

MINUTES
METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 23, 2007

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 1:36 p.m. by Chairman David S. Wolff. Vice Chairman Gerald Smith, Board Secretary Jackie Freeman, and Board Members Burt Ballanfant, George DeMontrond, III, James W. E. Dixon, II, Rafael Ortega, and C. J. Stewart, III were present and constituted a quorum. Board Member Carmen Orta was absent.

As the first order of business, Chairman Wolff called for approval of the Minutes of the Board Meeting of July 26, 2007. Board Member C. J. Stewart moved approval of the Minutes. The Motion was seconded by Board Member George DeMontrond and all Board Members present voted in favor of approval of the Minutes.

MOTION NO. 2007 – 35

Chairman Wolff next called upon those members of the public who had requested to speak before the Board. The persons who spoke and the substance of their comments were as follows:

1. Mr. Clifton Casimire – complained of rude bus operator behavior and the failure of some bus operators to stop at the bus stop or stop near the curb.
2. Mr. Michael Jackson – complained that scheduled buses for Route 3 failed to arrive, and mechanical failures had forced passengers to catch another bus.

David Feeley, Senior Vice President of Operations, explained that some buses on Route 3 have been delayed because of moving freight trains at the intersection crossings.

3. Mr. Mark Hogue – suggested a new bus route, called the “39 Fountainview/Crosstown.” Mr. Hogue suggested changes to Bus Routes 53 and 82.

4. Mr. Tom Bazan – complained that METRO does not timely respond to his requests under the Texas Public Information Act. He expressed concerns that METRO has not honored its commitment to spend 25% of sales tax revenues for general mobility projects. Mr. Bazan also questioned the accuracy of ridership and revenue data. He stated that boardings and revenues have declined, by his analyses, and charged that METRO has diverted its resources away from bus service.

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President & Chief Executive Officer Frank J. Wilson disagreed with Mr. Bazan's comments. Mr. Wilson offered to share additional information with him that might address his concerns.

5. Mr. Joseph Charles – requested the return of a paratransit disability card and certain stolen property. Mr. Charles claimed to have been attacked by bus operators, as a part of a global mafia terrorist organization.

6. Mr. Joshua Bullard – argued that the current City of Houston Ordinance banning smoking at certain buildings should be more far-reaching. Mr. Bullard advocates extending the smoking ban to the entire METRORail platform, even if the area is uncovered. He believes bus stops should also be "smoke-free." He asked that the METRO Board request an amendment to the existing City ordinance.

7. Ms. Virginia Libengood – complained of poor bus service and delays, and rude bus operator behavior.

8. Ms. Gabrielle Schram – complained that METRO's real estate representatives have approached the tenants on her Wheeler Street properties. She accused METRO of encouraging them to move, and threatened to call "9-1-1" if any METRO representatives return.

9. Ms. Robin Holzer – of the Citizens Transportation Coalition. Ms. Holzer encouraged METRO to work with TxDOT and with HCTRA to ensure that transit is not compromised by the planned highway and toll road construction in the 290 Corridor. She suggested the construction of direct connector ramps to and from park & ride facilities, and giving transit a priority for toll lane usage. She also encouraged further planning and cooperation for the use of the Eureka MKT right-of-way.

Bryan Pennington, METRO's Vice President of Planning, Engineering and Construction, voiced his agreement with Ms. Holzer's suggestions. METRO is working with other entities to see that transit needs are addressed.

10. Ms. Sandra Burleson – President, Local 260, Transport Workers Union, requested that bus operators be allowed to wear their specially designed polo shirts for a longer period. She stated that the shirts are cool, they boost employee morale, and have received positive public responses.

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Board Member Dixon suggested that the employees be able to wear the shirts.

Mr. David Feeley explained how METRO and the Union previously agreed that the shirts would be worn, as a "test," from June 1 to September 1. He suggested that any further changes should be a part of the upcoming negotiations for the new labor agreement. Ms. Burleson responded that some operators only recently purchased their shirts when they received their uniform allowance (on August 15). She described the issue as a "morale booster" rather than a contractual matter. Mr. Feeley alleged that a change might infringe upon his ability to negotiate with the union. Ms. Burleson disagreed.

Vice Chairman Smith stated his support for the Union's request that the operators be able to wear the shirts during September.

Board Member Dixon surmised that the issue is more than wearing the new polo shirts. He stated that the work environment is most important, and he does not wish to see any hostility or bias among the workers.

Mr. Wilson cautioned that the Union should not ask the Board to become involved in day-to-day workplace matters. If morale is low, it often stems from the enforcement of rules that are necessary to operate a successful organization. Ms. Burleson responded that the employees are aware of the rules and appreciates the need for enforcement, although the manner in which the rules are enforced can produce work-place problems. Ms. Burleson then described an incident involving a supervisor dressed in a non-METRO uniform. Mr. Wilson acknowledged the incident but cautioned that the current discussion not serve as preparation for upcoming labor negotiations.

Board Member Dixon noted that the discussion has shown an environment between the Union and management that causes concern. While the ultimate issue may extend beyond the wearing of polo shirts, he stated his concern that the Union's request had demonstrated broader levels of disagreement.

Chairman Wolff then discussed, with Ms. Burleson, a letter drafted by the Union in which supervisory activities were referred to as a "sting." Chairman Wolff stated that the Board will not involve itself in day-to-day operations. The Board has confidence in management, and will leave to Mr. Wilson and Mr. Feeley to address day-to-day operational issues.

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Chairman Wolff then moved for consideration of the Summary Agenda, containing Agenda Items 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Board Member Stewart moved approval of the Summary Agenda. The Motion was seconded by Board Secretary Jackie Freeman, and all Board Members present voted to approve the matters on the Summary Agenda.

MOTION NO. 2007 – 36

By way of Summary Agenda, the Board of Directors approved the following:

1. Authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to execute and deliver a contract with Planet Ford for police vehicles and sedans for an amount not to exceed \$406,500.00; authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to execute and deliver a contract with Grand Prairie Ford for utility vehicles and vans for an amount not to exceed \$658,512.00.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007 – 73

2. Authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to execute and deliver contracts with Fiesta Cab Company, United Cab Company, Greater Houston Transportation Company, Liberty Cab Company, Inc. and with Houston Transportation Service, Ltd., for a total amount not to exceed \$10.5 million, for operation of the METROLift Subsidy Program and the Guaranteed Ride Home Program.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007 – 74

3. Authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and deliver a contract with First Transit, Inc. for the operation, vehicle maintenance and facility maintenance of METRO's Northwest Bus Operating Facility, for an amount not to exceed \$182 million.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007 – 75

4. Authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and deliver contracts with Safety Vision and with CISCO for video surveillance systems for a total amount not to exceed \$750,000.00.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007 – 76

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5. Authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to execute a modification to the existing agreement for METRO's continued participation in "MAP", the Motorist Assistance Program, and that METRO will contribute funding up to \$1,590,000.00.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007 – 77

6. Authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and deliver appropriate agreements with United Healthcare for administration of a medical benefits plan for salaried employees at a cost not to exceed \$1,455,983.00.

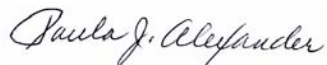
RESOLUTION NO. 2007 – 78

Board Secretary Jackie Freeman moved authorization for the President & Chief Executive Officer to proceed with negotiations with NewQuest Properties for development of a Pearland Park & Ride facility in the vicinity of State Highway 288 and FM 518, and report back to the Board on the status of the negotiations. The Motion was seconded by Board Member Stewart and all Board Members present voted in favor.

MOTION NO. 2007 – 37
RESOLUTION NO. 2007 – 79

There being no further matters to come before the Board, the Board meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Paula J. Alexander
Assistant Secretary