

**MID MON VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
1300 MCKEAN AVE  
CHARLEROI, PA 15022  
December 14, 2023  
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

Santa Claus came to visit the Transit Center and took photos with Staff and Board Members at 5:45 PM.

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman – 6:02 PM
2. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG – Chairman
3. ROLL CALL – Secretary

There being 12 members present at 6:02 PM, there was a quorum.

**Members Present**

Diann Donaldson  
Chris Carroll – Zoom  
George Eckert  
Bernie Bandini  
Earl Doman  
Frank Kennedy  
Devlin Fisher  
Fred Exley  
Timothy Herd  
William Furlong  
Mark Boyle  
Fred Berestecky

**Members Absent:**

Sandy Davis  
Devin DeRienzo  
Fred Naccarato  
Rik Pankiewicz  
Ed Bryner  
John Habel III

California, Fayette City & Coal Center (awaiting member appointments).

**Staff Present:**

Ashley Seman  
Nancy Basile  
Aerial Dochenetz  
Stephanie Lee  
Michael Perry

**Others Present:**

Blane Black, Solicitor  
Marc Roncone, MV Transportation

4. Chairman Fisher inquired if there were additions or corrections to the November 14, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes? Hearing none, Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the November 14, 2023, Board Meeting. Mr. Boyle made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5. PUBLIC FORUM – None.
6. REPORT FROM THE CARRIER – MV Transportation, Inc., Marc Roncone
  - a. Ms. Basile noted that ridership information is unavailable due to system upgrades and that the missing information will be presented at next month's Board meeting.
  - b. Mr. Roncone reported on fixed route service for the month of October 2023 and November 2023 as follows: Actual Vehicle Miles were 74,811 in October and 71,476 in November; Revenue Vehicle miles were 63,484 in October and 60,827 in November; Actual Vehicle Hours were 4,215.47 in October and 4,005.85 in November; and the Revenue Vehicle Hours were 3,714.28 in October and 3,526.93 in November.
  - c. Mr. Roncone also reported on 5 incidents without injury in October and 2 incidents without injury in November; 0 incidents with injury in October and November; 2 preventable accidents without injury in October and 1 preventable accident without injury in November; 1 non-preventable accident without injury in October and 0 non-preventable accidents without injury in November; and 0 accidents with injury in October and November. Mr. Roncone stated that there were 0 security issues in November and December; 4 valid complaints in October and 3 valid complaints in November; and 0 compliments in October and November.
  - d. Mr. Roncone also informed the Board that there were 2 road calls in October and 4 road calls in November; 41,357 miles between road failures in October and 19,533 miles between road failures in November; 4 major mechanical failures in October and 4 major mechanical failures in November; and 7 other mechanical failures in October and 4 other mechanical failures in November.
    - i. Mr. Boyle asked Mr. Roncone if there are any individual drivers involved in multiple preventable accidents? Mr. Roncone answered that there is one driver who is on a last chance agreement for safety points.
    - ii. Mr. Exley asked Mr. Roncone what type of programs there are to recognize drivers who have had no preventable accidents? Mr. Roncone advised that plaques are issued quarterly to recognize drivers with no preventable accidents, no safety concerns, and no attendance issues. Mr. Roncone also stated that there is a monthly program that awards gift certificates for having no preventable accidents.
    - iii. Chairman Fisher asked Mr. Roncone if there was still an issue with children running up and touching the moving bus at Highland Terrace in Donora? Mr. Roncone stated that he had a conversation with the Housing Authority and that it hasn't been an issue since then.
    - iv. Chairman Fisher asked Mr. Roncone what the driver procedure is for riders that get into a verbal altercation with each other. Mr.

- Roncone answered that the drivers will tell the riders to have a seat and try to deescalate the situation.
- v. Chairman Fisher asked if a rider who has relieved themselves on a bus multiple times can be banned from traveling with the MMVTA? Mr. Roncone explained that issues like that can be escalated to the MMVTA to document and track which will progress to banning the rider from using the MMVTA's services.
- e. See **Attachment I.6** for further details, provided in the agenda packet.
  - f. Mrs. Lee presented changes to the routes for Commuter A, Cal Commuter and Express 1 & 2 which will go into effect on January 13, 2024.
    - i. The MMVTA will no longer stop inside the Pittsburgh Greyhound Station and will be extending its commuter routes into the Strip District which will add approximately 10 minutes to the current schedules.
    - ii. New inbound stops include Liberty Ave. opposite 11<sup>th</sup> St. at Amtrak, Liberty Ave. opposite 14<sup>th</sup> St., Liberty Ave. opposite 17<sup>th</sup> St., Liberty Ave. after 21<sup>st</sup> St., Liberty Ave. at 26<sup>th</sup> St. and East Busway Bus Stop D.
    - iii. New outbound stops include East Busway Bus Stop D, Liberty Ave. at 25<sup>th</sup> St., Liberty Ave. at 21<sup>st</sup> St., Liberty Ave. at 17<sup>th</sup> St., Liberty Ave. at 14<sup>th</sup> St. and Liberty Ave. at 12<sup>th</sup> St.
      - 1. Mr. Berestecky asked if there were any surveys conducted that show interest in expanding the commuter services. Mrs. Lee answered that there was a Commuter A survey conducted earlier this year which showed high interest in extended services.
    - iv. Mrs. Lee presented a change to the Local 5 schedule which makes Upper Speers a deviated stop on Saturdays.
    - v. Mrs. Lee presented a change to the Local 1 schedule which makes Chamber Plaza in Charleroi a deviated stop.
  - g. Mr. Roncone updated the Board of a recent safety issue at the Pittsburgh Greyhound Station where a shooting took place in the parking bay next to a MMVTA bus and driver. Mr. Roncone advised the Board that Mrs. Seman immediately acted by reaching out to PRT to request Bus Stop D as a MMVTA stop earlier than January 15, 2024, due to the immediate and ongoing safety concerns for drivers and riders, however, was unsuccessful in convincing PRT to agree. Mr. Roncone thanked Mrs. Seman for working with PRT for over a year to have the MMVTA bus stop inside the station removed due to the continued safety issues.
    - i. Mrs. Lee also noted that from January 1, 2023, to November 6, 2023, there has been at minimum 13 incidents at the Pittsburgh Greyhound Station that drivers and riders are concerned about which includes robberies, assaults, drug trafficking, drug use, cleanliness of the facility and now the recent shooting.

- ii. Mr. Boyle suggested that the MMVTA Board of Directors take an official vote on removing the Pittsburgh Greyhound Station as a MMVTA stop early due to the ongoing safety issues.
- h. Chairman Fisher asked for a motion to approve the MMVTA Executive Director, Mrs. Seman, to discontinue bus service to the Pittsburgh Greyhound Station as soon as possible due to safety concerns. Mr. Boyle made the motion. Mr. Furlong seconded the motion. Motion carried with no opposition.

#### 7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- a. Chairman Fisher announced that Mr. Berestecky has served 5 years representing the Borough of Donora and thanked Mr. Berestecky for his years of service.
- b. Chairman Fisher stated that the Authority had a great year and thanked everyone for their support. Chairman Fisher then wished the MMVTA's contractor, MV Transportation along with the Board and staff, a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season.
- c. Chairman Fisher pointed out that each Board member received a couple books of trip tickets and stated that it's good practice that each member takes a bus trip to better understand the MMVTA's services and to better service the communities and riders when creating policies.

#### 8. TREASURER'S REPORT

- a. Mr. Eckert reported that the Finance Management Committee was sent a finance report to review the bills contained in the agenda packet under **Attachment I.8.a.**
  - i. Mr. Eckert reported that the total bills for December amounted to \$468,648.27 in Operating Expenses and \$95,680.24 in COVID Expenses.
  - ii. Mr. Eckert reported that the Capital Expenditures for the month of December were:
    - 1. \$18,475.00 payable to McGrew Construction for final Storage Facility flooring and repairs (Federal COVID Funds).
    - 2. \$31,006.45 payable to AVAIL Technologies for balance due of ITS equipment swap (State and Capital Funds).
    - 3. \$5,070.06 payable to School Outfitters for Bus Facility driver lockers (Federal, State and Local Funds).
  - iii. Mr. Eckert made a motion to accept December's Finance Report and approve payment of the same. Mr. Berestecky seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- b. Mr. Eckert stated that the Capital Projects list follows the Finance Report and is found in **Attachment I.8.b** of the agenda packet for review.
  - i. Mrs. Lee updated the Board on current capital projects.
    - 1. Replacement flooring at the Storage Facility has been installed and work was completed on November 20, 2023.

2. Bus radio equipment has been received and operators/staff will be trained to use the new radios soon.

## 9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### a. Human Resources – Fred Exley, HR Committee Chair

- i. Mr. Exley reported that the Human Resources Committee met on December 12, 2023, with all members present except for Ms. Davis.
  1. Mr. Exley stated that there was a unanimous decision by the committee to recommend a salary adjustment of 2% for salaried employees retroactive to July 1, 2023, and a \$0.50 increase per hour adjustment for hourly employees retroactive to July 1, 2023. Mr. Exley advised the Board that the increase will bring the employees up to the recommended 5% increase for the year.
  2. Mr. Exley asked the Board for a motion to approve a salary adjustment of 2% for salaried employees retroactive to July 1, 2023, and a \$0.50 increase per hour adjustment for hourly employees retroactive to July 1, 2023. Mr. Boyle made the motion. Ms. Donaldson seconded the motion. Motion carried.
  3. Mr. Exley stated that work to upgrade the MMVTA Personnel Manual is continuing, and the Human Resources Committee will bring it forward to the Board in the first quarter of the new year.

### b. Steering Committee – Timothy Herd, Committee Chair

- i. Mr. Herd updated the Board on the Steering Committee meeting held on December 5, 2023. Mr. Herd stated that a discussion on how representatives of the MMVTA can be “cheerleaders” for the transit service. Items discussed were as follows:
  1. How the MMVTA may be able to further reduce the carbon footprint.
  2. Mr. Pankiewicz noted that the MMVTA could possibly make note of enhancements in the local paper.
  3. The committee discussed the MyStop app and the potential to provide it in different languages. Mrs. Seman stated that she could discuss this with PennDOT and AVAIL. Mrs. Seman noted that there are several electronic signs with real-time information throughout the service area that are translatable, and customers can also view on the website using the provided translation app. Mr. Pankiewicz questioned if there is any way to track if these signs are being utilized? Mrs. Seman stated that she would have to check with Message Point.

4. Mr. Berestecky stated that there are effective ways to promote the value in use of a CNG bus versus numerous emission-releasing cars on the road.
  5. The committee discussed special fares for low-income and the use of ACCESS cards to purchase products.
  6. A discussion began regarding bus services to West Newton and Washington Township. The staff stated that a professional transit study is planned for next year and are hopeful that it will provide options for route restructuring and new route proposals.
  7. Mr. Berestecky discussed speaking to legislators regarding assistance with half fare and other fare options, as well as assistance with funding new services.
  8. Driver shortages were discussed, and Mrs. Seman stated gratefully that the MMVTA has not experienced such shortages.
  9. Mr. Berestecky opened a discussion on the preparedness against cyber-attacks.
  10. Chairman Fisher proposed consideration in utilizing MMVTA Park & Ride lots for community Farmers Markets.
    - a. Mr. Herd stated that the Steering Committee plans on meeting again in February 2024.
    - b. Mr. Berestecky asked Mr. Herd if talking points can be taken back to each representative's community. Mr. Herd advised Mr. Berestecky that it is a great idea.
    - c. Mr. Berestecky asked how many cars are removed from the road with the use of CNG buses. Ms. Basile stated that she would obtain that information.
- c. Safety & Security – Ed Bryner, Chairperson
- i. Chairman Fisher advised the Board that there is no report, however, the major points regarding safety and security were covered earlier by Mr. Roncone and Mrs. Lee during the Report from the Carrier.
- d. By-Laws – Fred Berestecky, Committee Chair
- i. Mr. Berestecky reported that the revised By-Laws have been completed and advised the Board that a copy has been provided to each member for review.
  - ii. Mr. Berestecky asked Mr. Black to explain to the Board the next steps with the revised By-Laws. Mr. Black asked the Board to read the revised By-Laws and provide suggestions to Mr. Berestecky or Chairman Fisher prior to the next meeting and that a vote to enact the new By-Laws will be put on the agenda for January's meeting.
    1. Mr. Berestecky asked if members can be emailed a copy of the revised By-Laws? Chairman Fisher asked Mrs. Seman to email a copy of the old and revised By-Laws to each Board Member for review.

- e. Capital/Construction – Chris Carroll, Chairperson – No report.

## 10. REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

### a. Executive Director

- i. Mrs. Seman notified the Board the Mark Turney, the MMVTA's Financial Auditor, will be presenting the 2023 audit results at the January meeting and will be available to answer questions members may have.
- ii. Mrs. Seman stated that the following Board members will be sworn in during January's meeting by Judge Porter; George Eckert representing the City of Monongahela, Tim Herd representing Speers Borough, and Mark Boyle representing Elco Borough.
- iii. Mrs. Seman announced that the MMVTA won first place in the Observer Reporter's "Best of the Best" award for "Best Overall Business Mon Valley". Those present to receive the award were the MMVTA staff, Mr. Roncone from MV Transportation and Ms. Donaldson from the Board of Directors.
- iv. Mrs. Seman wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year.

### b. Marketing

- i. Mrs. Dochenetz announced that there will be no bus service and administrative offices will be closed on Christmas Day, December 25, 2023, and New Years Day, January 1, 2024. Buses will be running as normal and the Transit Center will be closed on December 22, 2023, and December 29, 2023.
- ii. Mrs. Dochenetz announced that Cal Commuter service ended on December 8, 2023, and will resume on January 15, 2024. Vulcan Flyer service ended on December 9, 2023, and will also resume on January 15, 2024.
- iii. Mrs. Dochenetz announced that the Transit Center will be closed on January 15, 2024, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Buses will be running as normal.

### c. Operations

- i. Mrs. Lee stated that on November 28, 2023, Mrs. Seman, Ms. Basile, and herself attended the Fall PPTA Conference and were provided legislative updates.
  - 1. Senate Bill 977, The Bernard N. Gribbon Law, which is a driver assault bill, focuses on keeping public transit workers safe is currently going through the Senate. Berard N. Gribbon was murdered on the job while working for SEPTA.
  - 2. House Bill 1219, which focuses on increasing the operating budget after the fiscal cliff once COVID money is depleted. This bill is with the Pennsylvania budget right now.
  - 3. In the planning meeting it was discussed that the Public Right of Way Access Guidelines (PROWAG) negates any

- previous guidelines and provides additional regulations affecting access in public right of ways for ADA individuals.
4. The need for guidance for multilingual bus announcements was brought forward and is currently being looked at for best practices from larger multilingual cities.
  5. The keynote speaker at the Fall PPTA conference had a presentation on military style accountability in the workplace and focused on leaders delivering positivity and optimism in the workplace to keep employees happy and performing at high levels. The presentation also focused on the values of having strong leadership with soft skills and emotional intelligence.

#### 11. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

- a. Ms. Donaldson advised the Board that member attendance letters for the year 2023 will be sent to each community.
- b. Ms. Donaldson read a letter from the Borough of Donora thanking the MMVTA for the diesel fuel.

#### 12. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Chairman Fisher reminded the Board to look over the 2022-2024 Committee Assignments and let him know if anyone is interested in any changes. Chairman Fisher stated the changes will be made at the January meeting.

#### 13. NEW BUSINESS

- a. At this time, Chairman Fisher inquired as to if there were any community updates from Board Members?
  - i. Ms. Donaldson stated that the Belle Vernon Leopards won the State Championship for the second time in a row.
  - ii. Mr. Furlong took a moment to remember Mike Lee, the previous mayor of Stockdale, who has recently passed.
  - iii. Mr. Boyle updated the Board that he has lost his most recent election, but he will remain on the MMVTA Board of Directors representing North Charleroi.
  - iv. Chairman Fisher announced that he will be moving and will be resigning from the MMVTA Board of Directors after the January meeting.

#### 14. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Chairman Fisher asked if there were any further business to discuss? There being none, Mr. Furlong made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Berestecky seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- b. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.



**REMINDER:**

THE NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR:

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2023, AT 6:00 PM**

YOUR ATTENDANCE IS APPRECIATED!