



## **EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

4001 I-75 Business Spur

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# **Board Meeting Minutes**

**DATE:** Tuesday, August 6, 2019

**PLACE:** 4001 I-75 Business Spur  
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Waltman, Phyllis French  
Conor Egan, Rob Laitinen

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jennifer McLeod Tyson

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT:** Pete Paramski, Akemi Gordon and Kathy Neubert

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** See Attached

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Trustee Waltman.

**II. ROLL CALL OF TRUSTEES:**

All trustees were present with the exception of Jennifer McLeod-Tyson

**III. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA:**

Administrative Assistant Neubert asked to add Updated FOIA procedures and guidelines to the agenda. **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Laitinen; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee French to approve agenda changes. **UNANIMOUS**. Motion carried

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

A question was asked about getting credit card readers on the ferries. Director Paramski responded that EUPTA has not identified what this will look like at this time but have been researching options.

**V. APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES:**

With regard to the Board Meeting Minutes for May 7th, 2019, this item was tabled until the Board reviews the tapes.

In regards to the meeting minutes from June 25, 2019, **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Laitinen; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee French to approve said minutes. **UNANIMOUS**. Motion carried.

In regards to the Closed Session meeting minutes from June 25, 2019, **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee French; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Laitinen to approve said minutes. **UNANIMOUS**. Motion carried.

**VII: FINANCIAL REPORT**

**IN GENERAL:**

Finance Director Gordon present the electronic funds report.

Finance Director Gordon stated that each year she attends the MERS annual conference. MERS holds an annual meeting where all municipalities vote. MERS requests that each municipality have a delegate officer. Gordon asked the board for approval for her to be that delegate.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee French; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Egan to sign the employee

delegate certification form allowing Gordon to vote at the annual meeting on behalf of EUPTA. **UNANIMOUS.** Motion carried.

**FOIA Procedures and Guidelines:**

Administrative Assistant Neubert stated that EUPTA was required to update its FOIA policy. The policy reflects the mandated Michigan State requirements.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Laitinen; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Egan to accept the amended FOIA procedure documents. **UNANIMOUS.** Motion carried.

Finance Director Gordon handed out draft budgets for the board to review and discuss at the next meeting.

Gordon stated that informational meetings will be held on each Island. 8/7/19 is Neebish Island, 8/8/19 is Sugar Island and 8/15/19 is Drummond Island. Gordon stated that a presentation will be held at each site. She asked the board for input on what she should provide to the public. Trustee Laitinen suggested that communication be provided on what the requirements are as well as something regarding the law regarding the 50% discount, information on the costs, and what the shortfall is.

Paramski stated the presentation will have 3 parts to it. He will open the meeting with an educational segment regarding funding and match monies and how EUPTA gets subsidized. Gordon will do a presentation on finances and then a question and answer session.

Gordon asked if there was any feedback regarding the scenarios she handed out last month. Trustee French asked if the numbers would be rounded as she was concerned that there was change involved. Gordon stated yes, the numbers would be rounded and what she presented was a formula.

Another discussion was held on an electronic system for the ferries. Trustee Egan stated he would like a presentation on what has been looked at and what the shortfalls are. Paramski stated that he would like to contact LSSU to see about a marketing student doing an internship and working on this project. He also stated that they have talked about just doing a credit card system for car and driver as this is 50% of what is collected.

**BUSSING:**

Gordon went over the bussing financial statement stating that the revenue from all sources is up 9%. Gordon stated the majority of this is from EUPTA's contract fares. Gordon stated that expenses are up 2.25%.

Gordon spoke about the Michigan Transit Pool and reported that EUPTA received a notification about a settlement from a lawsuit with Alpena County and all transit agencies will have to share in that cost.

A discussion was held about Michigan Road Association and how this works. Gordon stated

that this might be something she could look into. Trustee Laitinen stated that the next time he speaks with his CRA administrator he will ask if he can provide EUPTA with some information.

Gordon stated that Director Paramski, Administrative Assistant Neubert and herself attended a meeting at War Memorial Hospital regarding non-emergency medical transportation. The Superior Health Foundation out of Marquette received a grant for the Upper Peninsula. War Memorial Hospital is now applying for some of this grant money. Gordon and Neubert gave War Memorial Hospital an idea of what EUPTA could currently provide within our existing routes and what we could possibly add, as well as the cost of ferry tickets for those who may need services from one of the Islands. Gordon also provided them with an estimated cost for this service. If War Memorial gets the grant then they could contract with EUPTA to provide the service. They will know in mid-October if they will receive any of the grant funds.

Quarterly revenue graphs for Chippewa and Luce County bussing were presented.

#### **FERRIES:**

Gordon presented quarterly graphs for all the ferries. The graphs break down the revenue for each ferry with a 5-year comparison provided as well.

### **VII: DIRECTORS REPORT**

#### **IN GENERAL:**

Paramski reported that this is a very busy week. A staff meeting was held earlier today and EUPTA has two of the three Island meetings coming up this week, and the Drummond meeting will be held next week. Trustee Laitinen will be attending the Neebish Island meeting, Jennifer stated that she was interested in representing the Board at the meeting on Sugar Island, and John and Conor will attend the meeting on Drummond Island. Also present will be the members of the task force which are Phil Roy and Greg Gorsuch for Sugar Island and James Geyer and Brad Kuusinen for Drummond Island.

Paramski stated that the procurement policy that was previously updated and approved needs a signature on the policy.

Paramski reported that the bids came in for the demolition of the Fog Cutter building and there was only one bid and it came in significantly over budget. Paramski stated he has been working back and

forth with Lansing to justify the bid. Paramski stated that the bid was solicited and advertised.

Paramski stated that the Category F ferry dock road project is complete; however, there is still some restoration work to be done but the road looks good.

Paramski and Gordon will be attending the annual Michigan Transit Pool Association meeting in Crystal Mountain later this month.

**FERRY SYSTEM:**

Paramski stated that when refueling the Sugar II there was a fuel spill. It was contained well and cleaned up. There were no citations given.

Paramski reported that the annual Coast Guard inspections have been scheduled. Sugar and Neebish have been inspected. There was one issue on Sugar and the issue has been resolved. The Neebish inspection was done last week and there were a couple of minor things dealing with the age of the vessel.

Paramski stated that he met with the Naval Architect last week for the first time. They met at the office and then went and looked at the slip and the docks and it was a very productive meeting.

**VI: FINANCIAL REPORT:**

**IN GENERAL:**

Finance Director Gordon presented the electronic funds report.

Gordon stated that the April Financial statements were sent with the board packets and she will be sending the May financials to Board members separately in the mail.

Gordon stated that EUPTA has had a fare restructuring taskforce that has met a couple of times. The taskforce included a couple of staff from Drummond Island and Sugar Island as well as Gordon and Paramski. Gordon stated that this has been a round table discussion regarding fares and fare restructuring. Gordon reiterated that this is very preliminary and in draft form.

Gordon presented a power point presentation on the restructure. She stated that it is not just an increase but that there is some restructuring that has been needed for many years. Gordon stated that since she has been at EUPTA there has been a fare increase every five years and the last increase was in 2013 and EUPTA's expenses have increased 13%. Trustee Egan asked if the board could get

**VIII. BOARD COMMENT:**

Trustee Laitinen stated that he also attends the MERS meeting at it is a very informative meeting. He also stated that there is a MERS meeting on 8/7/19 in Marquette and the MERS CEO will be talking on upcoming changes and he will give an update at the next board meeting.

Trustee French and Egan stated they didn't feel there was enough communication regarding scheduling the meeting on the Islands and feels that this is being rushed. Any board member who wants to attend should be able to. Trustee Laitinen stated that in the future when meetings are scheduled to communicate ahead of time.

Trustee Egan stated that EUPTA has talked about updating the policy book and create a procedure and policy regarding rate changes and schedule changes.

Trustee Egan stated that he feels there are some things that need to be cleaned up procedurally. He feels any incidents that happen be reported to the board and he feels that there is room for improvement in regards to communication.

Trustee Laitinen stated that it has been interesting learning about the operations of EUPTA and his experiences have been good. He appreciates the opportunity to sit in on the meeting with the Naval Architect and realizes that this is a staff function but appreciated the opportunity. Laitinen stated he was impressed with the staff interaction with the Naval Architect.

Trustee French feels she is out of the loop and things change and don't get reported to the board. She stated she feels she was reprimanded for asking a question.

Trustee Egan stated that he feels decisions are made that the board should be aware of. He stated he is not asking to get involved in day to day operations but if there is an incident the board should be aware. Paramski asked that if there are things the board wants to know to let him know what those things are.

Chairman Waltman stated that in regards to communication, if there are any questions, err on the side of more communication.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Laitinen; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Egan to go into closed session. A roll call vote was taken at 11:39 a.m.  
Trustee Egan – yes, Trustee French – Yes, Trustee Laitinen – yes, Chairman Waltman yes.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee French; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Egan to return to open session at 11:49 a.m. **UNANIMOUS.** Motion carried.

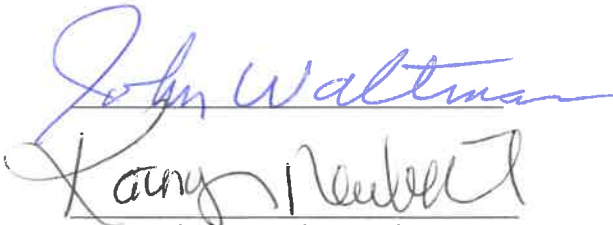
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**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business to come before the Board, **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee French; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Waltman to adjourn. **UNANIMOUS.** Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 12:50 a.m. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday September 10, 2019.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Waltman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Prepared By: Kathy Neubert  
Administrative Assistant