



EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

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Board Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday July 7th, 2020

PLACE: Zoom Electronic Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Waltman, Lynda Garlitz, Jim German
and Joe Henne

MEMBERS ABSENT: Phyllis French

**ADMINISTRATIVE
STAFF PRESENT:** Pete Paramski, Akemi Gordon, Bonnie Kaunisto and Kathy Neubert

**ADMINISTRATIVE
STAFF ABSENT:** None

OTHERS PRESENT: See Attached

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Trustee Waltman.

II. ROLL CALL OF TRUSTEES:

Trustee German – present
Trustee Henne – present
Chairman Waltman – present
Trustee French – Absent (excused)
Trustee Garlitz – present

III. PLEDGE OF ALLIGIENCE:

IV. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

Chairman Waltman asked that fare equity study be added under new business. **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Henne; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee German to add fare equity study under new business. A roll call vote was taken:
Trustee German – Yes, Trustee Henne – Yes, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz – Yes.
Motion Carried.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brad Kuusinen discussed the emergency procedures that the Drummond Island Ferry utilizes.

VI. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES JUNE 2ND, 2020 AND SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES JUNE 10TH 2020.

IT WAS MOVED by Trustee German; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Henne to approve the June 2nd, 2020 Board meeting minutes and the June 10th 2020 Special meeting minutes. A roll call vote was taken:
Trustee German-Yes, Chairman Henne – Yes, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz – Yes,
Motion carried

VII. FINANCIAL REPORT

IN GENERAL

Finance Director Gordon presented the Electronic Funds Report.

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Gordon spoke about MERS Defined contribution supplemental actuary for new hires.

BUSSING:

Gordon stated that as she reported in the April financials, revenue was down 61% which was one full month of the “Stay at Home” order. In May Gordon stated that the numbers are slowly going up from 61% to 41% decline. YTD EUPTA is down 12%. Gordon stated that the contracts with HBH and NTI are still at a standstill so EUPTA isn’t able to bill for those riders.

Gordon stated that ridership was down 56% in April and 52% in May. YTD ridership is down 15%.

FERRY SYSTEM:

Gordon reported that in April, fare revenue was down 46% and in May it was down 19%. These numbers are also starting to slowly climb back up. YTD EUPTA’s fare revenue is down 7%. Vehicle counts in April had decreased 47% or 16,222, in May we were down 19% or 8,918. Both were full months of the “Stay at Home” order.

Gordon stated that the new fares went into effect on 7/1/2020. The changeover with the new tickets went smoothly thanks to Kathy and Bonnie. The new temporary signs for fare rates are all up at the docks.

Gordon reported that there was definitely a surge of ticket sales in June which will skew any comparative revenue numbers. This whole year is going to be skewed. First, the “Stay at Home” order was implemented at the end of March and continued through all of April and May so revenue was down. June ticket sales were up substantially, and July 1st the new rates went into effect. Since people stocked up on the commuter tickets, it may be a while before they need to purchase the new ones. This will definitely skew our financial data.

VIII. DIRECTORS REPORT

Director Paramski reported that it’s been a very busy month. Paramski stated that the fare increase/restructure was implemented 7/1/2020 and it went smoothly. Paramski stated that EUPTA has not taken a lot of phone calls/emails regarding this.

Drummond Islander III update – Paramski reported that MCM Marine continues to work on the drydocking tasks that need to be done. The USCG was at the shipyard earlier today inspecting a couple of hull repairs and impact damage repairs that needed to be done. Paramski stated that the prop shafts have been pulled and replaced and the old ones sent out for repair. Paramski stated that we are waiting for Twin Disk to hook up the electronics to the gears. Most of the blasting and painting is complete on the hull, window seals still need to be replaced as well as a few other minor repairs. Paramski stated that we are hoping to have the boat back in service the end of July or the

first part of August.

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Paramski stated that in regards to the Neebish Islander III design, EUPTA is waiting on the design and development of the specifications and plans and Paramski is still hopeful that letting will be done mid-summer.

In regards to the property update, Paramski stated that FTA has signed off on the environmental process. Paramski stated that the next step is an appraisal review and Paramski is currently soliciting for the review. Once this step is complete, EUPTA should be able to start negotiating with the owners of the property for purchase.

Paramski stated that he sent the board an update on IBI last week. IBI has put together a briefing on what the current situation is and what our issues are.

Paramski stated that the Neebish Island shoreline protection project was completed last week.

Drummond Islander IV had their annual Coast Guard inspection last week and Paramski stated that it couldn't have gone better and there were no corrective measures needed.

Paramski reported that the Detour Park is about complete. He stated that the Township has put picnic tables and benches in the area.

Paramski stated that EUPTA is participating in the Rides to Wellness program in Chippewa County which provides non-emergency medical transportation to those in need. Paramski stated that he is hopeful that this will extend to Luce County as well.

Paramski reported that Union negotiations will take place soon. This has been delayed with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Trustee German stated that EUPTA needs to be very frugal and that as Akemi gets information on a new retirement plan this may be the time to get it inserted into the new contract. Chairman Waltman stated that he agreed.

IX. POLICY REVIEW

Neebish Island Parking Policy – Paramski stated that nothing has changed with this policy and EUPTA now has a copy of the court order associated with this policy.

IT WAS MOVED by Trustee German; **SUPPORTED** by Chairman Waltman to approve the Neebish Island parking policy. A roll call vote was taken: Trustee German – Yes, Trustee Henne, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz - Yes.

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Student Discount Policy and Bonus Ticket Policy - Paramski stated that the Student discount policy and the Bonus ticket policy are both new policies due to the fare restructure/increase. Paramski stated that both of these policies were emailed to the board and implemented on an interim basis.

IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Henne; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee German to approve the Student Discount Policy and the Bonus Ticket Policy. A roll call vote was taken: Trustee German – Yes, Trustee Henne, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz - Yes.

By-Laws – Discussion: Trustee German stated that By-Laws in essence are very good in any organization. German stated that administration still needs to go through and make some changes; however, he feels that EUPTA is on the right track. Chairman Waltman agreed and stated some changes that needed to be made. Trustee Garlitz suggested that she feels it needs to be read carefully and submit changes to Kathy for the next meeting.

IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Garlitz; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Henne to table the By-Laws and submit changes for the next meeting. A roll call vote was taken: Trustee German – Yes, Trustee Henne, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz - Yes.

X. NEW BUSINESS

Emergency Protocol for Island residents – Director Paramski stated there was an incident that prompted this being on the agenda. Paramski stated that after discussions, a cut and dry policy is probably a mistake as every situation needs discretion. Paramski stated that he recommends that if it is a true emergency that 911 be contacted.

Trustee German stated that he agrees and feels that it is important to have a third party look at the situation and that third party should be 911. German stated that he has asked the complainant on three different occasions for a written explanation on his version and that has not been supplied. German stated that the 911 dispatchers are trained to ask the appropriate questions which were not relayed to the captain by the individual who called the captain. German stated he feels it should be posted that if there is an emergency to call 911 not the captain's phone.

Trustee Garlitz stated that there have been several emergencies on Sugar Island that have self-transported because the emergency needed to be moved quicker than the ambulance could get there. Garlitz stated that they would call the boat when they were on their way and make the captain aware of how long it would take them to get to the ferry.

German asked if it would be more efficient to call 911 and have them notify the boat.

Chairman Waltman asked about the air evacuation however Trustee Garlitz stated that would come from Traverse City.

Trustee German made the motion that 911 be called before the Captain as this is life and death and

the Captain is not trained in this.

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Trustee Henne stated that he is supportive of calling 911 however he would like to consult with 911 to see if they are on board with this. Henne also stated that as a parent or grandparent you are doing everything you can to cut down on the time to get the person transported.

Trustee German withdrew his motion and recommends that Director Paramski contact 911 and get some input.

IT WAS MOVED by Trustee Garlitz; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Henne to table a decision on the emergency protocol until more information is received. A roll call vote was taken: Trustee German – Yes, Trustee Henne, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz - Yes.

Disabled Veteran – Trustee Garlitz stated that there is no disabled ticket anymore and asked about a discounted car and driver commuter pass. Finance Director Gordon stated that the \$100 ticket is a 75% discount so everyone is getting this discount. Garlitz asked if the Disabled Veteran would need to come into the office and provide documentation of disability and Gordon replied stating that no one has to provide documentation for the \$100 ticket. Gordon clarified that if a person is buying the senior/disabled cash fare ticket, documentation must be shown to the deckhand.

Fare Equity study – Chairman Waltman stated that one individual has been identified to do the study and the person is located in Washington. Waltman stated that back in January the board stated EUPTA should find someone to do this study. Waltman stated this would be a very expensive, time consuming process. Waltman stated that at this time it does not seem to be a useful endeavor for EUPTA to pursue and Waltman suggests that this request be rescinded.

IT WAS MOVED by Trustee German; **SUPPORTED** by Chairman Waltman to rescind the 1/7/2020 motion for a Fare Equity study. Discussion: Trustee Henne asked for some historical information on why the motion was made. Chairman Waltman discussed the board composition and the different fare categories. Trustee German stated that at this time we are getting very few complaints and the study would be very expensive. German stated about ten years ago the County did a salary study and it wasn't a useful study. Trustee Garlitz stated it should be tabled or rescinded and could be looked at down the road.

A roll call vote was taken: Trustee German – Yes, Trustee Henne, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz - Yes.

XI. BOARD COMMENT

Trustee Garlitz stated that in regards to IBI study it didn't tell us anything we didn't already know. Garlitz suggests that each board member ride the ferries and understand the challenges the deckhands go through as well as the collection process.

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Trustee Henne spoke about the emergency protocol and asked what coverage EUPTA captains and staff have with respect to being sued. Gordon stated that she would have to check on the limitations. Henne wants the staff to know that the board is interested in having their back. Paramski stated that he will make a phone call and find out. Chairman Waltman asked Paramski for a report on this next month.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business to come before the Board, **IT WAS MOVED** by Trustee Garlitz; **SUPPORTED** by Trustee Henne to adjourn. A roll call vote was taken: Trustee German – Yes, Trustee Henne – Yes, Chairman Waltman – Yes, Trustee Garlitz - Yes. **UNANIMOUS**. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 11:38 a.m. The next regular board meeting will be held August 13th at 10:30 am.


Lynda Garlitz
Secretary/Treasurer


Prepared By: Kathy Neubert
Administrative Assistant