



**South East Area Transit**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
February 14, 2024

**I. Call to order**

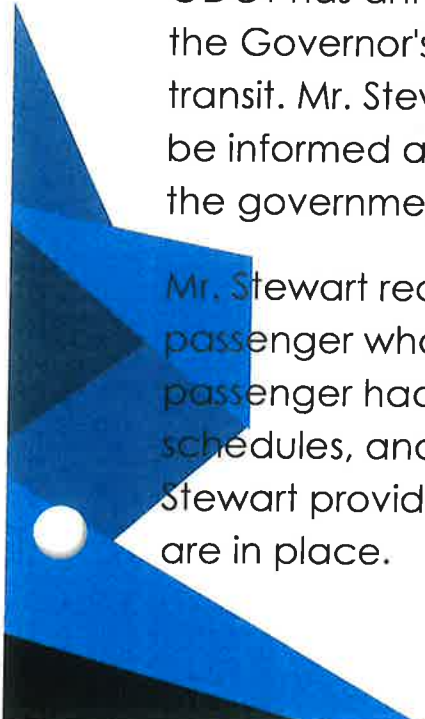
Mr. Guentter called to order the regular meeting of the South East Area Transit Board of Trustees at 12:04 pm on February 14, 2024 at 205 N. Fifth Street, Zanesville, OH.

**II. Roll Call**

Ms. Gill conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Ron Gombeda, Rob Guentter, Doug Hobson, Michael Norman, Ellen Rucker, Jody Spencer, James Spraggins, Kurt Ufholz, and Kelly Warden. Stacey Russell was absent. Staff present: Howard Stewart, Andrea Dupler, Rich Wood, and Dianne Gill.

**III. Public Comments/Official Communications**

ODOT has announced the grant awards for the 2024-25 fiscal year from the Governor's office. The grants total \$106 million in support of public transit. Mr. Stewart would also like to suggest that the public should also be informed about the local match funds to make them aware that the government is not providing complete funding.



Mr. Stewart received a message from Mayor Mason about a frequent passenger who had some concerns regarding SEAT's operations. The passenger had complaints about SEAT's weather policy, weekend schedules, and the limitations on carrying groceries on the buses. Mr. Stewart provided the mayor with an explanation of why these policies are in place.

Ms. Christine Piatt had a conversation with Andrea to express some concerns that she would like to share with the board. She felt that there were some communication issues from staff when scheduling next-day and same-day trips. The reasoning behind the way they communicate and why they do it this way was explained to her.

#### **IV. Approval of Consent Agenda**

A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented by Mr. Ufholz, with a second by Mr. Hobson. **Vote: (Verbal) In Favor – Unanimous at 12:08 pm.**

#### **V. Transit Director Report (Presented by Mr. Stewart)**

- Our contracts with ODOT have been extended for an additional 6 months as ODOT is shifting from a calendar year to a fiscal year. For the rest of the fiscal year 2024, we will be receiving less than what we had originally requested in 5311 funds but more than what was requested in State funds. However, we will still be short around \$169,000.00. In the fiscal year 2025, we received around \$148,000 less in 5311 funds than what was requested. Therefore, we will be exploring ways to cut back in this area to stay within the budget.
- Our Mobility Manager for Guernsey and Muskingum counties, Nicki Silver, has submitted her resignation effective Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>. Our veteran dispatcher, Kaci Hooper has also submitted her resignation as of February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Mobility Management – Out of a little over 40 mobility managers in Ohio, only around 6 of them are housed within a transit agency. There is a resolution later in the meeting to ask for support to not fill that position within SEAT and to work toward getting that housed at another agency.
- A meeting was held with Muskingum Valley Health to discuss a potential partnership regarding individuals who face transportation barriers. It has been highlighted in other meetings within the community about agencies collaborating more effectively to

ensure that individuals receive the assistance they need without any unnecessary delays or complications.

- SEAT/Park Discussion is now public knowledge. Our NEPA study has been submitted to ODOT's HDR Consultant. We should have an update after February 15<sup>th</sup>. Additional discussion was held regarding the State Auditors bulletin clarifying when governmental entities are permitted to assume debt in the form of standard installment loans from private financial institutions. We are waiting for his recommendation.
- Morgan County / Noble County Transition – Our contract with Noble County JFS is up at the end of April. SEAT would like to discuss with the director of Noble County JFS the potential of extending that contract until the transition to Morgan County Transit is complete.
- Our board appointments are set up correctly. This answers the questions that were put forth in the last meeting regarding our board structure.
- Strategic Planning
  - There has been communication with Faith Knutsen at the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service about the potential of a future Sales Tax Levy. ODOT is also going to discuss future sales tax levies for rural systems at the SOS conference this spring.
  - We are going to work on a street route restructure soon.
  - We are currently working on fare structures for agencies.
- Employee Volunteer Program – There is interest in coming up with some policies regarding a Volunteer Program to have staff volunteering within the community.
- There was an opportunity to talk to security at KODA. The local police department will not come in for less than 3 hours per day so we are also looking a private security services.
- SEAT passed OTRP's risk management assessment.

- Howard attended Lobby Day in Columbus. He was able to meet with many officials to talk about transit and what we are doing.
- There will be a Mobility Ohio meeting next week.

#### **VI. Operations Report (presented by Ms. Dupler)**

- Almost 300,000 trips were scheduled in 2023. In 2017 there were around 150,000 trips scheduled.
- There were between 67 and 68 thousand riders on Street Route. The Putnam/Pine route especially has continued to show tremendous growth.
- 20,000 same-day trip requests were accommodated.
- We transport an average of 90 mobility devices per day between our counties. These are passengers who are unable to transfer from the device.
- The denial rate was less than 2%. The majority of these denied trips were out-of-town medical trips and early AM or late PM trips that were outside of our service hours.
- We have touched 4500 unique riders with our Demand Response service.
- SEAT has an average on-time performance rate of 99.6%.
- SEAT currently has a little over 100 vehicle options.
- There was also mention of the various organizations that have been a huge help this past year: Christ Table, Eastside Community Ministries, Guernsey County Community Development, Project Ready, and Trulight Ministries were some that were mentioned.

#### **VII. Maintenance Report (presented by Mr. Wood)**

- Road calls were down 50% for December.
- Labor costs decreased by almost \$1957.
- Inventory value is slightly reduced to \$71,188.17.
- Sold Maintenance decreased in December with a net gain of \$167.04.
- The year-to-date numbers show a reduction in revenue vehicles. This was due to no longer servicing Belmont County.



- 245,936 fewer miles than in 2022. We used 10,153 less gallons of fuel.
- In 2023 we called for a wrecker only 3 times.
- Overtime was the lowest in 7 years at 26.05 hours for the year.
- All but two of the First Net systems have been installed in the vehicles.
- Maintenance will be starting air conditioning inspections in the vehicles soon.
- Howard mentioned the potential of security at bus locations. There was a window broken out of a new bus overnight recently.
- Discussion was held about the potential of fencing in the buses to prevent easy access.


#### **VIII. Financial Report (presented by Ms. Gill)**

- Final numbers for December are not complete. Even though ODOT is changing to a fiscal year, our audit will still be done for year 2023.
- On our 4<sup>th</sup> quarter invoice, the original contract, we were \$288,610.00 over budget, which is better than last year. When we wrote the 6-month budget, we were able to include that deficit.
- Attended a financial training module through ODOT with our Executive Assistant. Our model of record-keeping was used to show how to track financials in the training.
- Our 2023 audit has started.

#### **IX. New Business**

**Resolution 2024-01:** Approve Dissolution of Guernsey County Fixed Route Service. We are nearing the end of the pilot in Guernsey County. It is working well with the full transition to Demand Response.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 2024-01 as presented by Mr. Spencer, with a second by Mr. Spraggins. **Vote: (Verbal) In Favor – Unanimous at 1:01 pm.**



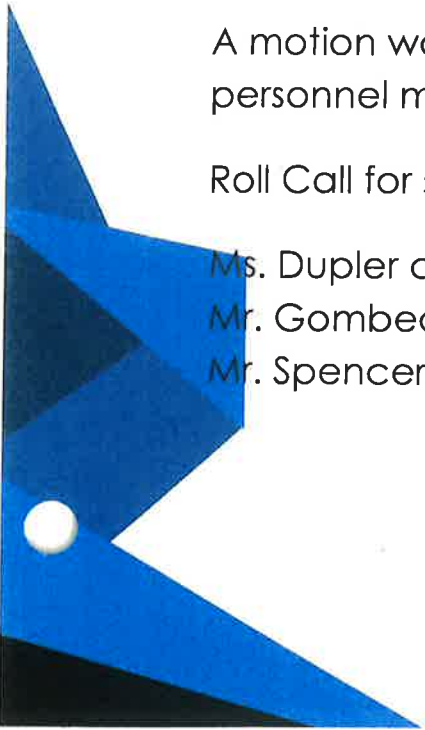
**Resolution 2024-02:** Approve Transfer of Noble County Public Transportation to Morgan County Transit.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 2024-02 as presented by Mr. Hobson, with a second by Ms. Warden. **Vote (Verbal) In Favor – Unanimous at 1:02 pm.**

**Resolution 2024-03:** Approve Termination of 5310 Mobility Management Contract with Ohio Department of Transportation. We would like to no longer hire this position or apply for these funds. It will save us local match money and ODOT has approved this request.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 2024-03 by Mr. Ufholz, with a second by Ms. Rucker. **Vote (Verbal) In Favor – Unanimous at 1:03 pm.**

## **X. Old Business**



During the upcoming March meeting, several documents will be presented to the board for signature, including a Code of Ethics. Additionally, oaths will be retaken during this meeting and will be conducted at the beginning of each year thereafter.

## **XI. Executive Session**

A motion was made to move to an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.

Roll Call for session:

Ms. Dupler conducted Roll Call. The following persons were present. Mr. Gombeda, Mr. Guentter, Mr. Hobson, Mr. Norman, Ms. Rucker, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Spraggins, Mr. Ufholz, and Ms. Warden.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Guentter adjourned the meeting at 1:19 pm with a motion to do so from Mr. Hobson and a second from Mr. Gombeda.

Board President

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Board Secretary/Treasurer

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Witness

*Deanne Hill*