The CCRC not helping with boat any longer. There is not a county truck on island or employee on island any longer. Trustee French stated, "If the ferry doesn't run due to unplowed roads, Phyllis is going to work very hard to end contract".

- Bonus Ticket discussion: FY2022 graph provided to the board showing how much has been provided free in FY22 from the bonus ticket program. We have not raised prices from inflation. Fare increases are likely coming in upcoming year. It makes business sense to eliminate bonus ticket due to inflation. The plan is to implement smaller increases instead of huge increases, so they are not so hard on the customer. Federal funding has helped us but we still need to keep up with inflation.
- It was moved and carried roll call vote:

MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Nick Huyck	Approve: Suspend bonus tickets effective March 31, 2023.
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Yay: Huyck, Henne, Waltman Nay: French, Garlitz

9. Board Comment:

- Phyllis will be gone January to May and would like to listen to meetings via public.

10. Adjourn: It was moved and carried by roll call vote to:

MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Adjourn the meeting at 11:54 AM
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Lynda Garlitz, Secretary


Bonnie Kaunisto, Recording Secretary

Board Approved: