



SAGINAW TRANSIT AUTHORITY REGIONAL SERVICES BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday – April 24th, 2023
STARS Board Room (615 Johnson St.)

12:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Diana Gutierrez called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Ms. Diana Gutierrez – Chair, Mr. Dennis Browning, Ms. Vickie Dillon, Mr. Floyd Kloc, Mr. Carl Ruth, Ms. Kathy Miller, Ms. Evelyn McGovern, Dr. Michael Gavin

Members Absent:

EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Browning motioned to approve the agenda as presented, supported by Mr. Kloc. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Ruth motioned to approve the minutes for the Board of Directors meeting on Monday, February 20th, 2023. Mr. Kloc supported the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Gillig Bus Purchase-

Mr. Steffens said we are trying to purchase nine of these buses with the funding Congressman Kildee got out of the earmark matched by the state, at \$50,000 more than the five million intended for this, but we have things we can fill that in with. Mr. Kloc recommended this be approved, which was supported by Ms. Gutierrez and Mr. Ruth. Recommendation carried unanimously.

FY2024 Preliminary Budget-

Mr. Steffens stated there is a hole in the budget due to trying to tell a story to Lansing and show them our process and struggles each year. Dr. Gavin asked if other counties are doing the same thing, which Mr. Steffens states is a tricky question to answer and can be elaborated on later. Mr. Kloc said the Finance Committee recommended this be approved, which was supported by Mr. Ruth. This was carried unanimously.

Cash Flows-

Mr. Steffens said Ms. Pavlowski showed a few months of cash flows to the Finance Committee and went over a few trends. Mr. Kloc brought this to the board for approval, which was seconded by Mr. Ruth, and carried unanimously.

March Financial Statements-

Mr. Steffens said we are moving to a new system so this statement was not completely accurate but hopes next month's will provide an accurate picture. Ms. Gutierrez asked how the new system is working, and Ms. Pavlowski

replied that it is working with some issues, but we are working through those issues. Mr. Kloc brought this to the board on behalf of the Finance Committee for approval to file. This was supported by Mr. Browning and carried unanimously.

Feasibility Study Results-

Mr. Steffens sent this to Omnitech, managers, and the Board members to review – this survey included surveying riders in person on tablets, sharing the survey online, and calling lift and RTW riders over the phone. Mr. Steffens went over some stand out data such as route 1 and 6 having the highest traffic, the top reason people don't use us is 69% of them have their own transit, we had a higher proportion of people walking to shelters and the station than we thought, safety and reliability was most important to riders, etc. He mentioned regarding the plaza, most like it where it is but the Potter Street Station came in as the second-best option. Thirty-three percent of people ranked themselves as very happy with our service, forty percent happy, and only ten percent were unhappy or very unhappy, which Mr. Steffens says is a great result. He went on about how riders seem to want weekend services, more routes, lower fares, and more stops outside of the city in the township. We will use this data to show the township their citizens want transit available to them. Mr. Steffens explained how this survey can show that taxpayers want infrastructure for the bus system. Mr. Kloc said these were great responses and there were also good comments provided by the survey. Ms. Miller said she was surprised how many people took it, as we surveyed over 1,000 people. Ms. Gutierrez asked if the results will be shared with the staff. Mr. Steffens said on May 1st, 2023, we plan to have an open house style public hearing at the Dow, which employees will be told about and encouraged to attend, that will touch on sharing the survey results. This will also be included in the final feasibility study. Mr. Steffens mentioned how many employees also took the survey themselves. Ms. Gutierrez asked for a motion. Mr. Kloc moved to accept the results of the study, supported by Mr. Browning, and the motion was carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Steffens said he caused a stir in Lansing with the funding he proposed, but it was necessary to make a change and get the conversation started. He is unsure if this will change things for this fiscal year. Mr. Steffens believes we are likely to get the same amount as last fiscal year but hopes to at least raise one hundred million dollars from Michigan Works and DHHS next fiscal year if possible. MDOT is talking about joining the meeting between both associations, and Mr. Steffens was invited to this meeting. He again mentioned the open house at the DOW on May 1st, 2023. Ms. Gutierrez asked for a motion to move on after approving the discussion items and hearing the executive director's report to the Strategic Planning Session. Mr. Ruth motioned to move on, seconded by Mr. Kloc. Motion carried unanimously.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Ms. Lee Anne Keller and Ms. Bre Sklar from Omnitech quickly introduced themselves to the Board of Directors. MS. Keller and Ms. Sklar mentioned how they wanted to have a visioning session with the Board of Directors to go over the survey data, to understand their vision for STARS future, to workshop the Mission, Vision, and Values, and go over the Board member interviews. They passed out a packet to everyone breaking the session down into a step-by-step process. Ms. Keller mentioned how the Personnel team is working on this twice a month in meetings, will do the bulk of this work for the Strategic Planning, and will continue to update the Board. Ms. Keller took them through an exercise going over the "One thing" that is compelling to everyone individually about the work being done at STARS, as well as other exercises. Ms. Sklar notated each answer for all the exercises practiced during this session. Everyone contributed to the exercises. Ms. Sklar provided a timeline of the Strategic Planning Process that had been created at a previous Personnel meeting, which Ms. Kayla Fales, financial assistant, will provide at personnel meetings to keep the committee on track. Ms. Keller then went over data regarding our financials, and how that paints a picture of STARS' past, present, and where we are going. She also went over the feasibility study results, and how that data can affect the plan for STARS future. Some big themes during these exercises were the importance of making sure riders have safe, reliable service, that we work to keep a skilled and educated staff, that we work to better the community, and that we continue to fight for funding and to be heard by all levels of government. Ms. Lee Anne Keller then went over their SOAR Analysis outline (strengths, opportunities, aspirations,

results/key performance indicators), going over the commonalities between the Board members, and managers top priorities at STARS. Mr. Ruth and Mr. Kloc briefly touched on how funding stood out to them in this data and mentioned the importance of building up a reserve as they had talked about during the Finance Committee meeting earlier in the day. Mr. Kloc believes sustainability in funding could solve a lot of STARS problems. Ms. Keller said transportation often comes up as a top priority across every company she typically works with, so the work being done at STARS is very important. Ms. Gutierrez asked how we can continue to recruit skilled staff. Mr. Steffens answered by being vigilant about keeping us fully staffed the best we can, by hiring positive employees to continue creating a positive culture at STARS, and by treating our staff well. Mr. Steffens took away from this that we may need to use funding to reduce the time it takes for people to get to buses and help improve our riders' experience and therefore their feelings on STARS. He suggests in the future we could have an inbound and outbound bus for routes. We would need to double the number of drivers, buses, and expenses, but this could be something to plan for in the future. Dr. Gavin suggested leveraging grant dollars to make things like this happen, and to keep in mind that Time is unbelievably valuable to our riders. Ms. Keller then led everyone on to workshopping the mission, vision, and values of STARS. Plenty of ideas were notated, which will be brought to a smaller group in the future to word smith and work up some new suggestions for each of these. Ms. Keller then went over visioning, what it means, and continued with a visioning exercise. She then touched up on best practices for Mission, Vision, and Values for us to keep in mind as this process continues. Ms. Keller will reach out to the board members and managers who did not interview with her the prior week and gather that data to bring to the Personnel Committee. Ms. Sklar notated all the feedback during this session and will use it to help move the Strategic Planning forward. Ms. Miller mentioned that the Personnel Committee will now be meeting twice a month, with the second meeting being virtually to solely focus on working with Ms. Sklar and Ms. Keller on this strategic planning and get us through this process as efficiently as possible.


BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Gutierrez congratulated Mr. Steffens on his tri-annual review.

Ms. Dillon asked if STARS is on the year-long hockey committee with the Dow. Ms. Forbes replied that she is currently working on getting our foot in the door.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ruth moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:58 PM, supported by Mr. Kloc. Motion carried unanimously.



Vickie Dillon, Secretary

Date: 5/22/23