

**DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**1100 DART Way – Des Moines, IA 50309
October 25, 2011**

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Bob Mahaffey, Gaye Johnson, Christine Hensley, Skip Conkling, Tom Gayman, Angela Connolly, Ben Champ for Ted Boesen; Steve Peterson for Steve Brody

Commissioners Absent: Steve Van Oort, Steve Brody, Ted Boesen

Alternates Present: Ben Champ, Steve Peterson, Ruth Randleman

Staff Present: Elizabeth Presutti, General Manager; Tom Reynolds, Chief Operating Officer; Jamie Schug, Chief Financial Officer; Debra Meyer, Capital Grants Manager; Randy Ross, HR Director; Claire Celsi, Marketing and Community Partnerships Director; Kirstin Baer-Harding, Advertising Manager; Randy McKern, Transportation Manager; Gunnar Olson, Public Information Officer; Jim Tishim, Planning Director; P.J. Sass, Customer Service Manager; Paula Covington, RideShare; Nolden Gentry, Legal Counsel; Suzanne Robinson, Clerk to the Commission;

Others Present: Dana Conn, TMA; Nathan Goldberg, MPO; Todd Erzen, Des Moines Register; John Halsband, DART customer

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Angela Connolly at 5:02 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Notice of the meeting was duly published.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Connolly called for corrections to the September 27, 2011, meeting minutes. There being no comments on the minutes, it was moved by Ms. Hensley and seconded by Ms. Johnson that the minutes be approved. The minutes were approved as written.

INTRODUCTION

General Manager Elizabeth Presutti introduced DART's new Marketing and Community Partnerships Director, Claire Celsi, who was made welcome by the Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENTS SECTION

None

CONSENT ITEMS

6A – FY-2016 Federal STP Grant Application

6B – September 2011 Financial Reports

It was moved by Mr. Conkling and seconded by Ms. Hensley that the consent items be approved.

The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Action Item 7A – Refugee and Schools Reduced Fare Programs

Ms. Sass summarized the details of each program with a PowerPoint presentation (attached). The Reduced Fare Program recommendation are:

1. Provide a Reduced Fare Program for refugees
2. Provide a Reduced Fare Program for students

The programs would be implemented in tandem on the following timeline:

NOVEMBER

- Finalize policy and procedures
- Finalize all marketing materials
- Translate all written materials
- Contact all metro schools

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

- Train agency staff on program and use of DART services
- Schedule group visits to DART for each refugee agency in program
- Provide program information to Pass Sales Outlets and DART staff

Programs would be in effect as of Monday, January 2, 2012.

It was moved by Ms. Hensley and seconded by Mr. Peterson that the Commission approve the reduced fare programs for refugees and students.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion Item 8A – DART Central Station Construction Update

Ms. Presutti stated that with the weather cooperating so wonderfully, DART Central Station work was proceeding more rapidly than anticipated. She said that excavation of the basement has been finished and footings are being poured. Ms. Hensley noted that the Public Art portion of the project has selected three artists to present their concepts. Mr. Gayman asked how much in funding is in the budget for art. Ms. Presutti answered \$300,000.

Discussion Item 8B – FY-2013 Budget Planning

Ms. Schug brought the Commission up to date on the budget status via a PowerPoint presentation (attached). She noted that she is working with the cities in making assumptions about revenue, but that falling property tax revenues mean funding is much less than projections. She added that federal revenues will remain stagnant. Assumptions on the expense side are for a 1% pay increase for employees, an increase in health insurance costs of 15% and dental 5%, with an increase in workers comp of 10%. She explained that DART is looking at all options to lower insurance costs, including self-insurance. She mentioned that the health care reform act to be implemented in 2014 is likely to be a significant additional expense to DART. She reminded the commission that health insurance quotes won't be tendered until April. She summarized the timeline:

Preliminary Presentation of Expense & Revenue Estimates	November 29, 2011 DART Commission Meeting
Progress Update	December 20, 2011 DART Commission Meeting
Set Public Hearing Date for FY2013 Tax Levies	January 31, 2012 DART Commission Meeting
Service and Budget Committee Meeting	February 7, 2012
Public Hearing Notice Delivered to Publisher	February 14, 2012
Public Hearing Notice Published	February 17, 2012
Public Hearing to Approve FY2013 Budget	February 28, 2012 DART Commission Meeting
FY2013 Budget Certified to County Auditor and filed with the Iowa Department of Management	March 15, 2012

Ms. Hensley asked why we don't get quotes until April, and Ms. Schug said that timeline is the industry standard. Mr. Conkling asked if we have shopped around, and Ms. Schug said that Holmes Murphy looks at all the options on DART's behalf. Mr. Mahaffey asked about Holmes Murphy's fee and Ms. Schug said that they get a flat brokers' fee.

Discussion Item 8C – DART Forward 2035 Marketing Plan and Project Implementation

Ms. Celsi provided a Power Point presentation (attached) of her preliminary Marketing Plan including her department's goals, strategies to achieve the goals, and a timeline. Chair Connolly asked about the "brand refreshing" goal, and stated that commissioners and DART staff had spent a good amount of time and attention to choosing the current DART logo, including its use on all bus stop signs in particular. Ms. Celsi assured the Chair that she wasn't advocating for a change, just a look at where it is used and making sure there is a standard that is being upheld in all usages. Ms. Celsi summed up by saying that she would be taking some of the load off the general manager's shoulders by helping with group presentations and working with Ms. Baer-Harding to maximize ads-on-buses usage. She added that while the mass media would be utilized rarely because of cost, that there may be a place for an occasional usage if well-done enough to attract attention. She also stated that a goal of public relations will be to build up a store of goodwill so that when news isn't as good, the goodwill will help mitigate the damage. Commissioners welcomed Ms. Celsi to the DART team, and Chair Connolly thanked her for coming up with a marketing plan in such a short time on board.

Discussion Item 8D – 2012 State and Federal Legislative Priorities and Appointment of Legislative Committee

Ms. Presutti asked that the Commission appoint a Legislative Committee to review and prioritize the state and federal legislative needs for the upcoming year. Mr. Conkling, Ms. Hensley and Mr. Brody volunteered to serve on the committee. Ms. Hensley suggested a short talk to the MAC meeting members, and Mr. Conkling advised asking Bill Wimmer, DART's State Legislative expert, to meet with the committee as well. Ms. Presutti will provide the list of possible priorities to the Committee.

8E – Performance Reports

Ms. Presutti announced that ridership is up on all routes, and that Routes 3, 6, and 7 are up a significant amount. Mr. Gayman asked if the rise in fuel prices has a correlation with ridership. Ms. Presutti replied that it usually doesn't unless it goes over \$4 a gallon.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Commissioners were reminded of the dates left for the DART birthday parties at member city libraries, and Ms. Baer-Harding promised to e-mail dates for those still to come. Mr. Conkling said that he attended the party in Altoona and had a great time, He also stated that he talked to the parents of the children attending the party and none of them were aware of the new service in Altoona. He asked that an effort to inform the residents be developed.

Mr. Reynolds brought to the commission's attention some problems with Merle Hay Mall due to Hoover and Meredith students riding the bus to the mall after school instead of going home. Merle Hay Mall management was not happy with the steps DART has already taken to alleviate the mall's concerns, and were advising that they might ban buses from mall property. Commissioners Hensley and Gayman advised DART staff to speak with the mall owner, and would agree to be involved in any discussion.

Ms. Presutti announced that:

- DART will receive \$2.1 million for six new buses, and that staff will be looking for a bus buy to piggyback.
- She is working with Allen McKinley at City of Des Moines on a presentation to a Des Moines Council Workshop in November.
- Fifteen interested parties went to Kansas City for a day to look at their BRT system, and the consensus was to move forward in finding ways to get local match dollars for DART's prospective BRT route.
- Ms. Baer-Harding's entry to the Ad Wheel Awards was a winner, and the prize was accepted by Chair Connolly at the APTA Annual Meeting in New Orleans in early October.

Chair Connolly said she was pleased to represent DART to see General Manager Elizabeth Presutti receive her certificate for completing the year-long "Leadership APTA" course while in New Orleans for the conference.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

2011 Meeting Dates

Nov 29, Dec 20

2012 Meeting Dates

Jan 31, Feb 28, Mar 27, Apr 24, May 22, Jun 26, Jul 31, no meeting in August
Sep 25, Oct 23, Nov 27, Dec 18

Date: _____

Chair: _____

Secretary: _____