



## **EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

4001 I-75 Business Spur

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# **Board Meeting Minutes**

**DATE:** Tuesday September 1st, 2020

**PLACE:** 4001 I-75 Business Spur  
Public Comment/Zoom Electronic Meeting

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT:** Pete Paramski, Akemi Gordon, Bonnie Kaunisto 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

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLIGIENCE:**

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

Finance Director Gordon added a discussion on refunds of passenger tickets to her report.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee German; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Henne to approve the agenda with the noted change. **UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIED.**

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**VI. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES AUGUST 13<sup>TH</sup> 2020 AND CLOSED SESSION MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 13<sup>TH</sup> 2020.**

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee French; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Garlitz to approve the August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 regular Board meeting minutes and the August 13<sup>th</sup> 2020 Closed session meeting minutes. **UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIED.**

**VII. FINANCIAL REPORT**

**IN GENERAL**

Finance Director Gordon presented the Electronic Funds Report.

Gordon discussed Public Act 152 of 2011 and stated that each year EUPTA has to vote on the employer's/employees share of medical plan coverage. Gordon stated that since the inception of Public Act 152, EUPTA has adopted the 80/20 split in health insurance costs and recommends EUPTA continue this.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee German; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee French for EUPTA to adopt the

80/20 split in health insurance costs. **UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIED.**

Gordon discussed the budgets for FYE 2021 and explained that this is how the State determines how much it will advance EUPTA each month in operating assistance for both busing and ferries. The State will advance 1/12 each month based on the percentage of expense for both bus and ferry. Gordon stated that at the end of the fiscal year a reconciliation is done and EUPTA will either owe the State money back or the State may owe EUPTA money back based on the actual expenses for the year.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee German; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Henne to adopt the 2021 budget as presented. **UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **BUSSING:**

War Memorial Hospital granted EUPTA with a 2020 Dodge Caravan minivan through the Superior Health Foundation grant. EUPTA took possession of the van on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2020. EUPTA purchased the van and will get reimbursed through War Memorial Hospital. EUPTA will be using this van for the Rides to Wellness program.

Helen Newberry Joy has now become a partner with the Michigan Transit Connection which manages the Rides to Wellness program. EUPTA will now be able to take calls for providing non-emergency medical transportation to and from the hospital and get reimbursed. The RTW program has allowed us to recoup some of the lost revenue we have experienced with the pandemic.

Gordon stated that ridership numbers are down 33% compared to last July and 19% YTD. Fare revenue is down 39% for the month and 22% YTD.

#### **FERRY SYSTEM:**

Gordon handed out a graph regarding the percentages of special runs on each Island.

Gordon reported that there was a 17% increase in fares for August and were up 4% for the year. Vehicles were down slightly at 1% with a decrease of 8% for the year. Passengers are down 8% for the month and 14% YTD.

Gordon stated that since the fare increase July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, EUPTA has been refunding non-expired passenger tickets for all three islands. Gordon stated that in the beginning EUPTA issued several refunds but it's really slowing down now. Gordon asked if the board would be willing to approve a deadline on refunds of September 30<sup>th</sup> 2020, the end of EUPTA's fiscal year. Gordon stated that we

could post this on our Facebook pages and website. Gordon stated that she really doesn't think there are many left out there that aren't expired. Gordon reported that EUPTA has issued approximately \$2,400 in refunds.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Garlitz; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee German to put a 9/30/2020 end date on the refund of passenger tickets. **UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIED.**

Trustee German spoke about the negative fund balance and asked when Finance Director Gordon would estimate there would be a positive fund balance and to the recommended 10-15% that most Governmental Agencies are suppose to be at. Gordon stated that the Cares Act funding will help however she stated that it would be at least 2 years before EUPTA will see a positive fund balance. Trustee German also spoke about the MERS unfunded liability. Gordon stated that EUPTA is paying the minimum requirement, however this will take years.

#### **VIII. DIRECTORS REPORT**

Director Paramski stated that Sea trials were held on the Drummond III last week with the United States Coast Guard. Paramski reported that the transmissions/gears started overheating, therefore other additional testing could not be completed. Paramski stated that Twin Disk and CAT thought the current cooling system would be sufficient, however that was not the case. Paramski stated EUPTA has received a recommendation for two additional coolers and plumbing will need to be done which is quite extensive.

Paramski stated that in regards to the Neebish Islander III, the Naval Architect is on his last pass through for the final drawings and EUPTA held its final plan review last week. Paramski is working on the RFQ to submit to Lansing to be able to get the construction contract advertised.

Paramski stated that in regards to the property update, the purchase agreement was signed 8/19/2020 by both parties. The title research is being done and if there are any issues, the seller will take care of that and a closing date will be scheduled. Paramski also stated that he has been working on the RFQ for the facility design and is waiting to hear back from Lansing.

Trustee's stated that EUPTA needs to be proactive and make sure the public knows that this is being funded 100% from grants and not from revenue. Trustees would also like some sort of press release done reiterating this.

Paramski stated that in regards to an update from IBI, not a lot has changed. Paramski stated that he just got an updated report from IBI today and he has not even opened it yet. Discussion incurred regarding the different options and that there must be more options out there than they are giving us as well as what happens if EUPTA is totally cashless and someone doesn't have a card on them.

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Paramski stated that there was a Prebid optional visit with four contractors regarding the camera contract. Contractors were able to look at what they are bidding on and ask questions. Bids are due on 9/9/2020.

Paramski stated that one EUPTA employee and his spouse have tested positive for Covid-19. No other employees have had any symptoms. Paramski stated that EUPTA is following the CDC and Health Dept. guidelines as to when the employee can return to work. Paramski stated that Trustee German's assistant passed along some very helpful information including a one-time allotment of 80 hours of sick leave that the employee can use.

**IX. BY-LAW DISCUSSION**

A discussion regarding the By-Laws occurred. **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee German; to approve the By-laws as presented. Discussion: Trustee Henne stated that in regards to Article 12 he had some concerns. Henne stated that he had previously had an interest in serving on the board and approached the commissioners and was told although he was a good candidate, there were currently no openings in his district. Henne stated that that the board is appointed and he does not feel he is representing his district as he is not an elected official. Henne also stated that he does not feel that decisions made by the board should be controlled by politics.

Trustee German stated that the commission tries the best they can to even it out on the Islands. German stated that as a board we need to view the agency as a whole.

**IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee German **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Garlitz to approve the By-laws with the following change: Article 12 strike the words of that district and change the wording from that respective County to their respective County. **UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIED.**

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

Trustee Henne stated that he received a call today from someone who was offended by a political sign near the approach to the Drummond Island ferry. Trustee Garlitz recommend trying to find out who's property it is on by contacting the assessor and also asking if there were any sign size restrictions for that area.

**XI. BOARD COMMENT**


Trustee German thanked the board and stated it has been a pleasure to work with each and every one of them. German stated he feels they have accomplished a lot in a short period of time.

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**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business to come before the Board, **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Henne; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee German to adjourn. **UNANIMOUS; MOTION CARRIED.** The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m. The next regular board meeting will be held October 6<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

  
Lynda Garlitz  
Secretary/Treasurer

  
Prepared By: Kathy Neubert  
Administrative Assistant