

Board of Director's Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: May 21, 2020

Location: Remote

Board Member Attendees: Raymond Hess, Jesse Miller, Kyra Sims, Roger Hewitt, Kathleen Mozak-Betts, Richard Chang, Mike Allemang, Sue Gott, Ryan Hunter, Eric Mahler (Chair)

AAATA Staff Attendees: Matt Carpenter (CEO), Bryan Smith, John Metzinger, Mike Blackston, Rosa-Maria Njuki, LaTasha Thompson

Meeting Chair: Eric Mahler

Chairman Eric Mahler called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

1. OPENING ITEMS
<p>1.1 Approve Agenda Ms. Kathleen Mozak-Betts motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Kyra Sims. In support of the motion: Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes Mr. Rich Chang: Yes Ms. Sue Gott: Yes Mr. Raymond Hess: Yes Mr. Roger Hewitt: Yes Mr. Ryan Hunter: Yes Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes Ms. Kathleen Mozak-Betts: Yes Ms. Kyra Sims: Yes Chairman Mahler: Yes</p> <p>The motion was approved unanimously.</p>
<p>1.2 Public Comment Mr. Jim Mogensen discussed Title VI with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), mentioning that the FTA has guidance on their website outlining the analysis needed before service reductions become permanent.</p>
<p>1.3 General Announcements Chairman Mahler announced that the City Council and Mayor have reapproved both Mike Allemang and Kyra Sims for another term on the Board.</p>
2. CONSENT AGENDA
<p>2.1 Minutes Mr. Hess motioned to move the minutes into the record, seconded by Mr. Miller. In support of the motion: Mr. Allemang: Yes Mr. Chang: Yes Ms. Gott: Yes Mr. Hess: Yes Mr. Hewitt: Yes Mr. Hunter: Yes Mr. Miller: Yes</p>

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes
Ms. Sims: Yes
Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion carried and the minutes were moved into the record.

3. EMERGENT BUSINESS

3.1 Coronavirus Update

3.1.1 Recovery Plan

CEO Matt Carpenter reminded the Board of the Recovery Plan that was brought to the Board at the April 16th Board Meeting. Since then, TheRide did implement a very difficult decision to reduce staffing costs via layoffs and the elimination of positions. He described that if there was silver lining, TheRide did manage to save many more jobs by changing how some services were delivered.

CEO Carpenter presented the unified COVID-19 Recovery Plan for the Board and public's consideration. He pointed out that the Pandemic Timeline Gantt chart in the document is on target thus far and illustrates some of the thinking behind TheRide's actions.

Mr. John Metzinger provided a description of TheRide's financial situation as it stands this week. He described the recent difficult decisions having been made with the long-term financial sustainability of TheRide as a key priority. The challenges are coming from a loss of fare and contract revenue and higher costs due to cleaning and sanitation and personal protective equipment, as well as higher personnel costs early in the pandemic response. Even in good times, staffing costs are TheRide's greatest expense, which is why it was necessary to reduce costs with layoffs. Mr. Metzinger explained the forecast chart in the Recovery Plan, which shows a range of financial projections to help discern a path forward. The plan is designed to return TheRide to something as close as possible to the normal financial position by the end of the pandemic recovery.

Mr. Metzinger reported that at the State Revenue Conference held last week it was stated that revenue is down by about \$3B, and impacts to the state budget are certain, but have not yet been made widely known. This will make the CARES Act funds critical, and it is being used within the limits of the law for eligible costs. To date, operating expenses to be reimbursed with CARES Act funds are up to \$1.2M. With tonight's authorization for a capital procurement for driver's barriers, TheRide will have already used about 10% of the CARES Act funds. That burn rate will slow down in July once the financial impact of staffing reduction is fully realized. He expressed that challenging times have led TheRide to make difficult but necessary decisions. It is anticipated that the financial performance will be near the path of the green line on the forecast chart and that this will be a financially sustainable position for TheRide.

CEO Carpenter reported that TheRide is planning to restore the services for the community in a way that is safe for staff and passengers and looks forward to welcoming all the riders back as the stay-at-home orders are gradually rolled back. He also wanted to note that TheRide will probably not be able to put everything back exactly the way it was, nor should they. Restoring exactly as it was will likely not be affordable for TheRide, and the world has changed considerably. He reminded the Board and public of pre-existing financial challenges for TheRide before the pandemic. Bringing back service exactly as it was would be equivalent to bringing back those same financial challenges. TheRide will move forward in an incremental, negotiated, but slow way. Due to the pandemic, many expectations have been reset. TheRide will have a new direction, essentially to put them on sound financial footing going forward as service is restored. This will be discussed more with the Board and public over the

next month or two. The intent is to have as much service up and running as possible, phased in, starting this August by phasing up about 60% of the fixed route service. Going forward through the rest of the year will be determined by the course of the pandemic and TheRide's financial situation. By 2021, TheRide hopes to be back up to what will be considered full services, which will probably not look exactly like the services TheRide had prior to the pandemic. Services will be brought back along the lines to which previous work has led. Paratransit will be phased back in along the lines of the consultant report which already has considerable citizen input through the LAC. Fixed route services are still in development, but TheRide looks forward to bringing those back to the extent they can afford.

CEO Carpenter pointed out in the report that it touches on some of the other auxiliary services that TheRide has and hopes to restart as well as the importance of restarting fare collection. It provides a general timeline of when these things may begin to start happening.

CEO Carpenter expressed that the COVID-19 Recovery Plan is very much a public document and TheRide is very interested in feedback from the Board and the general public. E-mails can be sent to TellUs@theride.org.

Mr. Hewitt asked if loss of local tax revenue was assumed in the forecast. Mr. Metzinger expressed that there has been no word from the County Treasurer about that just yet, but the forecast does include a 2% reduction in property tax.

Mr. Allemang asked when it is being assumed that the CARES Act funds run out. Mr. Metzinger explained that the current forecast shows that TheRide will use about \$8M to stop-gap deficits for 2020 and nearly that for 2021. That would put TheRide to the end of 2021 with about \$3M remaining in CARES Act funds. Between now and then, other uses for those dollars will certainly be apparent, especially as it relates to safety of the drivers and the public. If he had to guess, it would be sometime in late 2021 that CARES Act funds would run out.

Ms. Gott asked about contracts for consulting services or vendors that if frozen could open up opportunities to be reconfigured so that work could be done in-house. CEO Carpenter pointed out the decision to bring paratransit in-house, which allowed TheRide to retain 50 jobs that otherwise would have been eliminated. Also, many staff have been redeployed on cleaning duties.

Ms. Mozak-Betts asked what TheRide is allowed to spend the CARES Act funds on. Mr. Metzinger explained that the FTA (Federal Transit Administration) has made it very clear the CARES Act funds are available to cover lost fare revenue. TheRide can also recover the COVID-19 related costs which includes things like paid employee leave, PPE, cleaning and sanitation supplies and contracts and services. TheRide can even use it for additional employee overtime that is COVID-19 related. In essence, because TheRide is not collecting fares, the largest portion of this is likely going to go to stop-gap the deficits that are the result of the lack of fare collection.

Mr. Miller asked what the guiding philosophy behind increasing the fixed-route service is; what is the thought process around the allocation of resources. CEO Carpenter indicated that there are a number of factors being juggled right now. Trying to anticipate the return of large number of riders for some of the busiest routes (Rt. 4, 5, or 6) might require more buses in order to maintain social distancing. At the same time, TheRide wants to restore services everywhere, not leave anyone without service. A need to provide better access to medical facilities has been recognized. Rt. 3 to St. Joseph Hospital in Ypsilanti had not run on Sundays before, but it is now going to. TheRide is also restrained by our resources (number of buses, number of drivers,

amount of money and finance we have). TheRide is trying to find a way to balance all those things. Hopefully in the next couple of weeks there will be more details and specifics.

Ms. Gott expressed gratitude for the clarity demonstrated by CEO Carpenter and Mr. Metzinger's reports.

Lastly, the recommendation for expediting Board oversight of pandemic recovery suggestions made by CEO Carpenter via an additional issue brief sent earlier in the day to the Board was mentioned. Chairman Mahler asked the Board to review that for discussion at the next Board meeting or possibly at some of the Committee meetings in the coming weeks.

Mr. Hunter asked if any thought had been given toward a second wave of the pandemic and the effects that might have on the current timeline. CEO Carpenter noted that this has been anticipated. Mr. Smith and his staff have been working very hard to come up with contingency plans in addition to the August improvements. Should another lock down happen in the Fall, TheRide can fall back to the current level of service, referred to as Sunday Plus, and then be able to bounce back up again after that. TheRide is trying to husband resources in order to be flexible no matter what happens.

3.1.1.1 Pandemic Barrier (Budget Amendment)

CEO Carpenter walked the Board through the Issue Brief and Resolution authorizing funds for permanent pandemic barriers. These barriers would provide the same level of safety that is seen in retail stores today. There is a shield between the driver and riders as they are boarding. TheRide is requiring that riders wear masks, but if they do not have one, they do not deny them service. There is consideration being given to how to provide masks to riders in the future. He described having a physical barrier between the driver and riders as a reasonable step. The cost will be about \$800K, or a little less. The barriers are about \$6K a bus. The factories right now have about a 3-month lead time to build and deliver the barriers. CEO Carpenter pointed out that there is a risk of diminished air flow around the driver, but staff feels that solutions can be found to deal with that.

The Resolution asked for a budget authorization and allowance for CEO Carpenter to enter into a contract to purchase the barriers as soon as possible. Ms. Gott moved to support the resolution, seconded by Ms. Sims.

Mr. Miller asked if the drivers were in favor of the barriers. Mr. Smith reported that Delisa Brown, president of the union, told him that they were 100% in support of the barriers. Mr. Miller expressed his full support of the barriers.

Votes were taken in support of the resolution:

Mr. Allemang: Yes
Mr. Chang: Yes
Ms. Gott: Yes
Mr. Hess: Yes
Mr. Hewitt: Yes
Mr. Hunter: Yes
Mr. Miller: Yes
Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes
Ms. Sims: Yes
Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion passed unanimously. Below is the signed resolution.

Attachment 3 – Proposed Budget Amendment Resolution

Resolution 03/2020

AMENDMENT OF FY 2020 CAPITAL BUDGET

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
ANN ARBOR AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA) Board of Directors (Board) is required by the Michigan Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act of 1968 to adopt a balanced operating and capital budget for each fiscal year, and

WHEREAS, a capital budget with expenditures of \$17,987,928 was adopted for FY2020 by the Board in September 2019 (Resolution No. 06/2019), and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has created the need for social distancing in order to prevent viral spread, and shield doors for fixed-route buses can help increase the safety of bus operator and passengers, and the cost to purchase and install shield doors on the fleet will not exceed \$800,000, and

WHEREAS, the AAATA was awarded additional federal funding under the CARES Act as assistance to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and these funds will pay 100% share of the cost of shield doors, and

WHEREAS, amending the AAATA’s 2020 capital budget will authorize the CEO to expend up to \$800,000 to install shield doors, and

WHEREAS, the declaration of a state of emergency by the Governor has prompted the CEO to declare this procurement to be emergency procurement under the terms of the AAATA Purchasing Manual section 2.5,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby approves an amendment to the AAATA FY2020 Capital Budget as its general appropriations act to increase total expenses by \$800,000 to \$18,787,928, and that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the CEO to enter into contracts for the procurement and installation of shield doors to reduce the spread of COVID-19.



Eric A. Mahler, Chair
May 21, 2020



Kyra Sims, Secretary
May 21, 2020

4. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Committee Reports

4.1.1 Governance Committee

Chairman Mahler highlighted that the A2Zero plan was accepted but not adopted and that Matt Webb (former head of the RTA) resigned. He explained that Ben Stupka is taking Mr. Webb’s place and 3-County Plan discussions may start back up again.

4.1.2 Finance Committee

Mr. Allemang highlighted discussion of the Recovery Plan, the Pandemic Barrier Proposal, the Q2 Financial Reported, and the Cash and Investment Monitoring Report. The Committee recommend approval of the Cash and Investment Monitoring Report. He reported that there was a good discussion about cash flow and the importance of reviewing the cash flow regularly at this time. He also noted that initial discussion was had in regard to developing a Board approved fare policy.

4.1.3 Service Committee

Mr. Hewitt reported that the Service Committee got an update from CEO Carpenter on the pandemic responses being made by TheRide and spent most of the time discussing the Construction Policy.

4.1.3.1 Construction Policy (Approval)

Mr. Hewitt led discussion on the importance of a construction policy being in place should infrastructure stimulus come from the federal government for shovel ready projects. He reported that the Service Committee does not have a unanimous decision on how to proceed with the two versions of the Construction Policy but seeks the Board's review of each with hopes of approving one. The difference between the two versions is that the second version eliminates policies 3, 4, and 5. He noted that the last time the Construction Policy was discussed at the Board level there were a number of issues raised with the policy preamble (i.e. what is considered a major renovation, what is "aesthetically displeasing"). CEO Carpenter provided an executive interpretation of that which the Board discussed first.

Ms. Sims expressed still having an issue with "aesthetically displeasing" but believes when a construction project presents itself that the Board can just agree with majority rule at that time. She noted that the CEO interpretation points are a good start. She asked from whom the determination of applicable legal expectation for environmental impact would come from. CEO Carpenter explained that the requirements from NEPA would have to be done, but the Board would decide at the beginning of the project if anything above those requirements should be done, and to what level. Ms. Sims expressed being happy with most of the language in the policy and the Board will just have to learn once the Board actually has to enforce it.

Chairman Mahler expressed not being in favor of "aesthetically displeasing". He described the difficulty with trying to get consensus on anything having to do with design, especially when it comes to what is displeasing and what is not. Mr. Allemang agreed with Chairman Mahler. He expressed his willingness to going along with the majority.

Mr. Hess expressed not seeing what problem is being solved with the construction policy and that existing policies on the books would cover almost any scenario he could imagine that would require Board action.

Mr. Miller pointed out that the construction policy arose from a scenario where discussions like these were not had prior to being asked to approve a budget that included construction.

Ms. Gott agreed with Mr. Miller. She expressed needing the opportunity to ensure good fiduciary stewardship when millions of dollars are going to be encumbered and ultimately spent; some of the information that would be helpful to know before seeking funding or entering into significant design commissions is not found elsewhere in Board's policies.

Mr. Allemang expressed that guidance to the staff regarding construction was probably needed, but the current versions of the policy are too prescriptive, but he is still flexible.

Chairman Mahler agreed that the policy is very prescriptive and gives the Board the opportunity to micro-manage every construction project that comes in over the CEO. He expressed that the Board should be involved in the approval process, the budget monitoring process, and the over-run process, but not in every step of a construction project.

Mr. Hewitt expressed that policies 3, 4, and 5 are pretty prescriptive and suggested that there are other things that are not included in the policy that could be handled with the same level of detail but are not, such as the contract. He noted that there are already a number of existing policies that relate to funding and cross over on budget. He would support the version that removes policies 3, 4, and 5.

Ms. Gott noted that having been on the Board during the construction of the Blake Transit Center and appreciating the range of basis for design, the advantage of more detail is to establish a greater understanding by the Board. Because of the magnitude of dollars, the additional detail offers the Board the chance to have a greater level of understanding, which she thinks is the responsibility of a Board when talking about \$10-15M.

Mr. Hewitt moved that the Board enact the Construction Policy version 2, seconded by Mr. Hunter. Mr. Miller moved to remove "aesthetically pleasing" from version 2. Mr. Hewitt accepted that as a friendly amendment.

Chairman Mahler conducted a vote for the amended version 2:

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: No

Mr. Hess: No

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes

Mr. Miller: Yes

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Sims: No

Chairman Mahler: No

The motion passed 6 to 4. Version 2 with the removal of "aesthetically displeasing" was approved and added to the Board Policy Manual as follows:

2.12 CONSTRUCTION

The CEO shall not allow construction of a new building or facility or major renovation that is inconsistent with industry standards and grantor expectations, environmentally irresponsible, risks financial jeopardy, or is not aligned with achievement of the Board's Ends.

Further, without limiting the scope of the above by the following list, the CEO shall not:

- 2.12.1 Proceed with grant applications, detailed architecture or engineering, procurement of construction services, or real-estate transactions for a construction or major renovation project.

2.12.1.1 Request authorization to proceed with a project prior to providing information that demonstrates that such construction is fiscally responsible and aligned with achievement of the board's Ends, and without providing data that supports an informed decision by the board – including but not limited to clearly articulated information about the following:

- A. Definition of the project's purpose and goals.
- B. Definition of the project's key elements and rationale for their inclusion.
- C. Definition of the project's strategic context, and contribution to advancing the board's Ends or other policies.
- D. Explanation of the project's priority relative to other capital needs.
- E. Estimates of the capital cost, ongoing operating and maintenance costs, and expected useful life associated with the project.
- F. Explanation of anticipated funding sources and financing mechanisms.
- G. Definition of risks associated with the project.
- H. Project timeline.
- I. Public involvement process.

2.12.1.2 Request authorization to proceed with a project without incorporating it into an annual budget or a budget amendment.

2.12.2 Expend funds on a construction project prior to having confirmed funding for that stage.

2.12.3 Proceed with construction that does not minimize inconvenience to the travelling public and those businesses and residences directly impacted to the extent that is reasonably practicable.

2.12.3.1 Proceed without providing timely and accurate information to the travelling public, residents and business owners.

2.12.3.2 Proceed with construction project or changes to the project that could be foreseen to create significant resistance from the traveling public and external stakeholders because they had not had the opportunity for consultation.

2.12.4 Allow the board to be unaware of political, residents' and businesses' issues related to the proposed construction.

2.12.5 Allow the board to be without regular reports on the project's implementation, including but not limited to:

- A. Changes to the anticipated cost of the project.
- B. Changes to the elements/scope of the project.
- C. Changes to scheduled completion, delays or impacts to timelines.
- D. Timely notice of possible cost overruns and planned action to reduce impact.

4.2 Monitoring Reports

4.2.1 Cash & Investments (Policy 2.6)

Mr. Metzinger walked the Board through the policy and monitoring report, which presents compliance. The Finance Committee recommended that the Board accept the report as compliant. There were no questions from the Board.

Mr. Allemang motioned that the Board accept the CEO as (A) in compliance, supported by Mr. Hewitt and Ms. Mozak-Betts.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes

Mr. Miller: Yes

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Sims: Yes

Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

4.3 CEO Contract

Chairman Mahler pointed out the highlights listed in the middle of the issue brief:

Important highlights include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Five-year term
- \$185,000/year minimum; flexibility for financial reasons
- Delay of \$10,000.00 payment to deferred compensation until June 2021
- Redefining the mandatory resignation due to disability (7.3(d))
- Redefining "with cause" (7.3(f))
- Increase of separation payment of base salary from six months to twelve months
- Addition of supplemental disability insurance
- Mandatory arbitration of all employment-related legal claims

The Board had no questions.

Mr. Hewitt moved the CEO Contract into the record for approval, supported by Mr. Allemang.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes

Mr. Miller: Yes

Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes

Ms. Sims: Yes

Chairman Mahler: Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Mahler reported that CEO Carpenter did come to a tentative agreement with the Governance Committee on these very terms. He will accept officially when he signs it.

5. STRATEGY & OPERATIONAL UPDATES: CEO

5.1 Q2 Service Report

Mr. Smith took the Board through the Q2 Service report. He expressed a lot of difficulty in creating this report because the shut down and cessation of normal services started at the very end of this quarter. Numbers that are reported as averages really would not be representative of what is going on. He summed up that with the fixed route services there is a 90% drop in the daily ridership and a 75% drop in ridership for paratransit. He noted that TheRide is still carrying 10% of the daily ridership which is around 2,000 trips a day on fixed

route and about 150 trips a day on paratransit. TheRide is still carrying those essential workers and making those essential trips. He did not report on the rest of the metrix in written form mainly because those numbers would appear to be misleading.

Mr. Hewitt asked about the cost per revenue hour looking quite high. Mr. Smith explained the number may be a typo and that he would investigate it. Following the meeting, he notified the Board of the cost per revenue hour to be \$121.25. There was an error in calculating the number on the submitted reported, for which he apologized. He made mention in his follow-up that the hours dropped but expenses did not, and he does expect this number to rise for the next quarterly report.

5.2 Q2 Finance Report

Mr. Metzinger took the Board through the Q2 Finance Report. He started by thanking the AAATA finance staff who have been working extremely hard to streamline their processes in order to close out the financial periods in a more timely manner in order to get financial reports ready for the Finance Committee and the Board. He thanked LaTasha Thompson for her work on this.

This report showed TheRide's financial performance year to date through March 31st. Mr. Metzinger pointed out that for much of the financial period that is presented we were in normal times, pre-pandemic until late in this report. But the pandemic affects do show up even in the financials this quickly.

He reported that TheRide operated within the budget with a small surplus of \$20K of revenue after expenses. This surplus is off from the budgeted surplus of \$405K due to the lower fare revenue being collected after TheRide stopped collecting fares in mid-March. The quarter ended with a reserve balance of \$10.1M which left TheRide in a very strong position as it entered into the pandemic period. That amount of money is able to support 2.6 months of the annual operating expense. The reserve has remained at or above the target of 2.5 months for 3 of the last 4 consecutive quarters. Unfortunately, quarter 3 financial results which will be presented in August are likely to show a drop in the reserve balance depending upon the application of the CARES Act funds and how that all plays out in response to the Coronavirus.

In terms of cash flow, Mr. Metzinger explained that cash flow was adequate to cover expenses. The second quarter ended with a balance of cash and investments at \$13.9M. That was slightly higher than the balance at second quarter end last year.

Mr. Miller asked for more depth on how the expenses were lower than budget. Mr. Metzinger explained that there were only about 2 weeks of financial activity during the pandemic reported. The expenses were lower than budgeted primarily due to savings from lower wages prior to the pandemic, lower fringe benefits, lower fuel costs, and also there were lower contract and service of another cost. Costs across the board were operating a little lower than normal before the pandemic hit.

5.3 CEO Report

CEO Carpenter made two additions to the report. With regard to the A2Zero project, he reported that Ann Arbor City Council did meet virtually earlier this week to discuss this as well as many other items. They postponed decision on formal adoption of the A2Zero plan until the next Council meeting in early June. There was no action but lots of discussion. CEO Carpenter expressed that most the media and public attention is on the virus and recovery. This one will get a little more political and media attention before it is finally done. There is definitely controversy about costs and benefits. He expressed not being able to tell which way it is going to go at this point.

CEO Carpenter reiterated his appreciation of staff and described AAATA as a great organization to be working with and all the team members have been doing incredible work under strange, bizarre conditions the last couple of months.

Ms. Mozak-Betts asked about the lack of AAATA attendance at the Transportation Commission meetings due to current lack of staff. She asked if a Board member should consider representing AAATA during this time or if it is fine the way it is. CEO Carpenter expressed it being relatively fine the way it is, though there might be a broader question about TheRide's participation in that Commission. Because TheRide was given a vote, it does affect their quorum decisions and perhaps they would appreciate having someone from TheRide's perspective. He reported that Board members have been on this Commission in the past with varying degrees of feelings of effectiveness. TheRide has communicated to the City that as soon as staff is available to be put back into the Commission, it is the hope to do so. The Commission has not suggested to CEO Carpenter that this is causing a serious problem.

Mr. Hess offered his perspective that if there are issues that come up pertaining to transit, he is pretty quick to communicate those back to CEO Carpenter. If there are questions that come up on issues that have been discussed at the AAATA Board public meetings, Mr. Hess will share just his knowledge of the Board meeting proceedings. He does not speak for the Board, but just of his knowledge of Board meeting proceedings. CEO Carpenter stated that aside from the couple of times that the Commission has requested information from AAATA and staff have made presentations in the past, most of the work of the Commission pertains to the non-motorized activities of the City and hasn't directly pertained to AAATA business yet. If there is something that needs TheRide's attention, staff will show up to the meeting.

Ms. Sims was the most recent Board member to serve on the Transportation Commission and expressed that the Commission does really important work, but she would agree with CEO Carpenter's comments. She noted that having Mr. Hess there to notify CEO Carpenter if there are any issues that need AAATA's attention is a fine way to communicate and continue to interact with the Transportation Commission in the meantime. She noted that most of the discussions that affected TheRide were very operational and in those instances, staff members from TheRide were coming to the Transportation Commission to give presentations and provide more context. As a Board member, they were not talking much about strategy or long-term planning or anything that the Board is usually involved in, so she thinks it would be more appropriate to continue to have that communication with Mr. Hess, monitor the agendas and the minutes of the Transportation Commission, and then when staff capacity allows, reappoint a staff member to serve.

Mr. Miller pointed out that as businesses open back up, we may expect a lot more cars on the road in Ann Arbor. He wondered if TheRide was missing an opportunity to make the Transportation Commission aware of this issue and neglecting responsibility to allocate resources for public transportation in the wider recovery from the virus by not attending Transportation Commission meetings.

CEO Carpenter noted having preliminary discussions of this sort, like pop-up bus lanes, and what is realistic given the current political situations that are out there. He does not know that the Transportation Commission would necessarily make or break that decision but the broader point about anticipating what is going to happen when things reopen and trying to get ahead of that is very well taken. He has thought about asking major institutions to stagger their opening times and already has had one conversation with UofM. He thinks that this message would be more affective if coming from more than just TheRide, coming also from other institutional players. He hasn't had the time to figure out how to reach out and make that request, but he thinks the general idea of the City, TheRide, and perhaps the County issuing a suggestion or request like that makes a lot of sense. If there are tactical infrastructure things like that which can realistically be done, a pop-up bus lane certainly would be nice, but he thinks we are already running out of time though.

Mr. Hess reported that the City just launched on their website A2gov.org/healthystreets a solicitation for ideas from the public on changes to the transportation infrastructure amid COVID-19. This is a tool where suggestions of this nature could be made.

Mr. Allemang supports CEO Carpenter or his staff not attending these meetings right now, particularly in light of what Mr. Hess had to say.

Mr. Allemang asked about the Y-Lot progress being made and what “pre-entitle” means. CEO Carpenter reported that the City has been moving forward from the Council direction to conduct some preliminary planning work on the Y-Lot and other properties. Pre-entitlement clarifies as much of the parameters about what the construction will be, what it will look like ahead of time so that when the project is bid or tendered and development firms decide whether or not they want to participate, as much of the uncertainty of the development has been ironed out as is possible. A lot of decisions will happen later, but so far this process has allowed them to move forward with public involvement on massing ideas. There was a presentation at a previous Board meeting showing some of the general renderings of a building on the Y-Lot, which included as one of the requirements a bus lane built in through the middle of the building on the ground floor up against the Blake Transit Center to give AAATA a second bus lane to create a transfer platform. The results of the public engagement and preliminary planning were brought forward to Council with a particular recommendation (which was the one seen at the AAATA Board meeting a few months ago), and the request to Council was to approve moving forward for pre-entitlement, nailing down as much of the specifics as they can at this stage, so that when it comes back to Council in early 2021, Council at that point will find the decisions there acceptable and can move forward finding a developer for the site and a lot of the uncertainty will have been removed from the process.

6. CLOSING ITEMS

6.1 Topics for Next Meeting:

Asset Protection (2.8)

Ms. Gott asked that even if there is an interest to go to an in-person Board meeting in June, it might be helpful for anyone who is at high risk to be allowed the opportunity to link in virtually. CEO Carpenter reported that the Governor did extend an executive order to allow bodies like this to meet virtually through the end of June. If the executive order is allowed to lapse, the Board may not have that option any longer, but he will keep an eye on what the options will look like beyond June.

Ms. Mozak-Betts suggested if in-person meetings become necessary, perhaps the tables could be reconfigured so that social distancing can be observed.

6.2 Public Comment

Michelle Barney requested that Route 66 be added back to the fixed routes twice a week (one weekday and one weekend day) so that riders can get to Meijer, which was taken under consideration by staff.

Jim Mogensen spoke of his experience when AAATA staff tried to figure out how much the millage would be for the initial expansion. He described dynamics in the community and the need to figure out how to have proper lines of communication.

6.3 Adjournment

Mr. Hewitt motioned to adjourn, supported by Mr. Hess.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Allemang: Yes

Mr. Chang: Yes

Ms. Gott: Yes

Mr. Hess: Yes

Mr. Hewitt: Yes

Mr. Hunter: Yes
Mr. Miller: Yes
Ms. Mozak-Betts: Yes
Ms. Sims: Yes
Chairman Mahler: Yes

It was unanimous to adjourn. Chairman Mahler adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Keith Everett Book

Approved June 18, 2020