

**SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** December 18, 2024

**TIME:** 6:00 PM

**LOCATION:** Reading/Virtual

**PURPOSE:** Regular Monthly Meeting

**ATTENDANCE:** Members: June Wolf, James Schlegel, Jessica Jones (Virtual), Bonnie Glover, Joy Ashley, Cheryl Love, Sandra Burke (Virtual) and Gaetan Giannini (Virtual)

Solicitor: Jill Nagy, Summers Nagy Law Offices

Staff: Gregory Downing, Laura Hopko, Keith Boatman, Dominique Thompson, Harold Purnell, Czarina Ellis, Vicki Weidner, Jen Boley, Paola Peguero (Virtual) and Erika Gustus

Guests: Michael Golembiewski, County of Berks MPO (Virtual), Steve Newsham with ATU Local 1345 and Jose Mario Calderon (Virtual)

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**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

1. Call to Order

Ms. Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Changes to Agenda

None

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

None

4. Approval of Minutes from the November 20, 2024 Regular Board Meeting

Upon motion by Ms. Glover, seconded by Ms. Ashley, the Board approved the November 20, 2024 Regular Board Meeting minutes.

5. Bills and Communications

None

6. Reports of Committees

- A. Personnel Committee – None
- B. Operations Committee – Monthly Performance Report for November is included in the packet.

Mr. Downing provided an update on the Lancaster route and schedule changes. For the board's reference, a table was provided comparing information such as the number of trips for both weekdays and weekends. Further, complaints are still high but that is expected given that change is hard for many customers. Based on the information received Route 10 and Route 18 are the ones that are having the most difficulty. Beginning at the start of the new year there will be a staff member at the Queen Street station to take feedback from customers on Fridays to better address issues and answer their questions.

Ms. Glover inquired if there were a lot of complaints or comments regarding Route 3, Mr. Downing responded that he has not seen anything come through about that route. He had been expecting to see an uptick in ridership as it passes McCaskey but that has not happened as of yet. Ms. Glover asked for clarification as to whether Route 3 is the Sterling route, Mr. Downing confirmed.

Mr. Downing stated that there were a number of comments on different routes at the initial roll out, citing the confusion between inbound and outbound schedules for Route 8 as an example. As customers have become accustomed to the changes a lot of those comments/complaints have stopped and the remainder have been regarding buses running behind their time.

Ms. Glover noted that there is less congestion at the terminal since buses are no longer packed close together. Mr. Downing confirmed, stating that Mr. Thompson had worked with the Union to overcome the glitch in the software and make sure that the buses were staged properly and that it just took a little time to get those adjustments implemented.

Ms. Glover asked about how customers were getting into the building as there seemed to be confusion with some customers regarding waiting inside the building. Mr. Downing stated that there has been construction in progress and up until recently customers needed to enter through the back door, but the main entrance was now available.

Ms. Wolf inquired as to which of the routes had the most complaints of the seventeen reported for the month and Mr. Downing replied that the Lititz bus had the most. Additionally he stated that a lot of complaints are received and that both he and Mr. Thompson were actively going through the complaints, reviewing the videos to verify which ones are legitimate. Out of an average of five to seven complaints a day there were seventeen shown to be valid and have been addressed.

Ms. Wolf asked if a follow up could be done in January, Mr. Downing confirmed that another update would be done at the next meeting.

Ms. Wolf if anything could be done about the schedule. Mr. Downing said that adding time to the schedule affected a number of things including the budget and that the earliest anything would likely be done about the lateness issues that are more than traffic related would be June or July.

- C. Finance Committee – Monthly Procurement Reports for November are included in the packet.

Ms. Love reviewed the items listed on the Procurement Report, all of which are related to the parking lot project at the Reading facility. Mr. Downing clarified that these are in relation to the soil contamination mediation as discussed previously.

- D. Marketing Committee – Monthly Marketing Report for December is included in the packet.

Ms. Landis stated that marketing had done a great job with their events and thanked Ms. Boley for her work.

Upon motion by Ms. Glover, seconded by Ms. Love, the Board approved the Committee Reports.

## 7. Old Business

- A. **Approval of FY 2024 Audit** – The draft audit for FY 2024 was presented at the November Board meeting for review and comment. The Finance Committee reviewed the audit with the Auditors and found no problems or issues. Staff recommends approval.

Upon motion by Mr. Schlegel, seconded by Ms. Glover, the Board approved the FY 2024 Audit.

8. New Business

- A. **Approval of MPO Representatives for Lancaster and Reading** - The two MPO's require SCTA to officially designate the representatives to the RATS and LATS MPO Technical and Coordinating Committees. A copy of the recommended appointments for 2025 is included in the Board Packet.

Mr. Downing clarified that the representatives for both RATS and LATS would be he and Mr. Boatman respectively.

Upon motion by Ms. Landis, seconded by Ms. Love, the Board approved the MPO Representatives for Lancaster and Reading.

- B. **Approval of Bids for Vehicle Disposal** - Bids for the disposal of one 40 ft. Hybrid Electric-Diesel bus and eight (8) shared-ride vans were received prior to the Board meeting. A summary of the final bids was made available and copies were provided for review.

Mr. Downing stated that the Authority retains a maximum of \$5,000 out of each winning bid with the remainder being sent to the federal government. The total for all bids was \$127,950. The summary provided detailed the amount received for each vehicle. Ms. Glover asked for clarification as to whether \$5,000 was kept out of every bid, Mr. Downing confirmed. Mr. Downing also clarified that the money retained by the Authority is included in the financials and is applied to projects in process.

Upon motion by Mr. Schlegel, seconded by Ms. Ashley, the Board approved the Bids for Vehicle Disposal.

- C. **Acknowledgement of RRTA & BARTA's Minimum Municipal Obligation to Pension Contributions** - PA Act 205 requires the Authority's pension plan (included in packet) be submitted and acknowledged by the SCTA Board of Directors. No official action was needed.

Mr. Schlegel inquired as to who would be the authorized signatory and Mr. Downing responded that it would be Mr. Benjamin Dice, CFO.

D. **Resolution 15-2024 Adoption of SCTA Safety Plan Update** - SCTA has updated its Safety Plan in accordance with FTA regulations and has developed Performance Targets for FY 2025 as required. A copy of the Plan would be forwarded to the two MPO's for their next meetings. A copy of the Updated Plan was also included in the Board packet for review. Staff recommends approval.

Mr. Downing noted that a list of changes had been provided to the Board for their reference and that these changes were made by the Safety Committee lead by Ms. Hopko and Mr. Newsham. Ms. Burke had a question regarding the a recital in the resolution. Ms. Burke noted that the recitals are generally non-binding but that the fourth one is actually a criminal standard and she wanted to inquire as to why this was introduced for actions against employees. Ms. Nagy agreed that is seemed unusual and stated that it is from the FTA's webinar on the standard that should be used for employees who get disciplined on behalf of this program.

Ms. Wolf inquired of Ms. Burke if she would be comfortable with an approval on the understanding that the recital would be looked into with the FTA by Mr. Downing and the staff, Ms. Burke agreed.

Upon motion by Ms. Landis, seconded by Mr. Schlegel, the Board approved the Adoption of the SCTA Safety Plan Update on the understanding that the FTA will be asked to clarify the fourth recital and, if it cannot be revised or removed, it will stand as written.

E. **Resolution 16-2024 Rooftop Solar Panel Project Rooftop Array** - Proposals were requested from qualified firms for the installation of a rooftop solar panel array at the Reading Operations Center. A proposal received from Spotts Brothers, Inc., Schuylkill Haven, PA, in the amount of \$533,900, met the requirements of the specifications as described in the Request for Proposals. Spotts Brothers is the current contractor installing the solar panel canopy array and rehabilitating the employee parking lot. Staff recommends award.

Upon motion by Ms. Love, seconded by Ms. Ashley, the Board approved the Rooftop Array for the Rooftop Solar Panel Project.

F. **Approval of November Operating Statement** - For the month of November, ridership in Lancaster showed a 3.9% decrease with fixed route showing a 3.9% decrease and shared ride showing a 3.5% decrease. For Reading, ridership showed

a 1.2% decrease with fixed route showing a 1.2% decrease and shared ride showing a 0.5% decrease. Total ridership was 280,608 for fixed route and 28,669 for shared ride for a total for the month of November of 309,277 rides compared to 316,209 rides last November, for an overall decrease of 6,932 rides.

Financially for November 2024, Lancaster recorded \$500,241 in operating revenue combined with operating grants of \$755,927 for total revenue of \$1,256,168 against total expenses of \$1,418,825. For Reading, operating revenues of \$514,520 combined with operating grants of \$446,291 for total revenue of \$960,811 against expenses of \$1,287,957. For the fifth month of the fiscal year, operating revenue was at 79% of the projected budget and operating grants were 60% for total revenue 68% of the projected budget compared to expenses at 74% of projected budget.

Mr. Schlegel remarked that the numbers had decreased considerably for November showing a decrease of over 7,000 riders and asked what factors could have contributed. Mr. Downing responded that a dip was expected in Lancaster's numbers due to the changes in the routes and schedules. Additionally, he noted that the temperature for both Reading and Lancaster would also play a role as people will not travel in cold weather unless necessary. Ms. Wolf noted that there are five weeks in November as opposed to four and Ms. Ashley pointed out that with Thanksgiving there would likely be a lot of people not traveling during the holiday, which would make a difference as well.

Upon motion by Ms. Love, seconded by Ms. Landis, the Board approved the November Operating Statement subject to audit.

- G. **Appointment of Nominating Committee** - The Chair will appoint a nominating committee for officers for the upcoming new year at the meeting.

Ms. Glover and Ms. Landis have been chosen by Ms. Wolf as the Nominating Committee.

## 9. Public Comment

Mr. Downing acknowledged the forty-four years of service Ms. Vicki Weidner has had with BARTA stating that "Vicki has been an invaluable member of the organization. Ms. Weidner has made a substantial impact on not just the customers and organizations she has worked with but her coworkers as well and will be greatly missed." Ms. Jones

stated that she started working with Ms. Weidner when she was a caseworker and has always appreciated all the help and support Ms. Weidner has given to her. A plaque was presented to commemorate her retirement.

10. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the public meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM upon motion by Ms. Glover, seconded by Ms. Ashley.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gail Landis

Secretary

