

LUZERNE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 25, 2020

PRESENT:

CHARLES SCIANDRA, CHAIRMAN
MICHAEL CEFALO, VICE-CHAIRMAN
VALERIE KEPNER, PH.D, TREASURER
JOSEPH PADAVAN, ASST. TREASURER
LYNETTE VILLANO, SECRETARY (Joined by phone after roll call)
GARY POLAKOSKI, ASST. SECRETARY
PATRICK CONWAY, MEMBER
SEAN ROBBINS, MEMBER (Joined by phone after roll call)

ATTORNEY JOSEPH BLAZOSEK, SOLICITOR
ATTORNEY MATTHEW CARMODY, ASST. SOLICITOR

ABSENT:

DENNIS DRISCOLL, MEMBER

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

LEE HORTON, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JOE ROSELLE, DIRECTOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES/I.T.
VINCE COVIELLO, DIRECTOR TRANSIT MAINTENANCE
LOUIS URITZ, PROCUREMENT MANAGER
RANDY LISMAN, FINANCE DIRECTOR
JANINE HENNIGAN, HR MANAGER
TRACY KLINE, ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT

OTHERS:

KEVIN MCGEE, UNION PRESIDENT
PAUL JASON, BUS OPERATOR
ERIC MARK, THE CITIZEN'S VOICE

1. Pledge of Allegiance: Board Chairman, Mr. Sciandra, welcomed everyone to the Special Meeting and invited those present to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call: The following Board Members were present or available by phone for the meeting: Mr. Cefalo, Mr. Conway, Dr. Kepner, Mr. Padavan, Mr. Polakoski and Mr. Sciandra. Atty. Robbins and Ms. Villano dialed in by phone after roll call was taken.

3. Public Comment: None.

4. Chairperson's Report: Mr. Charles Sciandra

Mr. Sciandra said we have two paramount concerns; number one is the safety and well-being of all of our associates. He said that he looks at our authority as first responders from the drivers to the cleaners, everybody is doing a superb job and we want to recognize that.

He stated our second concern is that we want to provide safe transportation for all of our ridership throughout our service area. He explained that we are working with Bob Fiume and COLTS as to everything they are doing to make sure that we are either emulating what they are doing or they are emulating what we are doing.

Mr. Sciandra said this is an unprecedented situation, something we have never seen in the history of this organization. He added that there are different services we are looking to provide and have never done before and we want to improve and sustain our ridership.

He stated that he was happy and excited to see that everyone from the administrative side to the drivers have been very open in looking for a solution and he applauded that and thanked everyone.

5. Solicitor's Report: Attorney Joseph Blazosek

Atty. Blazosek noted for the record that there was an executive session from 4:35 p.m. until approximately 5:05 p.m. He said that during the session, Atty. Robbins joined the meeting as did Ms. Villano and any votes will certainly include them as well as the other persons that were here as roll was called. He said he outlined for the board a consideration form of property agreement that involves the Murray Complex and touches on real estate.

He added that Mr. Horton, himself, and Atty. Carmody had the opportunity to discuss some staffing observations and ridership reports, adding that these are extraordinary circumstances. He said the staff is being stretched in ways that weren't imagined a month ago, or certainly any time those of us who have worked here can relate to. Mr. Horton gave some input to the board on what his forecast looks like for staffing. Atty. Blazosek added that no decisions were reached or actions taken.

6. Executive Directors Report: Interim Director, Lee Horton

Mr. Horton presented the following action items:

Motion to approve Joyce Insurance renewal for Worker's Compensation insurance, also Excess Flood and Underlying Flood Insurance. A motion was made by Mr. Padavan and seconded by Ms. Villano. Motion carried with a roll call vote of the board.

Motion to waive bus fare collection, effective Monday, 3/30/20. Atty. Blazosek explained that we have not seen such a dramatic drop in ridership as we have in recent weeks and there is a concern for safety of the drivers. He stated that other agencies have talked about ways it might be possible to work in a solution that would still keep service, and add protection for drivers.

Mr. Horton explained that in waiving the fare collection we would be able to utilize the back doors, and try to minimize the amount of contact with the drivers. He stated that we would still conform to ADA regulations; if someone needs a lift or a wheelchair or ramp, we would still have to perform that as normal. Mr. Horton said he spoke with the ATU and they are comfortable that we can implement a sign off policy so we know that the ridership is still being accurately collected and minimize the amount of contact the drivers have with the public.

Mr. Sciandra inquired about COLTS. Mr. Horton said that the COLTS buses are unable to utilize the back doors as our drivers will be doing. He commented that this is being done across the state.

Before the vote was taken, Atty. Carmody read the updated temporary fare policy resolution (see attached). A motion to waive the fare collection was made by Mr. Cefalo and seconded by Dr. Kepner. Motion carried with a roll call vote of the board.

Motion to pay April healthcare for both unions. Atty. Blazosek explained that this is due to staffing adjustments that were recommended. A motion was made by Mr. Padavan and seconded by Mr. Polakoski. Motion carried with a roll call vote of the board.

Motion to approve pipe storage at Murray Complex. Mr. Horton stated that Pennsylvania American Water requested to store pipes at the Murray Complex for two weeks for a project that is being done in that location. A motion was made by Ms. Villano and seconded by Dr. Kepner. Motion carried with a roll call vote of the board.

Mr. Sciandra asked Mr. Horton to update the board on what COLTS has done thus far. Mr. Horton explained they went to six days a week using the Saturday service schedule but did not believe we are at that point yet. He said COLTS went fare-less and has laid off multiple Fixed Route and Shared Ride employees and a customer service position. He said COLTS is not proceeding with the delivery of groceries as they notified Gerrity's and the store said it is not something they want to pursue at this time. He added that they have several employees working from home.

Mr. Horton stated that he spoke to the Pittston Wal-Mart and with Wal-Mart it must be online and then the onus is back on the customer itself. He said we are trying to come up with what it takes to order and see if there is some way to help them. He said he also reached out to Dave Pedri and said we are looking at doing meal delivery for those who would normally go to the senior centers to eat. Mr. Horton added that he will reach out to Schiels and Weis to see if that is something we can subsidize the Shared Ride with.

Mr. Sciandra believed that once this information hits the media we will get more requests as seniors and handicapped people are going to be looking for ways to solve some of their needs.

He explained this is really out of the box, for even the government. Mr. Sciandra said that even when this epidemic is over, there are some additional services we can provide for our ridership throughout the County. He mentioned that he talked to Toby Fauver who has helped us embrace this and take some hurdles down with the State. Mr. Sciandra said that someone questioned on an email whether or not a license or permit is needed for delivery and it is not necessary.

Mr. Conway stated that Schiels Market currently delivers to the houses.

Mr. Sciandra stated that Wal-Mart is running out of drivers adding that this is going to be a work in progress and we are definitely going to learn as we go.

7. Old Business:

No old business was discussed.

8. New Business:

Mr. Horton explained that we are selling vehicles in the amount of \$17,500, one of which includes the Trolley. He also noted that we can drop them off the insurance because they are not on the road.

Mr. Sciandra asked for a motion to accept the bid of \$17,500 for five Fixed Route vehicles. A motion was made by Dr. Kepner and seconded by Ms. Villano. Motion carried with a roll call vote of the board.

9. Remarks: None

10. Adjournment: With all business completed, Mr. Padavan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Kepner. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

BY: Tracy Kline, Secretary to the Board