

**DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority - 1100 DART Way
April 28, 2009**

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Robert Parks, Bob Mahaffey, Christine Hensley via speakerphone, Ted Boesen, Gaye Johnson, Skip Conkling, Steve Van Oort, Angela Connolly, Tom Gayman

Commissioners Absent:

Alternates Present: Ruth Randleman, Carlisle

Staff Present: Brad Miller, General Manager; Sharon Cramer, Finance Director; Rebecca Lovig, RideShare Manager; Carol Pelfrey, Maintenance Director; Jim Tishim, Transportation Director; Randy Ross, Human Resources Director; Kirstin Baer-Harding, Advertising Manager; Michelle Orfield-Koranda, Planning; Nolden Gentry, Legal Counsel

Others Present: DART Operator Sherrie Taha

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Angela Connolly at 5:02 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Notice of the meeting was duly published.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Connolly called for corrections to the March 31, 2009 minutes.

There being no comments on the minutes, it was moved by Mr. Skip Conkling and seconded by Mr. Bob Mahaffey that the minutes be approved. The minutes were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENTS SECTION

Bus operator Sherri Taha had comments (attached) for Commission members regarding the use of stimulant funds that DART may receive. She asked that instead of improvements in the property and purchase of buses, the money be used to expand service. She asked that her remarks be included in the public record of the Commission meeting. Chair Connolly responded that stimulus funds were restricted to capital purchases only, and so could not be used for service improvements.

Action Item 6A – FY-2010 RideShare Budget

Chair Connolly said that action on the FY-2010 RideShare budget would be deferred until the May 26 Commission Meeting.

CONSENT ITEMS

- 7A – Des Moines Public Schools Contract – FY-2010
- 7B – April fixed route Financial Report
- 7C – April Paratransit Financial Report
- 7D – April RideShare Financial Report

General Manager Brad Miller explained that there was a slight modification in the Des Moines Schools contract since the Commission packet was sent out. He said our original estimate of a 4% increase in school ridership was modified to 3% since the District is providing service on three routes that DART had in the past. It was moved by Mr. Ted Boesen and seconded by Mr. Parks that the Consent Items be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Action Item 8A – Public Hearing Authorizations Including FY-2010 Paratransit Budget

The General Manager explained about the new requirements for public hearings and notices throughout the budget process. Legal counsel Gentry confirmed that since DART is now a regional transit authority the requirements are different. Mr. Miller said that DART will now be required to adopt and certify its entire budget, including Paratransit and RideShare. Beginning next year, the FY2011 budgets will be submitted for Commission approval by the same March 15th deadline the cities are required to meet. In order to bring DART into compliance, for FY-2009 and 2010 DART will be amending its FY-2010 fixed route budget approved in March to add the Paratransit and RideShare budgets.

- Public Hearing #1 – Commission approves setting a public hearing on the FY2010 DART Paratransit Budget.
- Public Hearing #2 – Commission approves setting a public hearing in July, 2009, on amending the adopted and certified FY2010 DART fixed route budget by adding the adopted Paratransit and RideShare budgets to create a single FY-2010 DART budget.
- Public Hearing #3 – Commission approves setting a public hearing on amending the adopted and certified FY-2009 DART fixed route budget by adding the Paratransit and RideShare FY-2009 budgets and to adjust the projected revenue and expenses as required by Iowa Code.

Mr Parks moved, and Mr. Tom Gayman seconded that the DART Commission approve setting the public hearings #1, #2 and #3. The motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 8B – Orion Bus Purchase – Stimulus and FY09 Appropriations Funding

Mr. Miller announced that DART has received \$5 million in stimulus funds to buy 9 of the 14 new buses (\$3,413,000). In addition, the Iowa DOT is scheduled to approve an allocation of federal funds for 4 additional buses through the statewide bus replacement earmark. He explained that DART would be joining a statewide consortium to possibly purchase, with stimulus grant funding, hybrid technology to add to the buses. Mr. Gayman asked if the buses were for replacement or expansion. Mr. Miller replied that they are replacement buses, and that we need more for expansion. Mr. Gayman asked if the Maintenance Department staff would be expanded with the

larger fleet. Mr. Miller said that we are two mechanics short right now, and are in the process of hiring, with the hope of finding an electronics specialist.

It was moved by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Gayman that the Commission approve ordering fourteen 40-foot diesel buses from Daimler Buses of North America aka Orion at a cost not to exceed \$4,950,000.

The motion carried unanimously.

Action Item 8C – Transit Hub Contract and Phase I Design Task Order

Mr. Miller said that DART advertised for an RFP for architectural and engineering services on February 12th and received requests from 32 interested firms. Seven proposals were received on March 12, 2009, with three design teams being interviewed. Substance Architecture Team was identified as the top ranked team. The Commission approved enter into contract negotiations with the firm at its March 31, 2009 meeting.

Mr. Gayman asked if the firm had experience in designing for transit projects. Ms. Orfield-Koranda said that they have designed and built LEED certified transit facilities, in particular in Grand Rapids.

It was moved by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Gayman that DART award a contract to Substance Architecture for architectural and engineering services for a combined value not to exceed \$1,500,000, and that the Commission approve beginning Phase I Concept Design for an amount not to exceed \$194,128.18. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion Item 9-A – Customer Appreciation Event Update

DART Advertising Director Kirstin Baer-Harding gave a presentation on DART's current marketing efforts, and explaining the success of the recent Customer Appreciation Day events. (Presentation attached.) Chair Connolly helped hand out the market bags on the bus on Customer Appreciation Day when all riders rode for free. She said that there were long-time riders and brand new riders on her bus, and that all of them want late-night service. Mr. Parks rode the Jordan Creek bus, and said that he had comments expressing appreciation for DART's supervisors, and that passengers want to see more bus shelters. Mr. Skip Conkling said that he rode the 6 AM express bus from Altoona, and that riders on his bus want more service to Altoona. Chair Connolly mentioned that she thought it would be a good idea for all commissioners to occasionally ride the bus.

Discussion Item 9B – New Financial System Update

Ms. Sharon Cramer, DART Finance Director, summarized the new financial system status for the Commission. She said that staff were going to be extremely pleased once they are using it daily, because it is capable of giving so much more data, and it is correcting lots of long-time errors that had to be taken care of by hand before. She said that at Mr. Boesen's suggestion she had DART's auditing firm, Denman & co., perform a review of the new system on April 17th, and approved of the numerous new controls regarding user access rights and business practice and policy revisions.

Discussion Item 9C – Federal Transportation Reauthorization Priorities

Mr. Miller said that when he and Chair Connolly were in Washington DC for the APTA Legislative Conference they were told by Congressman Boswell’s staff that they would be requesting projects to submit for the Transportation bill that would be brought to the House floor in June. The MPO executive committee decided to limit submissions from any organization to a maximum of five projects. DART submitted its projects:

- Priority #1: Transit Hub \$18,750,000
- Priority #2: BRT Facilities on University Ave. \$ 1,250,000
- Priority #3: Expansion Buses \$ 3,000,000
- Priority #4: Downtown Des Moines Tram \$87,500,000
- Priority #5: Western Suburban Park & Ride Lot \$ 1,250,000

The Transit Hub and Tram projects have since been combined, and transit projects have been separated from highway projects. Mr. Miller thanked all the commissioners involved in the MPO’s process in getting a transit project on the MPO’s priority list for the first time ever. He said that commissioners and DART staff need to find a way to provide more communication/education to local elected officials about the Transit Hub project. There was discussion about New Starts funding, and how much local match might be needed if that turned out to be a better option, and taxpayer education and input if local dollars are used.. Chair Connolly said that the next step will be preparing a presentation for the Partnership trip.

PERFORMANCE REPORTS

Mr. Miller said that ridership in March decreased, but that there was one less workday in the month, that accounted for the slight drop.

QUARTERLY SAFETY REPORT

Chair Connolly noted that there were minimal accidents in this quarter, and Mr. Miller said the rate was not only halved, but the dollar amounts were much smaller.

MONTHLY REPORTS

No additional comments to the Monthly Reports in the packet.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Conkling reminded Commissioners and staff that DART needs to develop a policy on new member-community buyin amounts. Mr. Miller said that at the last Service and Budget Committee he talked to the city managers, who asked for a framework to be set for them to look at. He said that staff would develop it.

CLOSED SESSION

Chair Connolly called for a motion to recess and reconvene in a closed session.

It was moved by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Van Oort that the Commission meeting be recessed and reconvened in closed session pursuant to Section 21.5, Subparagraph J of the Iowa Code to discuss the purchase of particular real estate where premature disclosure could be reasonably expected to increase the price that DART would have to pay for that property.

Roll Call: Parks yes, Boesen yes, Hensley yes, Connolly yes, Johnson yes, Van Oort yes, Mahaffey yes, Gayman yes, Conkling yes.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Connolly recessed the meeting at 5:05 pm.

The closed session was adjourned at 5:23 pm.

The regular board meeting was resumed at 5:24 pm. The Chair stated for the record that no action was taken during the closed session.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Connolly called the Public Hearing on the FY-2010 RideShare Budget to order at 5:25 pm. There were no comments on the FY-2010 RideShare budget. Chair Connolly declared the Public Hearing closed.

TRUSTEE ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

2009 Meeting Dates

Jun 30, Jul 28, No meeting in August, Sep 29, Oct 27, Nov 17, Dec 15 and holiday luncheon

Date: _____

Chair _____ Secretary _____