



Jeremy Peterson
Chief Executive Officer

Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority
127 East 14th Street
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503

**Erie Metropolitan
Transit Authority
Minutes
June 26, 2023**

Attendance via zoom:

Board members

Ashley Lawson
Jessica Molczan
Lyn Twillie-Darby
Ben Wilson
Shantel Hilliard
Dylanna Grasinger
George Willis (excused)
Jill Nagy (solicitor)

EMTA Staff Present

Jeremy Peterson
Ed Torres
Dani Duran
Molly Kohler
Sarah Morrison
Theresa Croll
Becca Gathers
Dave Robinson

Guests

Emily Aloiz
Sheila Woeger
Jasmine Flores
Passle Helminski
Mark Cassel

CALL TO ORDER:

Ashley Lawson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 403pm.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR June 26, 2023:

Ashley Lawson called for the review and approval of the AGENDA for the June 26, 2023, meeting. Jessica Molczan made a motion to approve the AGENDA as presented. Lyn Twillie Darby seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR May 22, 2023:

Ashley Lawson called for the review and approval of the MINUTES. Ben Wilson moved to approve minutes. Jessica Molczan seconded. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jill Nagy: None

Jeremy Peterson: Will have a very short executive session at the end of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Deb Spilko – Per email sent on June 22, 2023: For June 2023 Board Meeting

I want to share some thoughts with EMTA regarding Route 33 (Presque Isle Express) rider health and safety, as well as how this relates to liability issues.

I have chosen to offer an experience of mine, because I think it contains a few of the concerns. I apologize for detailed nature but I want you to understand this is not me imagining a problem.



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In late August of 2021, I had taken the 33 to the Waterworks area to take some photos. I received a call from my sister that my mother had taken a sudden turn for the worst and we would soon be losing her.

When i hung up I was overcome with grief and shock.

I headed out for a long walk, hoping it would somehow make me feel less heavy. I don't know how far I walked. I am a lifelong walker and in condition, but this time everything went wrong, and I soon was in distress. The bus stop signs do not tell you how far the next one is, or how far back the previous. Somehow, I thought they were closer together. Soon I was in serious trouble. The heat and humidity, the shock and grief, my failure to address hydration ... maybe my age and my medications. But soon I was very sick and disoriented from the heat. Now I did not know how far I had gone from the last stop, or how near the next one was. I didn't know when the next bus was coming, or if it would pick me up, since at this point I wasn't at a designated stop.

I just sat down, at what seemed like an eternity, and waited until I heard the welcome sound of an approaching bus. I waved and luckily the driver stopped. When I got on, the driver said, "We aren't supposed to pick people up there, but [pause] I know you."

I suspected the driver actually meant I looked like death warmed over, but decided "I know you" sounded more polite.

Anyway, what if the driver didn't decided to stop? What if it had been something even more serious, like a cardiac event?

The next year, at the Lagoons, I tried to figure when the bus would be arriving. The print schedule doesn't have much bayside time information, so I was left guessing.... and either the 33 wasn't on Avail or my phone couldn't receive it. I needed to use to bathroom, dashed over ran back but wasn't right at the stop, even though waving at the driver, he kept going. So I realized at least some would enforce the rule about where to stop.

It strikes me that there are some gaps in preparing for or preventing crises or problems of persons who have gone to the park on the EMTA bus. It is hard for people who go there only by car to fully understand how seriously stranded it can leave you, even if it isn't exactly wilderness. If you go there in a car and you aren't feeling well you can go back to the car and lie down or head back to the city. Not so if you're out there and you have an injury or health issue or your mobility device dies etc.

It would be helpful to have more information on the signs. Right now there is a lot of white space and a stop number that has been directed to Fairmont and Camphausen since it was put there (at least 2017). All the white space areas now on the 33 schedules could be filled with helpful information.

Route 33 needs to be included in Avail tracking app.

I dont understand why it is left out.

I have some specifics I will be suggesting soon, but I want to make this suggestion/recommendation (about addressing the issue at all) sooner than later. I would like to see EMTA set up a discussion with people who use the park without cars who have encountered or anticipated certain problems to get their ideas. To the best of my knowledge no such conversation has ever taken place.

Thank you
Deb Spilko



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Passle Helminski: We're working on new bylaws typed up so that we can send out to E&D committee. Had an appeal meeting today for a case. I thought busses stopped when people waved them down.

Jasmine Flores: Bus drivers will leave you if you are not at the designated stop. It is disheartening when people are treated differently depending on their needs. Says EMTA needs to do more.

Sheila Woeger: Bench on northeast corner of buffalo road and bird drive. Got a splinter from the bench. The bench is not an EMTA bench.

CEO REPORT:

Jeremy Peterson:

Began month looking for additional funding for TOD build out. Met with PA officials. Nothing has materialized but it was a good meeting.

EMTA received approval for a power study at the intermodal. Model power charging needs for electric vehicles. Thank the members of the MPO.

Transit development plan to meet in August. More to come at the July meeting.

CDM smith team in Erie for site meeting. Sent a compressed timeline to have space completed by May 24.

Tops on W 26th closed last week. Operations team met. Creating a food dessert route to some degree. Discussions on creating a route to get passengers to grocery stores.

Cyber security trainings are on the agenda as well.

Met with PennDOT last week to discuss Altair doing segment 3 & 5.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: will be in the executive session. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Have not met.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Vicky presented the budget by email.

2024 budget

Lyn Twillie Darby recommends accepting the fiscal year 2024 budget Fixed route and LIFT as presented. Ben Wilson seconded. Motion carried.

May 2023 Financials

Lyn Twillie Darby recommends that May financials be accepted as presented. Jessica Molczan seconded. Motion carries.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Lyn Twillie-Darby:

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Hiring: 41 total interviews with 1 new hire. 7 candidates in pre-employment screening process. Complement staff numbers were reviewed.

Recruiting event- Next recruitment will be held on June 27 at PA CareerLink.

EMTA call off policy: Lyn Twillie Darby recommends approved call off policy as presented. Ben Wilson seconded. Motion carries.

Absence management policy will be tabled for further discussion.

DEI training – had meeting with Open Eyes. Will update on the training process. Pursuing training for all employees.

CEO Evaluation process: Benchmark goals have been written. The policy has been written.

MARKETING COMMITTEE:

Ben Wilson: The 14th Fest was very successful. Many in attendance. Training will be conducted on new equipment in conference room soon. Sarah has been working on tutorials to use the apps for customers to use. Looking to make additional TV campaigns. Looking at branding to ensure it is inline with EMTA needs.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

Jess Molczan:

February numbers: Fixed route: 118, 743 riders. LIFT rides were 11,711 of which 3,519 ADA. Route 33 presque isle express is running Wednesday and Saturday.

PLANNING COMMITTEE:

George Willis (absent) – Bodhi Gardens is getting ready to move in. Looking at other tenants to fill the space as well. The original plan was that space would be completed Aug 2024, but new compressed plan moves date up to May 2024.

NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE:

Jeremy Peterson: June 29 is the next scheduled LIFT negotiation meeting.

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT:

Thank the whole team for 14th Fest. It was a great event. There was a lot of work done to have this celebration event.

Lyn Twillie Darby was disappointed that there were no food trucks that were minority owned. Sarah Morrison said that there were food trucks minority owned that were invited and coming, but canceled at the last minute.

Triple D's was recommended.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

Ashley Lawson called for a motion to adjourn. Lyn Twillie Darby made a motion to adjourn. Ben Wilson seconded. Motion carries. 449pm Move into executive session.



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The next meeting will be **July 24, 2023**, via ZOOM @ 4:00 p.m.