

Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority
6/7/2022

1. Call to Order:

Board Chair, John Waltman, called the June 7, 2022 meeting of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority Board to order at 10:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call was taken:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim German (excused)

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

3. Agenda: It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Joe Henne	Approve the agenda with the addition of MSU Survey to the Director's Report
--	--

4. Public Comment:

- A. Tom Gibbons
- B. Mike Pine

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

MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve the May 3, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.
--	--

6. Finance Director Report:

- Finance Director Gordon reviewed April 2022 Financials. Bus revenue is down and including Rides to Wellness. There were quite a few cancellations in April. Rides to Wellness fares are higher than the contracts we used to have pre-Covid. CRRSA funding is at 40% reimbursement rate and replaces the 20% CARES act and the 18% Federal Rate. Expenses are up including fuel and salaries. We are short on drivers and therefore more overtime is being incurred. Travel/training line item has increased. We purchased driver training materials which were a one-time purchase, and this is 100% reimbursable.

- Ferry revenue – Expenses are up in fuel and wages. Fuel increased 98%. Wages have increased due to overtime. Drummond is down deckhands and are very busy. We have advertised for a deckhand, but have zero applicants. Reviewed Jeep the Mac numbers. The months have changed: October 2020, April 2021 and May 2022. Provided graphs to show trends and it looks like the event is bouncing back after the pandemic. All three islands have decreased traffic and fares. Can surmise it has something to do with the higher fuel prices.

7. Director's Report:

- MSU Survey: MSU was hired by MDOT to conduct a study on the ferries. We heard about the study at a legislative update meeting approximately one year ago. We were supposed to be given an opportunity to view and comment on the questions provided in the survey before it was rolled out, but that did not happen. Two days prior to the team coming to the conduct the study the team called and requested our crew hand out the survey. It was explained to them it was Memorial Day weekend and the crew is extremely busy. The survey team came up and handed the surveys out themselves with a QR code. We called OPT to find out more about the survey and it is being conducted in other states with ferries, i.e. New Jersey, Washington, etc. Beaver Island Ferry was surveyed as well. Pete and Akemi voiced their concerns to the survey director, regarding skewed data, the fact that people can fill out the survey multiple times. The complete information from the survey is due to be rolled out in April 2023 for a final report. How much clout this survey to the legislature will be for funding is unknown. Trustee Henne recommended a letter of concern be written to put it on record of the concerns of how the survey was conducted and the questions.
- Facility Update: RCL Construction from Sanford, Michigan will begin breaking ground on June 13, 2022. The building should be shelled in by fall. October 2023 is the tentative move in date. We have a positive impression of the construction company and RCL came with high reviews from other projects around the state. They are utilizing local sub-contractors including electrical, and cabinetry. The location is south of Rodenroth Motors.
- Cashless Update: This project is not moving as quickly as had hoped for. It is very intensive. IBI has stated the progress is normal in this type of project. IBI is the consultants to help navigate the system and guide EUPTA. Go live date is going to be pushed back as starting it during the busy season is not fair to the crew or customers. We are currently discussing a soft roll out and then fully roll out October 1, 2022 to coincide with the fiscal year. Bonnie provided a demonstration on the app. Information is linked to the app for ease for customers, including Facebook pages. It was recommended to begin a Facebook Page for Neebish Island Ferry.

- **Neebish II Update:** Presentation with new photos from Burger were viewed. The launch will be August 13th, 2022 at Burger Boat's facility in Manitowoc, WI. All are welcome to attend.
This will be a big event open to the public with a blessing for the boat and food trucks, etc. The board is invited as well as OPT. There will also be a local launch with local dignitaries, OPT, etc. in Barbeau, Michigan in September or October 2022.
- **Sugar II Update:** MCM continues to make progress. Working on painting the interior. Engine gears have been installed and will be aligned when in the water. Hoping to be in service by July 4th weekend. D-III and D-IV will be at Drummond July and August and then D-IV will go into drydock at MCM after Labor Day weekend.
- **Temporary Deckhand wage discussion.** It has been very difficult to obtain and retain temporary deckhands. We have been advertising for a long period of time with zero applicants. The wage is low comparatively to other jobs in the local proximity with no benefits. At this point we need to make a decision to increase the wage or we may be at a point where we cannot run the ferry due to the lack crew members. A discussion ensued with the board regarding pay with a motion from Trustee Henne to increase the pay to \$20.00 per hour. There was not a second. The wage was increased to \$18.00/hr.
- **Director Paramski updated the board regarding the dock work at Drummond Island approach and paving project on Drummond Island.** Both are great improvements.
- **Director Paramski has had communication with Drummond Island Tourism Association and went to a meeting to share information, plans, etc.** The meeting was a great experience and very productive.

8. Increase Temporary Deckhand Wage: It was moved and carried majority vote:

MOTION: Phyllis French SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Increase Temporary Deckhand Wage to \$18.00 per hour.
---	---

Yes: Phyllis French, Lynda Garlitz, John Waltman; Nay: Joe Henne

9. Ferry FTE Employee: Discussion regarding the possibility of hiring a Ferry Full Time Employee to fill in at locations in various duties. It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: John Waltman SECOND: Joe Henne	To Hire a Ferry FTE Employee
---	------------------------------

10. Review Contracting Policy and Change Order Flow Chart: Discussion: This Policy is redundant and already covered in the approved Procurement Policy. It was recommended to omit this policy as it is already covered. It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: John Waltman SECOND: Phyllis French	Omit policy as it is covered by the Procurement Policy currently in effect and board approved.
--	--

11. New Business:

None

12. Board Comment:

None

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

MOTION: Phyllis French SECOND: Joe Henne	Adjourn the meeting at 12:14 PM
---	---------------------------------


Lynda Garlitz, Secretary


Bonnie Kaunisto, Recording Secretary

Board Approved: