



Jeremy Peterson  
Chief Executive Officer

Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority  
127 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Erie, Pennsylvania 16503

**Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority  
August Board Meeting  
January 22, 2024**

**Attendance via zoom:**

**Board members**

Lyn Twillie-Darby  
George Willis  
Ashley Lawson  
Ben Wilson  
Jessica Molczan  
Shantel Hilliard  
Dylanna Grasinger

Jill Nagy (solicitor)

**EMTA Staff Present**

Jeremy Peterson  
David Robinson  
Theresa Lugo  
Ed Torres  
Matt Sanfilippo  
Vicky Takach  
Branden Montgomery  
Sarah Morrison  
Rebecca Gathers  
Ed Torres  
Chris Gerhart  
Dani Duran

**Guests**

John Renwick  
Deb Spilko  
Sheila Woeger  
Freda Tepfer

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Ashley Lawson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 402 p.m.  
Disclaimer – testing hybrid meeting system.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR January 22, 2024:**

Ashley Lawson called for the review and approval of the AGENDA for the Jan 22 2024 meeting. Lyn Twillie-Darby moved to approve the agenda as presented. George Willis seconded. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR December 18, 2023:**

Ashley Lawson accepted a motion for the approval of these minutes from December 18 2023. George Willis moved to approve the minutes from December 2023. Lyn Twillie Darby seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Jill Nagy: none  
Jeremy Peterson: none

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Sheila Woeger:** Happy New year to all. Share with board an incident that had



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to occur. Secured a ride on the LIFT to visit a friend. Took a fixed route to Walmart in the morning. Talked to supervisor and was told that I needed exact change – so I had to cancel my ride. I have \$20 bill. But the route was \$6 both ways. Yet the driver had a bag of money but the driver refused to give change to Sheila. Called supervisor, we'll let you pay round trip, but we can't give you any change. Asked security to have the LIFT pick her up where they dropped her off. Felt that someone may have tried to spite her by not picking her up at the front, but at the back of the facility where she was visiting her friend. (Pleasant Ridge). Chris Gerhart contacted me after attending the meeting for the elderly and disabled. Said that no one should be denied a ride. The LIFT supervisor had called me back. I had a \$5 credit on my account on the LIFT from prior rides. I do have a driver license, but want to take advantage of public transportation. Asking for better customer service from the LIFT. If EMTA is making the rules, then there needs to be more empathy. I found all the LIFT drivers to be very cordial individuals. Sometimes the fixed route drivers are not the most friendly. I thank you – (comments ended due to time limits).

#### **CEO REPORT:**

1. Triennial review this year from FTA. Dani and Becca will be going to Philadelphia to prep for the review this week.
2. Beginning Feb 14 – EMTA will host the technical advisory meeting of the MPO. Virtual and in person meetings.
3. Had incident on Erie High School bus – EMTA is fully cooperating with Police Department – including providing video footage. There was a meeting held with school administrators, police, and EMTA. Develop a plan to be proactive for **the** safety of drivers and all that ride our buses. Very good meeting. Shantel – Called a meeting immediately after the incident occurred. Booker T Washington had been in conversation with the schools to put mentors on the bus. Have a relationship with the school district. Put together a proposal from Booker T Washington to the school to have mentors on the bus. The school district will vote on the proposal this week at the board meeting. The proposal would have 3 mentors on each bus. Mentors meet at EMTA and then make sure everything is in order prior to picking up the students. EMTA will provide training for the mentors. EPD and district will also provide training. This contract would be for 90-day trial period which would start beginning of February if approved. Will create relationships with the students to help diffuse situations that could arise. When is the school board meeting – January 23 is the next scheduled meeting – Shantel will double check to find out if

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that is still the date. (Discussion ensued regarding training provided to drivers for incidents such as this one.)

4. Beginning in February, EMTA will begin partnering with TSA to conduct trainings.
5. In Passle's absence – there was an E&D meeting last week – Chris Gerhart was present to give the report: Met this past Thursday via zoom. Fixed route – Year over Year 9.6% ridership increase. LIFT 83% on-time service rating. Sarah Morrison reported conducting extensive travel training. Sponsored festival of trees. Will continue to hold monthly quality assurance meetings as well. Next E&D meeting will be April 11, 2024.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

1. Working on the driver assault bill – finally have some legs on the bill and it will be re-introduced in congress.
2. Working through authorization for training initiatives. State wants to implement standardized trainings which will be required for the 2027 review.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

Has not yet as such. Nothing to report. Note: Board will be asking for a longer meeting to discuss the strategic plan soon.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

Vicky Takach – reported on the EMTA financials (December). George Willis made the motion to approve financials as presented. Shantel Hilliard seconded. Motion passed.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:**

Committee met in December to look at DEI training and information from the training sessions. Looking at next steps to implement a DEI committee. Will update the board on the progress of these initiatives.

Vacancy needs:

10 Fixed route drivers needed.

20 LIFT route drivers needed.

January interviews: 39

4 candidates pending

4 new January hires

EMTA complement 197

Recruitment will take place January 23 at the PA CareerLink from 10-2pm.

**MARKETING COMMITTEE:**

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Ben Wilson – met last week. Thanked Sarah for all her efforts. Working with paratransit buses to get the graphics right and consistent. The EMTA newsletter has been sent out. Working with Colleges, Hamot and Erie Insurance to let employees and students know they are able to ride the bus for free with their company or college badge. Sarah and Becca are looking to get brochures translated for the New Americans settling in Erie. EMTA started a Winter goods drive to benefit Erie City Mission – donations will be accepted at EMTA. Launched the new 2024 surveys for internal and external needs. Answers will be used to benchmark marketing efforts and strategies.

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:**

**Jessica Molczan reported:**

Fixed route 108,900 December rides.  
2023 total fixed route ride 1,374,325  
2021 total fixed route ride \$865,468  
LIFT rides of which were ADA funded.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

George Willis: Received the one proposal for the management of the upcoming project. Presented the cost estimate of the proposal. Appropriate documentation was received and shared with the board members. George Willis made a motion to award and negotiate the contract for construction management services to Gannett Flemming. Shantel Hilliard seconded. Motion carried.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE:**

Nothing to report.

**NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE:**

Ongoing lift negotiations.

**CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT:**

Nothing additional.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Nothing else to add.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Ashley Lawson adjourned the meeting at 449 pm  
Lyn Twillie Darby made motion to adjourn. George Willis seconded. Motion



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carried.

The next meeting will be **February 26, 2024**, via  
ZOOM @ 4:00 p.m.