BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SOUTHWEST OHIO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF: Regular Meeting of the SORTA Board of Trustees

DATE: Tuesday, February 15, 2011, 9:15 a.m.  
The SORTA/Metro Mt. Adams Board Room  
602 Main Street, Suite 1100  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Margaret Gutsell; J. Thomas Hodges; Gregg Hothem; Christine Matacic; Jason Riveiro; Sean Rugless; James R. Tarbell

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Suzanne Burke; Minette Cooper; William L. Mallory, Sr.; Karl Schultz; Doug Sizemore

STAFF MEMBERS: Terry Garcia Crews; Darryl Haley; Lou Ann Hock; Sallie Hilvers; Mary Moning; Butch Gaut; Colin Groth; Mike Restle; Mike Ongkiko; Tim Harrington; Jerry Roetting; Joe Routt; Bill Spraul; Perriann Allen; Donna Adkins; Mike Weil

OTHERS: Mark Bennett, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 627; Joe Curry, Everybody Rides Metro; Brian Gay, City of Cincinnati; Rich Moore, Frost Brown Todd; Chris Moran, League of Women Voters

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Rugless, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order. Since there was not a quorum at this time, Mr. Rugless revised the order of the board agenda until Mr. Riveiro was able to arrive at the meeting.

HEARINGS FROM CITIZENS

Mr. Rugless asked if there were any citizens who would like to address the board. Mr. Bennett stated his disappointment that the SORTA board has not filed a lawsuit against the City of Cincinnati for the City’s taking of $1.7 million from the transit fund. Mr. Bennett reported the ATU is in the process of filing a class action lawsuit to defend the city’s citizens against this unauthorized use of funds. Noting that Metro and the ATU were in the midst of labor negotiations, he invited all board members to attend the negotiations’ meetings between Metro and the ATU in order to better understand the process. Mr. Bennett also stated that there has not been a strike at Metro since 1988 and cited concerns regarding Senate Bill 5 proposed in the Ohio legislature that would affect collective bargaining rights for state and local employees.

Mr. Steve Drennan, a customer who uses a walker, expressed his frustration with the older buses as their wheelchair ramps tend to break down more often, making it impossible for him and other disabled riders to board the bus. He also has had issues with drivers who claim his walker blocks the aisle and reports that he had his fare deal card replaced three times in a year because the color fades out. The board thanked Mr. Drennan for his feedback and asked Chief Operations Officer Mary Moning to work with him to resolve these issues.
Financial Report

Mr. Restle reviewed the financial and ridership reports for December, 2010, and for year-end 2010. Ridership report for year 2010 indicates a 3.5% negative variance to budget and 2.4% negative to budget for the month of January, 2011, due to inclement weather. In total, for 2010 net income for the year is favorable by $1,154,000, however, final year end adjustments to reserves for workers’ comp and liability claims have not yet been determined and are not reflected in this amount. For January 2011, net income for the month was a net favorable variance of $612,000 due primarily to favorable labor and employee benefits, offset by unfavorable transit fund operation subsidy.

Everybody Rides Metro Presentation

Mr. Curry presented the Everybody Rides Metro year-end report to the board. ERM recently celebrated the one-millionth ride at the Partners’ Lunch on September 16th. This milestone was reached after only 28 months (May 2008 – September 2010). Despite the poor economy, in 2010 there was an increase in work-related rides in the three major categories of number of tokens, number of clients and number of new clients. The top 10 agencies remained the same with Talbert House giving out one out of every three tokens. Six new partners were added in 2010 to bring the total number of partners to 86. The ERM fund balance at year-end was approximately $900,000. Funds received from SORTA totaled $142,463, and ERM purchased 664,000 tokens during 2010.

CEO’s Report

Ms. Garcia Crews updated the board on the status of the transit fund. City Council has restored $1 million that was withheld from our 2011 funding request thanks to higher-than-expected earnings tax revenue at year-end. She emphasized that restoring the $1 million basically brings us back to a balanced budget, and City Council did not address its own use of earnings tax revenue that is supposed to be dedicated for transit purposes only.

The new administration at the Ohio Department of Transportation has rescinded the Innovative Service grants awarded to all Ohio transit systems a couple of months ago so we will not be offering the new express routes we had planned to the University of Cincinnati/Uptown from Liberty Township and Western Hills. Vice Mayor Qualls has asked Ms. Garcia Crews to attend the next Livable Communities committee meeting to highlight the reasons for the new route and our losing the state money.

The Public Affairs department has developed a “Kids Ride Safe” card for children to carry in their backpacks in case the child gets sick, lost or needs other assistance while on the bus. The card was developed in response to an incident in January where a bus operator made a 10-year-old boy leave the bus at the end of the line in an unfamiliar neighborhood.

Metro and TANK employee basketball teams are preparing for the first-annual Tri-State Shoot-Out on Saturday, February 26 at 7 p.m. to benefit the Everybody Rides Metro foundation and Welcome House of Northern Kentucky. Ms. Garcia Crews invited board members to attend if their schedule allows.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hothem made a motion that the minutes of the January 4, 2011 regular meeting be approved as previously mailed and Mr. Hodges seconded the motion. By voice vote, the Board
unanimously approved the minutes. Ms. Matacic made a motion that the minutes of the January 18, 2011 regular meeting be approved as previously mailed, and Mr. Hodges seconded the motion. By voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the minutes. Dr. Gutsell made a motion that the minutes of the February 1, 2011 regular meeting be approved as previously mailed. Mr. Tarbell seconded the motion. By voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning and Development Committee

Ms. Matacic presented the following motion from the Planning and Development Committee:

1. Proposed Motion: Appointment of Secretary-Treasurer to the SORTA Board

Mr. Tarbell moved for adoption, and Mr. Hothem seconded the motion. This motion appoints Terry Garcia Crews as Secretary-Treasurer to the SORTA Board effective February 15, 2011.

By voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

Operations and Management Committee

Mr. Tarbell presented the following action items from the Operations and Management Committee:

1. Proposed Resolution No. 2011-06, Approval of Body Shop Paint Purchase

Dr. Gutsell moved for adoption, and Ms. Matacic seconded the motion. This resolution approves a five-year contract with FinishMaster, Inc. for bus paint at a total estimated cost of $188,425.

By roll call vote, the Board approved Resolution No. 2011-06.

2. Proposed Resolution No. 2011-07, Approval of Contract for Bus Procurement

Ms. Matacic moved for adoption, and Mr. Hodges seconded the motion. This resolution approves the purchase of up to 43 low floor, 40-foot diesel powered buses from the Gillig Corporation at a total cost not to exceed $17,000,000 (including a 2% contingency fund).

By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2011-07.

3. Proposed Resolution No. 2011-08, Designation of SORTA Depositories, Accounts and Check Signers

Dr. Gutsell moved for adoption, and Mr. Hodges seconded the motion. The Board authorized the persons shown upon the schedule by position as the persons authorized to sign checks and other instruments drawn against each individual account. The Board further designates the banks and accounts shown on the schedule as the depositories and accounts to be maintained in each depository for SORTA. The Board also revokes all previous designations of depositories, accounts and check signers.

By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2011-08.
NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Rugless updated the board members on his January meeting with Mayor Mark Mallory. Mr. Rugless asked if anyone had new business to address prior to going into executive session; there was none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Hodges made a motion that the Board go into Executive Session as provided in Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(3) for, “conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes that are the subject of pending or imminent court action” and Mr. Hothem seconded the motion. By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion and went into executive session at 10:45 a.m.

Mr. Hodges made a motion that the Board return to regular session, and Mr. Hothem seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion and returned to regular session at 11:20 a.m.

Mr. Rugless made a motion that the meeting be adjourned and Ms. Matacic seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the SORTA Board is scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. in the SORTA/Metro Board Room, 602 Main Street, Suite 1200, Cincinnati, Ohio.

APPROVED:

Margaret C. Gutsell
Vice Chair

Terry Garcia Crews
Secretary-Treasurer