

MONONGALIA COUNTY URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING****January 10, 2001**

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AUTHORITY MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bob Roberts

Larry Calemine

John Spears

Jenny Dinsmore

Sandy Holepit

Bruce Gilbert

OTHER PERSONELL PRESENT:

David Bruffy

Wayne Pifer

Sheila M. Wolfe

NOT PRESENT:

Frank Salucci

CALL TO ORDER:**The Transit Board Meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.****READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

John Spears made a Motion to approve December's Board Meeting minutes. Jenny Dinsmore seconded the Motion .

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None**COMMITTEE REPORTS:****A. Funding Body Communication Report: (John Spears and Frank Salucci)**

John Spears stated there has not been a formal meeting. They have spoken to Bob Bell and Mr. Pyles of the County Commission. Bob Bell stated that they would have had open public meeting to discuss the problems the public is having with the Transit Authority. The County Commission would prefer to wait until the Consultants report is finished and then decide if there is a need for another meeting. Mr. Bell said they would find out how the report deals with the concerns that were brought up at the January 8 meeting, and then make a decision about another public meeting. Bob Roberts stated that he would like for the Transit Authority Board and the County Commission had a meeting either monthly or quarterly to discuss

mission plans and the joint goals that the two governing bodies would like to see happen. Bob Bell stated that he thought that was a great idea. He feels the reason that the County Commission gets some of the complaints is because the public still looks at it as a County bus system. Bob Roberts's feels this would be a good way to open up the channels of communication between the two governing bodies. Jenny Dinsmore suggested that we need communication between City Council and the County Commission. They need to let the Transit Authority Board know how they want to fund and what kind of services they want the Transit Authority Board to provide. Bob Roberts stated that all three as a group need to keep lines of communication open, set goals and develop a good Mission Statement.

John Spears stated that we need a way to better educate the public on how the new bus routes work. He stated that some people feel like they are ignored by the system, and that they want their problems taken care of in a timely manner. Bob Roberts stated that the governing bodies need to join together and deal with the issues.

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GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:

Mr. Bruffy stated that there were no exceptional items to note.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

A. Consideration of Approval of December 2000 Financial Report

Mr. Bruffy, the General Manager, stated that fare box revenue is up for the 5th month in a row compared to fare box revenue in the same month last year.

Jenny Dinsmore questioned where the payroll for salaried employees is located?

Mr. Bruffy stated under line 03.05.607.

Jenny Dinsmore questioned if this is an enough?

Mr. Bruffy stated that this includes Assistant Administrator, and the two receptionists. Operation Supervisor is listed under the maintenance budget line item. Route Supervisors and Shift Supervisors are listed in with bus drivers because they still drive.

Jenny Dinsmore questioned if we are looking at pulling the sick leave coverage in line?

Mr. Bruffy stated that there really isn't anything we can do about that with two unexpected illnesses and a retirement, which we had to do a sick leave payout for. He stated there are some other options we could look at to control these expenses. They would require some changes in our sick leave policy. He stated that administration has looked at a short-term disability policy where we would have to payout 5-6 days of sick leave and then the short-term disability policy would go into affect. This would result in a reduction of benefits for the employees.

Jenny Dinsmore questioned if the sick leave line item would be increased in next year's budget?

Mr. Bruffy stated that probably wouldn't increase because this year's payoffs were unexpected and we haven't had that in the past.

Sandy Holepit questioned exactly how many employees do we have in the office?

Mr. Bruffy noted the positions of General Manager, Assistant Administrator, and one of the two receptionists.

John Spears questioned how many full-time employees we have?

Mr. Bruffy stated that we have 17 full time employees.

Jenny Dinsmore made a Motion that the Board accepts the Financial Report for December 2000 as submitted. John Spears seconded the Motion.

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

A. Consideration of Approval of City and County Operating Assistance Requests

Mr. Bruffy stated that we are expecting a letter from the County Commission in January. In the past we have ask for \$350,000 from the County and \$250,000 from the City for the operating budget. Mr. Bruffy indicated that Board needs to consider the recommendations from the consultant, which may need more money to implement. Jenny Dinsmore suggested that the Board ask for the regular amount because the budget needs to be turned in to Charleston. The Board can make an amendment to the budget if the County or the Consultant decides we need more money to accommodate changes they may want. Mr. Bruffy stated that he had spoken with Mr. Jenkins after the public meeting and he expects to have his report completed within the next two weeks after January 8. He will then submit it to Charleston and Charleston will forward it to us. This will put us into February and the County budget is due in February. These funding levels are the same that the Transit Authority started with in 1996. John Spears questioned if when the Consultants Report comes back can it brought back to the Board and then make a request from County Commission? Bob Bell suggested that the Board wait until the Consultant's report comes back. Jenny Dinsmore questioned if the County Commission would have a carryover? Bob Bell stated that they normally do but it is not guaranteed.

Bob Bell questioned why ridership is up? Is a transfer counted as a new rider? How do you determine if ridership is up? Mr. Bruffy stated that when he says ridership is up, it is in comparison to same time last year. The hours of service we are providing on that vehicle and, how many people are on that bus when it makes a trip.

John Spears questioned if we had accurate information before 1999? Mr. Bruffy stated that there was information but you would be comparing two different systems.

Bob Roberts requested the Board get back to the Operating Assistance Request.

Jenny Dinsmore questioned if this would be enough. Mr. Bruffy stated that he could put a budget together with the same levels of service we have now.

John Spears stated that this is with the understanding that if the consultant comes up with different service recommendations that cost more money we will have the opportunity to amend the budget with both funding bodies.

Sandy Holepit made a Motion to approve the same amounts and if we need additional funding come back to the Board with a request to present to the County Commission. John Spears seconded the Motion.

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

B. Consideration of Approval of City and County Capital Funding Assistance Request

Mr. Bruffy stated we have Capital Funding from the Federal Transit Administration for the construction of the new Maintenance Facility. The State Division of Public Transit estimates for the cost of the new facility is 1.5 million. Under the federal funding formula the match is 80% federal, 15% state and 5% local. Our share of that 1.5 million is going to be \$80,000. We can't maintain our present level of service and take that \$80,000 from our current budget. The Maintenance Facility will house the administrative services, warehouse, stockroom, maintenance garage with a bus lift, a bus wash, and space for 20 buses to be parked inside. The main issue is if we can't come up with the matching funds, we need to let the State know so they can reallocate the funds to another system. Considering that this new maintenance facility is one of the most important things that needs addressed, we may not have the opportunity to do this again in the next 20 years. Jenny Dinsmore stated that we need to make a commitment this year. Mr. Bruffy stated that yes we need a commitment this year. The State has selected Burgess and Nipel as the engineering firm for the construction process. How long it takes for them to do the site work, environmental work, the design, put it out for bids, and get it under contract I don't know. The Board will probably need to draw down some money after July 1 and before June 30th. It may carry over into two years. The Board will need funding between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002. Bruce Gilbert suggested dropping one of the new buses. Mr. Bruffy stated that the State pays for the buses and it must be a local match of cash. Mr. Bruffy stated that he had suggested a cooperative deal with the Board of Education to show a local in-kind match, but the WV Transit Authority stated it must be cash. Jenny Dinsmore explained that we need the new buses due to the high mileage and maintenance cost on the ones we already have. John Spears questioned if the City is providing the land? If they are not then where is the site? Mr. Bruffy stated that they were not. The property owned by the City that was previously being considered was found to be located in the flood plane and FTA requires exploring all other options. Mr. Bruffy stated that he has been directed by the Board to check into the Morgantown Industrial Park. Sandy Holepit questioned if we could get them to change their mind? Mr. Bruffy stated that the people who did the environmental accessibility had reservations about the site because of the way it is laid out. Jenny Dinsmore questioned the price of the land in the industrial park compared to the City property? Mr. Bruffy stated that the price is \$100,000, which is about the same as the City property. John Spears questioned if the price of the land was included in the \$1.5 Million? Mr. Bruffy stated that it is and also included are land development, utilities, and construction.

Jenny Dinsmore made a Motion we request a 50/50 funding from each the County Commission and City Council to make a commitment to pay the \$80,000 or whatever the 5% matching amounts are. Larry Calemine seconded the Motion.

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

DRIVER OF THE MONTH PRESENTATION:

The Board announced the Authority's December "Driver of the Month", Mr. Roy Hunt. The Board also recognized Curtis Jenkins, Clyde Lowe, Steve Holt, and Don Cummings for outstanding performance in the month of December 2000.

John Spears stated that he hears there is jealousy among the drivers. He did have one driver call him. Jenny Dinsmore stated that more drivers are achieving a high level of performance. Bruce Gilbert stated that drivers are discussing this on the buses. Mr. Bruffy stated that there has been improvement of cleanliness of buses and more accurate paperwork. Sandy Holepit suggested that the Board appoints a Personnel Committee to have a meeting with the drivers to find out what their complaints are and if there is any truth to them. She would like a time set up that drivers can all be there. Jenny Dinsmore stated that the Board is there to create policy and take care of financial data. This is an issue that should be taken care of by management. We have set up a Grievance Policy to take care of these matters. We have personnel rules. The drivers need to follow the complaint procedure. Sandy Holepit stated that she didn't see where this is going to hurt the Board to find out if there is a

problem. John Spears questioned if management is having meetings with the drivers? Mr. Bruffy stated that he set up communication teams with an elected leader so that they don't have to give their name to make a complaint through their elected leader. Jenny Dinsmore stated that she hasn't heard anything from the drivers and that they have in the past let her know what's going on. Mr. Bruffy asked if there would be any management present at the meeting? Sandy Holepit said she preferred not. Jenny Dinsmore stated that she would not vote for this because it is going against the policies the Board has in place.

Sandy Holepit made a Motion to develop a Personnel Committee to meet with all the Bus drivers to find out if there are any problems and if so what we can do. John Spears seconded the Motion.

For: Sandy Holepit Opposed: Jenny Dinsmore

John Spears Larry Calemine

Bruce Gilbert Bob Roberts

John Spears made a Motion that this be tabled until next month's meeting because of the tie vote. Larry Calemine seconded the Motion.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Steve Buchanan stated that the Monongahela County Senior Center is inconvenient for him, as a wheelchair passenger because the ramp is too steep and there is no button to open the door with. He also suggested that the deviation fee be dropped until the consultant's report comes back.

John Spears made a Motion that the subject of the Deviation fee be put on next month's agenda.

Bob Brock questioned if when we are counting riders do you take in to consideration the increase in population in Morgantown? Mr. Bruffy stated that the new U.S. Census data is not out yet. Bob Brock questioned has there been an increase concerning driver turnover? Mr. Bruffy stated that there hasn't been a significant increase. We also have to provide a report to the Department of Labor annually. Bob Brock questioned if these were available to the public? Mr. Bruffy stated that they are. Jenny Dinsmore stated that you need to consider full-time drivers because part-time drivers come and go. Bob Brock questioned how complaints are handled and if Susan O'Connell is aware of these complaints? Jenny Dinsmore stated that she is. Mr. Bruffy stated that they are all kept on file and presented to the Board on a monthly basis.

Geneva Johns stated that there was a mix-up and she was left standing. She was told that she would have to call when she wanted to catch the bus. She never had to call ahead of time before, because there used to be a bus, which worked fine. Now she is not sure what time and where she is supposed to be. She has at least a twenty five to thirty minute walk from where she lives to the nearest bus stop. She stated that she called the depot numerous times, and didn't receive an answer any of the times that she had called. She said that when she did finally get a hold of someone, the receptionist was rude and told her that she was too late to catch her bus. She said that she should not have to call for a bus.

Sandy Holepit stated that she did not know that you couldn't page someone from a rotary phone. She stated that Mrs. Johns had told her that the person that she had spoken to on the telephone made her feel unintelligent because she did not know that. Sandy stated that the person answering the telephone is serving the public and should treat the public with respect. She stated that she has heard from numerous people that when they call the depot, they are not being treated properly and she finds that very troublesome. She feels that the people are here to serve the public, and all problems should be left at home.

Howard Jacobs stated that the Crown run to Booth needs to be earlier in the morning because some people can't get to work on the new time schedule. They can't catch a bus from the Depot to their work site. The

evening run is fine at noon, and in the evening it used to reverse and people would get home earlier. If someone comes to town just to shop they have to wait too long to go home. He stated that this was changed before Mr. Bruffy took over. John Spears stated that when we get a small problem like this we need to find a way to fix it. Bob Roberts stated that we have had no increase in funding, so we have to find ways to use the system to serve as many as we can.

Bob Brock suggested to have an outside source for people and drivers to file complaints. Would it be possible to have a small van to make the short trips instead of one of the buses? Would it be possible to have transfer tickets for the buses? Mr. Bruffy stated we have a monthly pass. Bob Brock asked if we had noticed more ridership on the buses of the Driver's of the Month? Mr. Bruffy stated that the Monthly Driver Award isn't based on ridership.

Rick Patton questioned how often a person needs to ride to make the bus pass a better deal for the passenger and when does the Authority start losing money? Mr. Bruffy stated that if you ride more than twice a day, five days per week or if you pay more than \$1.50 per day you should buy a monthly bus pass.

Sandy Holepit stated that somewhere around 6 to 10 people have told her that they would like to attend meetings because they have no way to get to the evening meetings. We need to be more accessible to the public.

Sandy Holepit made a Motion to consider new time for the Board Meetings to make them more accessible to the public. John Spears seconded the Motion.

Discussion:

Bruce Gilbert would like times to vary to accommodate the Drivers.

Jenny Dinsmore stated that she feels that the time needs to be constant.

Larry Calemine stated as long as they are kept on Wednesday he will agree.

John Spears suggested try 12:00PM for our next meeting.

There was no vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Maintenance Facility Update:

Mr. Bruffy stated that we have the architect under contract and they will let us know what they think about the new site.

B. Bus Shelter Wind Screen for Health Department (\$1,395)

Jenny Dinsmore requested that we ask the County to pay for the windscreen and provide the labor for the bus shelter at the Health Department.

Bob Bell stated that they would consider it. The County Commission needs a letter stating this. The County has a maintenance crew who is capable of putting this up.

Bruce Gilbert suggested turning the shelter around and putting some black top down for a wheelchair ramp. Mr. Bruffy stated that the bus shelter already meets ADA requirements and the land belongs to the Health Department, they must approve any changes.

Jenny Dinsmore made a Motion to request that the County pay for the windscreen and bench for the Health Department buses shelter.

Bob Roberts stated that the Motion died because there was no second.

Bob Bell stated that they have received the information concerning a bus shelter at the Courthouse, and that it will be considered. It has been tabled at this time. In the mean time passengers can use the Monongahela County Senior Center to wait for the bus and get out of the weather. He would like to get a sign put up over they're to let people know they can wait there. He would like for bus drivers to look for possible passengers over there.

C. Bus Stop Shelter Match (\$3,500) and Grant (\$5,000)

The General Manager stated that when we installed the bus stop shelters the City didn't have enough money in the project budget to finish. They asked for us to contribute \$8,500 to this project. He talked with Susan O'Connell and they issued a \$5,000.00 Grant for this project in July. He has checked the minutes and couldn't find where it was approved. He is bringing this to the Board for their approval.

John Spears made a Motion to approve the funding for the construction of bus shelters. Sandy Holepit seconded the Motion.

Vote: All Present And Voting Opposed: None

D. Local Match (5%) for Four New Vehicles (\$14,743.40)

Mr. Bruffy stated that 4 new buses needed a 5% match. The cost is \$73,717 per vehicle, and they will be here sometime in the spring. The match was already set aside in the Capital Escrow Budget.

John Spears made a Motion to pay the 5% match on the new buses. Sandy Holepit seconded the Motion.

Vote: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

E. Consultant's Review of Existing Services

John Spears questioned if we would get a copy of the report? Mr. Bruffy stated yes. It will go to the Division of Public Transit first. They will be sending a copy to County Commission, City Council, the Transit Authority Board and a copy to the General Manger. John Spears asked if it would be made available to the public? Mr. Bruffy stated that it would be.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Resolution 2001-01 –Authorizing Fiscal 2001-02 49 U. S.C. Section 5311

Operating Assistance Grant Application

Mr. Bruffy stated that the Resolution would authorize him to make application to the Division of Public Transit for Federal Transit Administration Operating Funds. We are eligible for 50/50 funding which means we could apply for up to \$600,000, but the state doesn't receive their full allocation of money to be able to match the 50/50. We could receive \$200,000-\$250,000 range. We have to pass this Resolution annually to show that the Board authorizes it, and there are conditions that the Board has to agree to abide by.

John Spears made a Motion that the Board authorizes the General Manager to apply for Federal Transit Administration Operating Funds. Bruce Gilbert seconded the Motion.

Vote: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

B. HRDE Youth Program Assistance Request

Mr. Bruffy stated that he had a request from the Human Resources Development foundation. The last two years they have asked for a letter of support committing free passes and transportation for their program participants. They are low-income people that are going to training or to school. In the past they haven't used any of those passes. He provided them with a letter because of their application deadline with the stipulation that the Board would have to approve it. John Spears suggested that an amended letter be sent to HRDE that states that if they are not covered by any other government agency that we would then consider this proposal.

C. Vehicle Striping Bid Approval

Mr. Bruffy stated that the Board made this an important goal. We have bids from three local business to do the new bus signage. Signs Plus was the lowest bid at \$586.00 for large buses and \$412.00 for 12 passenger vans. Mr. Bruffy recommends that we do all that we have money for in the marketing budget. The newest buses will be done first.

John Spears made a Motion to get the stripping done on the buses by Signs Plus. Bruce Gilbert seconded the Motion.

Vote: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT:

A. "Night Rider"

The trial "Night Rider" is completed and all payments are in.

B. New Jitney Shuttles

By the end of February or the first part of March all of the Jitney Shuttle Funding should be secured. When this is done, the shuttle's \$68,000 per year operating budget will be outside of our normal operating budget. We have several businesses that have made tentative commitments so far.

C. New Signs for Westover and Brewer Hill

Jenny Dinsmore asked if we had the signs with our new logo on them and if they were up yet. Mr. Bruffy stated that we had been waiting for approval from Utility Board and the Westover City Council. They gave their approval but the ground was frozen. As soon as the ground thaws we will get them up. The signs for Brewer Hill are up.

D. Promoting the New Access Routes

Mr. Bruffy stated that we mailed a flyer to the address list from 911 for the Mason Dixon Highway. Also, the radio ad on WTBZ in Grafton has helped to reach the public in that area.

GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT:

Information

1. I am pleased to report that progress is being made on operational funding for the Downtown Trolley Bus Route. Terry Cutright, Executive Director of Main Street Morgantown, and I have met with several businesses and community organizations to discuss funding for the new service route. We have been presenting our operational budget, the proposed service route and introducing the level of funding support we are requesting from each party. Our implementation plan is proceeding with an anticipated operational schedule to begin in late February or early March. Attached are budgetary and route information for your review and consideration.
2. Although we have received no formal notification of the meeting time or place, I have been informed that the County Commission's planned hearing on disability services is to take place in the County Senior Center on January 31, 2001 at 1:30 p.m. If I receive confirmation of the meeting before then, I will forward it on to you.
3. The West Virginia Division of Public Transit and the Federal Transit Administration have requested that Mountain Line consider managing the ACCESS Grant and serve as the Grantee for our funding as well as for the funds to be allocated to Harrison and Marion Counties. No determination has been made to date, but I did inform both parties that we could serve as the Grant Administrator to help insure that this funding was not lost. I have also included a ridership summary of our ACCESS Grant service for your review.

Executive Session:

Sandy Holepit made a Motion to enter into Executive Session at 6:06 P.M. To discuss Personnel matters. John Spears seconded the Motion.

Jenny Dinsmore made a Motion to return to regular session at 7:06PM. Larry Calemine seconded the Motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

John Spears made a Motion to adjourn at 7:06 PM. Sandy Holepit seconded the Motion.

