

Macatawa Area Express Transportation Authority
Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 24, 2024
Approved Minutes

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

Members Present: Chair Russ TeSlaa and Secretary/Treasurer Joe Baumann, Board Members Nathan Bocks, Jan Steggerda, Kristin Myers, Meika Weiss

Others Present: Lynn McCammon

Members Absent: Board Members Kevin Klynstra, Jason Latham, Al Rios and Abraham Hernandez

Staff Present: Elisa Hoekwater, Beth Higgs, Kaitlynn Riegling, Sandra Korhorn

6.24.1 Approval of the Minutes for May 2024 Board Meeting

A motion was made by Weiss and supported by Bocks to approve the May 2024 board meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

6.24.2 Public Comment

There were no public comments.

6.24.3a Marketing Committee

Higgs reported that the Marketing team has been working on an employee appreciation lunch (August 4) and also preparing for the VIA rider App which will launch soon after the new scheduling software.

6.24.4 Executive Committee

6.24.4a Request to Submit Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Competitive Grant Program Application

Riegling explained that TAP is a competitive grant with \$24.5 million dollars available annually to be used on projects to enhance Michigan’s intermodal transportation system and provide alternative transportation options. MAX will request funds to install new bus shelters with solar lighting, new system maps and brochures, bus stop signs, and other service change related projects. MAX is requesting up to \$250,000, these funds would support the unfunded costs of the Michigan Shared Streets and Spaces Grant that MAX applied for earlier this month. The TAP funding does require a match at a minimum of 20 percent but most projects match requirements are determined to 35 – 45 percent as MDOT would like to see strong local community support. The Board was requested to approve the submittal of the TAP grant funding. Motion to approve was made by TeSlaa, supported by Latham. Motion passed unanimously.

- 6.24.4b Relocation of Bus Shelter & Approval of Lease Agreement for James Street Center**
Higgs reported that in March she was contacted by the investment company that owned property at 115 Clover St. in Holland Twp, stating that MAX buses were damaging the blacktop near the bus shelter in their parking lot. The recent MAX Transit Study identified low ridership at that location, so the decision was made to remove that bus shelter. Capstone Companies, the property owner of the James St. Center Plaza agreed to have the bus shelter moved to their location at 285 James Street in Holland Twp. Entering a lease agreement until year 2039.
Motion to approve the new lease agreement with Capstone Companies was made by Baumann, supported by Bocks. Motion passed unanimously.
- 6.24.4c Proposed Employee Wage Adjustment**
Hoekwater reported that MAX has seen a significant increase in bus operator applications after wages were increased in November 2023. As the commitment was made to evaluate all remaining pay grades in 2024, we are now proposing a wage increase for all other positions. Adjust wages for all remaining MAX positions to account for cost of living increases and bring them in alignment with the MAX pay grade system for non-exempt and exempt employees. Using June 2024 employment data this would increase wages by \$146,897 (4%). The new total for adjusted wages in FY2024 would then be \$3,718,980. Motion to approve was made by Bocks, supported by Baumann. Motion passed unanimously.
- 6.24.4d Fare Adjustments to Launch VIA Scheduling Software**
Korhorn requested approval of fare adjustments for fixed route services to decrease the cost of the Reduced Fare weekly pass from \$10.00 to \$5.00. This will allow a reduced fare rider to ride a minimum of 10x to make the pass cost effective for the week or for a month (if a reduced fare rider wanted to purchase four (4) passes), rather than purchasing the Full Fare monthly pass. Board approval was requested to adjust the fares for both the Reduced Daily and Reduced Weekly fixed route passes. Motion to table was made by Myers, supported by Baumann.
- 6.24.4e Update on VIA Scheduling Software Launch**
Korhorn reported that the new Via scheduling software would launch in four to six weeks. The MAX team continues to provide input and meets weekly with Via to ensure a smooth transition.
- 6.24.4f Update on MAX Transit Route Restoration**
- 6.24.4g Ridership Reports**
There was no discussion.
- 6.24.4h Financial Reports**
There was no discussion.
- 6.24.4i Expenditure Reports**
There was no discussion.

5.24.5 Director's Report

5.24.6 Adjournment

A motion was made by Baumann and supported by Weiss to adjourn the meeting.
Motion passed unanimously.