



**Macatawa Area Express Transportation Authority
Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 23, 2021**

The Macatawa Area Express Transportation Authority Board met at 3:30 pm in the training room at the MAX Operations building - 11660 Greenway Drive, Holland, MI 49424.

Members Present: Chair Russ TeSlaa and Secretary/Treasurer Mike Trethewey; Board Members, Meika Weiss, Pankaj Rajadhyaksha, Al Rios, and Jan Steggerda

Others Present: Lynn McCammon

Members Absent: Vice-Chair Joe Baumann, Kristin Myers, and Kevin Klynstra

Staff Present: Elisa Hoekwater, Beth Higgs, and Barbara Sonnerville

8.21.1 Approval of the July 26, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Rios and supported by Trethewey to approve the July 26, 2021 board meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

8.21.2 Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8.21.3 Marketing Committee

Higgs reported that the new MAX website went live on August 16th and it looks great so far but Marketing will continue tweaking things on the new site during the coming weeks. Marketing is still working on driver recruitment efforts. And they are busy planning the MAX Employee Appreciation week coming soon.

8.21.3a Call Center Summary

There was no discussion.

8.21.4 Executive Committee

8.21.4a FTA Post- Audit and MAX Drug & Alcohol Policy Modifications

In January 2021 MAX met with the FTA as part of a required audit of the drug and alcohol policies for small urban transit agencies. Since the audit, we have provided regular Board updates on the recommended changes for compliance. A thorough legal review was completed and MAX staff spent numerous hours revising the document to the satisfaction of the auditors. The final draft was presented to the board for approval. A motion was made by Trethewey and supported by Rios to approve the modifications as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

8.21.4b*Modification to FY21 PTO Policy*

In May 2021 the MAX Authority Board approved the extension of PTO for MAX employees until December 31, 2021 for employees with accrual exceeding 240 hours. Due to the unique circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, MAX is approaching the end of the fiscal year with a balance of \$143,000 in State operating funds that will need to be returned if not expended.

An additional modification to the PTO policy is being recommended in order to provide a benefit to employees while also addressing the balance of operating funds. Employees who have accrued significant PTO hours will be offered up to 80 hours of PTO that can be cashed in before the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2021.

A motion was made by Weiss and supported by Trethewey to approve the modifications as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

8.21.4c*FY 2021 Budget Amendments*

Routine Transit Operations experienced a decline in expenditures for fuel and tires due to the fixed routes being suspended through March 2021. While ridership has been lower than before the pandemic, social distancing has required that fewer passengers travel in each vehicle. This results in more staff required to provide transit services and payroll costs for bus operators, dispatchers, and for all other staff working in operations have increased. While there have been fewer overtime hours among bus operators and dispatchers than in past years, overtime clearly increased for employees in transit maintenance, which includes utility workers who wash and sanitize vehicles and building & grounds maintenance. A summary was presented of the proposed modifications to the FY 2021 budget, which address the reductions in transit operations and payroll increases resulting from the pandemic.

A motion was made by Rios and supported by Weiss to approve the FY 2021 Budget Amendments as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

8.21.4d*FY 2022 Proposed Budget*

Preparing for the 2022 fiscal year required a detailed analysis of current spending, anticipating needs as MAX continues to provide service throughout the pandemic, and a lengthy discussion about much needed salary adjustments and wage increases. The 2022 proposed budget includes the original department request presented to the Executive Committee as well as a proposed budget which provides a \$2 hourly increase for all staff, and key salary adjustments.

A motion was made by Trethewey and supported by Rios to approve the FY 2022 Proposed Budget as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

8.21.4e*Route 8 Planned Changes*

Community Action House will be moving into a newly renovated 16,000 square foot facility located at the intersection of East 8th Street and Paw Paw Drive in Holland Heights. Following an evaluation of nearby fixed route services and a review of possible options to connect transit more directly to the area, the MAX Management Committee has determined Route 8, along it's Inbound return to the Depot, would offer the best ability to serve potential members of the community seeking transportation accessibility to the new CAH facility. These changes are planned to go into service on October 1, 2021.

8.21.4f *Ridership Reports for July 2021*
There was no discussion.

8.21.4g *Financial Reports for July 2021*
There was no discussion.

8.21.4h *Expenditure Reports for July 2021*
There was no discussion.

8.21.5 **MAX Director's Report**
Hoekwater reported that work has begun on the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program and will include ten Arboc buses in 2024 and two Gillig buses in 2026.

8.21.6 **Adjournment**
A motion was made by Trethewey and supported by Weiss to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.