



**Macatawa Area Express Transportation Authority  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 28, 2022  
Proposed Minutes**

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, Vice-Chair Ly Raymond, and Secretary/Treasurer Joe Baumann; Board Members Jason Latham, Kristin Myers, Al Rios, and Meika Weiss, and Kevin Klynstra

**Others Present:** Lynn McCammon

**Members Absent:** Jan Steggerda

**Staff Present:** Elisa Hoekwater, Beth Higgs, Shelby Pedersen, and Barbara Sonnerville

**3.22.1 Approval of the February 28, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Rios and supported by Weiss to approve the February 28, 2022 board meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**3.22.2 Public Comment**

A motion was made by Latham and supported by Rios to open the floor for public comment. Motion carried unanimously.

One person joined the meeting virtually but made no comment.

Higgs read the following public comment received via email in regards to the proposed fare increase, *"I hope that you will not raise fees to ride regular route for seniors, ADA cardholders etc. while .50 may not seem a lot most of them are on fixed incomes and with everything else going up it could create a hardship. MAX bus is the only way to get around and .50 each time they board will add up. It seems a better option is to go back to full service such as the reserve a max and late night route because you'll get more money that way instead of causing our elderly and disabled customers undue hardship. Thank you!!"*.

There were no other public comments. A motion was made by Rios and supported by Weiss to close the floor to public comment. Motion carried unanimously.

**3.22.3 Marketing Committee**

Higgs reported that Marketing is still concentrating on Bus Operator recruitment. They are looking at advertising on billboards in the area.

**3.22.3a Call Center Summary**

There was no discussion.

### **3.22.4 Executive Committee**

#### **3.22.4a** *Public Hearing Notice ADA and Senior Fare Change*

In October 2020, the MAX Transportation Authority Board approved a fare increase for fixed route and demand response passengers. Due to the pandemic we continued to offer these services without charging fare. Now that the fixed routes have been running for the last year and ridership has begun to stabilize, we are now prepared to again collect fares.

One change we are proposing is to discontinue free rides which are now offered for ADA cardholders, Medicare cardholders, and seniors over 70 years of age.

The floor was opened to public comment at the beginning of the meeting and all comments were taken into consideration by the board members.

A motion was made by Rios and supported by Latham to approve the increase in fares as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **3.22.4b** *Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Application*

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("Bipartisan Infrastructure Law"). MAX received feedback from USDOT staff on FY2021 grant application that was submitted and has been encouraged to resubmit an application by April 14, 2022.

A motion was made by Rios and supported by Baumann to approve the resubmission of the grant application as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **3.22.4c** *Grant for Buses and Bus Facilities Program & Low or No Emission Grant Program Application*

The Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program (49 U.S.C. 5339) makes federal resources available to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities.

A sub-program, the Low-or-No Emission Vehicle Program, provides competitive grants for bus and bus facility projects that support low and zero-emission vehicles.

On March 7, 2022, FTA announced approximately \$372 million available for Fiscal Year 2022 grants to help transit agencies purchase and rehabilitate buses, vans, and related equipment, and build bus facilities, with an application of May 31, 2022.

MAX is requesting funding through the Low-No Competitive Program in order to replace four buses used for demand response services and four buses used for Fixed Route bus service. A motion was made by Rios and supported by Latham to approve the Low or No-Emission Vehicle Program grant application as written. Motion carried unanimously.

MAX will submit an application through the 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Grant Program to complete the second phase building construction for the Greenway facility and retrofit the Padnos Transportation Center to accommodate electric vehicle charging. A motion was made by Rios and supported by Weiss to approve the 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Grant Program grant application as written. Motion carried unanimously.

- 3.22.4d** *FY 2022 Zero-Emission Transition Plan*  
The FTA provided a letter requesting the approval of Zero-Emission Transition Plan for all transit agencies seeking to apply for projects related to the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program and the Lo or No Emission Program. The Zero-Emission Transition Plan is required for any applicants seeking funding from these grant programs. A motion was made by Baumann and supported by Rios to approve the MAX Zero-Emission Transition Plan as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3.22.4e** *Revisions to Employee Pay Grades and Step Program for Annual Performance Evaluations*  
In order to provide a competitive pay structure that can be used for annual merit increases and support cost of living expenses, we have revised the pay grades and steps. The new step program will use metrics to assess performance and it will assist supervisors to apply a more consistent performance evaluation that can be used to place employees into their new step. We intend to begin this new revised step program after supervisors have gone through training and MAX employees have been informed of the new process. A motion was made by Weiss and supported by Rios to approve the new program as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3.22.4f** *Revisions to MAX Paid Time Off (PTO) Policy*  
In 2010, MAX established a PTO Policy for eligible full-time employees. To be eligible for PTO, full-time employees must have worked at MAX for 6 months, at which time they earn two days of PTO. On July 1 of each year, eligible full-time employees received additional PTO based on years of service. Part-time employees were not eligible to receive MAX PTO.  
MAX staff recommended revisions to the existing PTO policy to allow part-time employees to receive 3 days of PTO at 6 months from their initial hire date and earn 3 days of additional PTO annually on their anniversary date. Full-time employees would receive 3 days of PTO at 6 months from their initial hire date and receive additional PTO annually on their anniversary date.  
A motion was made by Baumann and supported by Rios to approve the revised MAX PTO Policy as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3.22.4g** *Ridership Reports for February 2022*  
There was no discussion.
- 3.22.4h** *Financial Reports for February 2022*  
There was no discussion.
- 3.22.4i** *Expenditure Reports for February 2022*  
There was no discussion.
- 3.22.5** **MAX Director's Report**  
Hoekwater reported that the MAX has been working on possible grant funding in conjunction with the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council.
- 3.22.6** **Adjournment**  
A motion was made by Latham and supported by Rios to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.