Board of Director's Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time: October 15, 2026 - 6:00pm – 8:30pm

Location: Riverside Arts Center, Ypsilanti (4th Floor) - Virtual via Zoom

Members Present: Kathleen Mozak (Chair), Mike Allemang (Treasurer), Jesse Miller (Secretary), Simi Barr, Rich Chang, Travis Gonyou, Susan Pollay, Praveena Ramaswami, Georgia Valentine
Members Absent: Julie Grand (Excused)

Chairwoman Mozak called the meeting to order at 6:01pm

1. OPENING ITEMS

1.1 Approve Agenda

No additions or changes noted to the agenda.

Mr. Barr motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Pollay.

No discussion on the motion.

All in favor of approving the agenda:

Mr. Simi Barr: Yes
Mr. Rich Chang: Yes
Ms. Susan Pollay: Yes
Ms. Praveena Ramaswami: Yes
Ms. Georgia Valentine: Yes
Chairwoman Kathleen Mozak: Yes

The motion to approve the agenda passed unanimously.

1.2 Public Comment

No public commenters.

1.3 General Announcements

Mr. Barr announced that this would be his last meeting and he would be stepping down from the Board. He thanked Board members for the experience and exposure to working on a Board. Chairwoman Mozak and Board members thanked him for his service.

Chairwoman Mozak shared that Mr. Miller would be stepping into the role of Service Committee Chair. She also reminded Board members that Audit Task Force member volunteers were needed as the task force would be having their first meeting in November.

*** Mr. Allemang joined the meeting at 6:04pm*

2. CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Board Meeting Minutes: September 17, 2026

2.2 Committee Meeting Summaries

2.3 Construction (2.10)

Mr. Chang motioned to accept the Consent Agenda, seconded by Ms. Valentine.

No discussion on the motion.

All in favor of accepting the Consent Agenda:

Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes
Mr. Simi Barr: Yes
Mr. Rich Chang: Yes
Ms. Susan Pollay: Yes
Ms. Praveena Ramaswami: Yes
Ms. Georgia Valentine: Yes
Chairwoman Kathleen Mozak: Yes

The motion to accept the Consent Agenda passed unanimously.

*** Mr. Gonyou joined the meeting at 6:07pm*

3. OWNERSHIP LINKAGE

3.1 OLTF

Mr. Chang provided an update on the progress of scheduling outreach meetings with local leadership / legal owners.

4. POLICY MONITORING

4.1 Sustainability Policy Proposal

Mr. Barr introduced suggested revisions to the sustainability policy that he and Mr. Carpenter worked on with the assistance of the Policy Governance Consultant. He noted that the original sustainability policy had been created as an Ends and then moved into Executive Limitations policies which inadvertently created inconsistencies between the Ends / Executive Limitations. The Service Committee reviewed the suggested revisions and agreed to recommending the Board accept the revisions as presented in the packet.

*** Mr. Miller joined the meeting at 6:15pm*

Ms. Pollay motioned to accept the proposed language changes to Ends Policy 1.4, Policy 2.9.1.5 Communication & Support to the Board, and Policy 2.11 Environmental Sustainability, seconded by Mr. Allemang as follows:

Delete:
1.4. TheRide positively impacts the environment and carbon emissions are reduced.

Revised:
1.4. Residents benefit from reductions of The Ride's direct and indirect environmental impacts including emissions, waste, and localized impacts.
1.4.1 Residents benefit from the absence of carbon and greenhouse gas emissions, and criteria air pollutants.

Current:
2.9.1.5 Let the Board be unaware of …any other incidental information requested by the Board. Incidental information includes…

Add to 2.9.1.5:
J. An annual update on goals, activities, impacts and trends regarding environmental initiatives.

Delete:
Policy 2.11 Environmental Sustainability

No discussion on the motion.

All in favor of accepting the proposed language changes (noted above):

Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes
Mr. Simi Barr: Yes
Mr. Rich Chang: Yes
Mr. Travis Gonyou: Yes
Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes
Ms. Susan Pollay: Yes
Ms. Praveena Ramaswami: Yes
Ms. Georgia Valentine: Yes
Chairwoman Kathleen Mozak: Yes

The motion to accept the proposed language changes (noted above), passed unanimously.

The Board Policy Manual will be revised accordingly.

4.2 Policy Language Discussion

No discussion.

5. EMERGENT ITEMS

5.1 Election Day Fare Payments by County

Mr. Carpenter presented a recommendation to suspend fares on Election Day – November 3rd. He shared that the county had initiated the proposal and verbally agreed to reimburse the one day cost of fixed-route, A-Ride, FlexRide and GoldRide Senior operating services. The county plans to lead communications and TheRide will amplify the messaging. Board members responded favorably and discussed demand-response capacity and the short planning window for implementation.

Mr. Gonyou motioned to authorize the CEO to suspend fare collection for a single day on November 3, 2026 (Election Day) subject to the CEO reaching an acceptable cost-sharing agreement with Washtenaw County that reimburses TheRide for fare revenue, seconded by Ms. Pollay.

No discussion on the motion.

All in favor of authorizing the CEO to suspend fare collection for a single day on November 3, 2026 (Election Day) subject to the CEO reaching an acceptable cost-sharing agreement with Washtenaw County that reimburses TheRide for fare revenue:

Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes
Mr. Simi Barr: Yes
Mr. Rich Chang: Yes
Mr. Travis Gonyou: Yes
Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes
Ms. Susan Pollay: Yes
Ms. Praveena Ramaswami: Yes
Ms. Georgia Valentine: Yes
Chairwoman Kathleen Mozak: Yes

The motion to authorize the CEO to suspend fare collection for a single day on November 3, 2026 (Election Day) subject to the CEO reaching an acceptable cost-sharing agreement with Washtenaw County that reimburses TheRide for fare revenue passed unanimously.

5.2 Title VI Introduction

Mr. Yang introduced the Title VI program update and noted slight changes had been made in accordance with revised guidelines. He noted that board committees will be discussing at their November meetings and public comment is open for input. The final approval decision will be made by the Board at the November Board Meeting.

6. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

6.1 Legislative Updates

Mr. Pfeifer information on a recently proposed gas tax suspension but the Senate has declined to advance the proposal. Currently, there are no federal reauthorization updates to report.

6.2 CEO Report

MS. Reed shared information related to a recent $6.6M state grant awarding which will be used for planning and NEPA review for the bus rapid transit project. Additional funding will still be needed to deliver the full project but the grant will support initial planning.

Mr. Carpenter shared that he, several staff and two board members recently attended the APTA TRANSform Conference / Expo in Chicago.

6.3 CEO's Draft Ends Interpretations (V1)

Mr. Carpenter provided an overview presentation (Board packet, pg. 195) of his preliminary Ends interpretations – he highlighted higher achievement ambitions, proposed measurement targets, and a new report structure. The new interpretations will be discussed at November committee meetings, followed by a fuller review at the November Board meeting.

7. CLOSING ITEMS

7.1 Action Item Recap

- Board members interested in participating on the Audit Task Force can contact Chairwoman Mozak
- Board Policy Manual will be updated with changes approved within the Sustainability policy proposal
- Title VI Program will be discussed at November committee meetings.

7.2 Topics for Next Meeting

Treatment of the Traveling Public (2.1)
Compensation & Benefits (2.3)
FY26 Q4 Financial Report
Title VI Approval
CEO Interpretations
Education: Guest Lecture: Land Use (Prof. Levine)
Millage Recommendation

Future:
Ridership Trends & Utilization, Draft Fare Scope, AI

7.3 Public Comment

Mr. Jim Mogensen shared his thoughts on the relevance of Title VI guidance and will be providing further input. He also shared he is part of distributing bus tokens to unhoused within the community and looks forward to receiving information about fare pricing / free fares when the fare study has concluded.

7.4 Adjournment

Ms. Ramaswami motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Chang.

There was no discussion on the motion.

All in favor of adjourning the meeting:

Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes
Mr. Simi Barr: Yes
Mr. Rich Chang: Yes
Mr. Travis Gonyou: Yes
Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes
Ms. Susan Pollay: Yes
Ms. Praveena Ramaswami: Yes
Ms. Georgia Valentine: Yes
Chairwoman Kathleen Mozak: Yes

Chairwoman Mozak adjourned the meeting at 8:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Holt