



EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

4001 I-75 Business Spur

Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Phone: (906) 632-2898 Fax: (906) 632-0988

Email: euptatrans@eupta.net Web: www.eupta.net

Board Meeting Minutes/Special Meeting

DATE: Thursday September 26th, 2019

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Waltman, Phyllis French
Jennifer McLeod Tyson (Phone), Conor
Egan and Rob Laitinen

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

**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 2:30 p.m. by Chairman Waltman.

II. ROLL CALL OF TRUSTEES:

All trustees were present. (Trustee McLeod-Tyson by phone)

III. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

None

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT:

David Bean asked what process was used to examine the fare restructure and the input from the Islands. He stated that when he goes to the EUPTA website he does not find things such as previous meeting minutes, and by-laws of the organization. Mr. Bean was told that EUPTA's board meeting minutes can be found on the Chippewa County website. The website is chippewacountymi.gov. Mr. Bean also commented about the board being appointed by Chippewa County. Mr. Bean stated that the revision of the fares will have an economic impact on those who live on the Island and use the ferry every day. He stated that the increase in fares will also have an economic impact on property values. He stated he isn't opposed to an increase but what about adding a percentage increase to all the current tickets.

Jason Viau stated that he paid a cash fare and couldn't get a receipt. He feels there are accountability issues with the crew. Receipt books are available and the crew should write a receipt if requested.

Lori Miller stated she was speaking for Marian Miller who couldn't be at the meeting. The Millers work off the Island and pay over \$3,000 for tickets each year and also have a student driver. Director Paramski stated that there is a student rate in the new proposal.

Trustee Laitinen stated that this will be the first roll out of the proposed fare restructure to the board and thinks it would be appropriate to offer another public comment session at the end of the meeting. **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Laitinen; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Egan to offer another public comment session after the presentation of the fare restructure. **UNANIMOUS**. Motion carried.

V. APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

With regard to the Board Meeting Minutes from September 10th 2019; **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Laitinen; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Egan to approve said minutes. **UNANIMOUS**. Motion carried. Chairman Waltman suggested that the additional public comment be placed under the fare restructure as VII A.

VI: FINANCIAL REPORT:

IN GENERAL:

Finance Director Gordon presented the electronic funds report.

Gordon stated that she will be attending the MERS annual meeting 10/2/19-10/4/19. Trustee Laitinen stated that he will also be attending the meeting.

BUS SYSTEM:

EUPTA's overall revenue is up by 5.34% which includes fares and state and federal operating assistance.

Expenses are up 5.22% compared to last year and Gordon reported that passenger counts are down. The ISD summer program ended earlier this year due to their grant funding so EUPTA had a few weeks of service that we didn't provide.

FERRY SYSTEM:

Drummond and Sugar Island had a really good August, and YTD EUPTA's fare revenue and expenses have increased .5%.

The September financial statements will be marked "Draft" until our audit report is completed. Anderson Tackman will be coming a month earlier this year.

VII: DIRECTORS REPORT:

IN GENERAL:

Executive Director Paramski reported that the Fog Cutter structure is gone and the parking lot is being paved.

FERRY SYSTEM:

Paramski stated that the Drummond IV had a successful Coast Guard inspection recently and this was final inspection for this year.

FARE RESTRUCURE:

Director Paramski stated that EUPTA developed a task force that has met over the last several months which consisted of deckhands, captains, and administrative staff to discuss what is working well and what could be improved upon. The task force tried to streamline the current products and make them consistent on each Island. Paramski stated the draft proposal goes from 50 printed products down to 8, eliminates passenger charges, eliminated many items, created a large commercial vehicle category and will be charging more for this due to the wear and tear on the boat, reclassified trailer lengths, addressed ATV's and UTV's, stated that Specials will be the same price for each Island, Manufactured homes will be by appointment only, came up with a student price and stated that for every 20 trip car/Pickup/UTV commuter passes you buy, you can come into the office and receive a voucher for 10 free trips.

Paramski stated that this will reduce printing costs and make it a lot easier to go to a computerized system.

Paramski and Gordon went through the current revenue, the proposed prices and the proposed revenue.

Chairman Waltman stated that the rate structure shows fairness and equity in all structures.

Trustee McLeod-Tyson stated that customers won't think it's fair when they see this change making everything right all at once and feels the process could be simpler.

Trustee Laitinen state that he was pleased to see a student discount.

Trustee French asked about 20 trip commuter trips and receiving a 10-trip voucher. A discussion was had in regards to the 10 trip tickets. Gordon and Paramski stated that a lot of money was being lost on the 10-trip tickets and that EUPA is not in a position to go back to that stating that rates aren't market based, they are cost basted rates and if EUPTA had a 10 trip ticket, lost revenue would have to be made up.

VII A: PUBLIC COMMENT #2

Jason Viau asked about not charging for passengers and walk on fare as well as clarification on the student rate as his wife is a student. There is no age limit on a student. You will need to bring in your current full-time school schedule and student idea to the office to receive the student discount.

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Julie Ketelhut spoke about the walk on fare as well and stated that EUPTA needs to be consistent as there have been several times that she has not been charged. She also feels that the increase is substantial. She would also like to see all large trucks, motor homes, logging trucks etc. cross during non-peak times and not when commuters cross.

Tim Moher stated that he has seen receipts given out and can only count on one hand the number of times they have missed charging him in twenty (26) years.

Mike Pine stated that trailers are causing issues with deckhands and wanted to know what was going to be used for a back up with the Drummond III going into Dry-dock.

Dawn Gibbins asked about the 6-month expiration.

Diane Laitinen- thinks the draft proposal is fair and stated they don't have a lot of passengers at Neebish. She did have a concern that with their limited ferry schedule they have to pay for a special for medical emergencies. Mrs. Laitinen stated that another ferry provider she recently visited charged \$85.00. She also commended the board for the proposed student price.

David Bean – wanted to know if the public comments were taken into account with the draft proposal and stated that one size does not fit all and each Island is different.

Mr. Bean was told that EUPTA's board meeting minutes can be found on the Counties website. The website is **chippewacountymi.gov**.

Jesse Knoll – spoke about the prior purchase of a backhoe and the roof of the EUPTA office.

Kristy Beyer thanked the board for the public comment and asked about a walk on fee and wondered about bikes.

VIII. BOARD COMMENT:

Trustee French addressed Mr. Bean's comment regarding board members being appointed by Chippewa County. Trustee French informed Mr. Bean that two of the Board members were appointed by Luce County and do not ride the ferry every day.

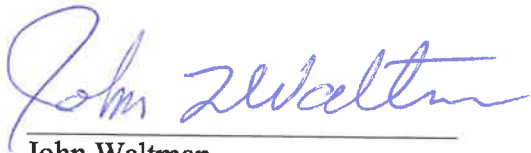
The board let the public know that there will be a final public meeting at a later date.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

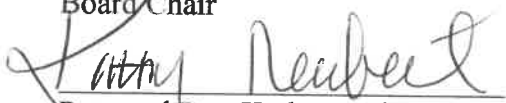
Being no further business to come before the Board, **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee French; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Laitinen to adjourn. **UNANIMOUS**. Motion carried. Meeting was

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adjourned at 4:04 pm. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday November 5th 2019 at 10:30 a.m.



John Waltman
Board Chair



Prepared By: Kathy Neubert
Administration Assistant