

## MINUTES

### MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

#### METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

February 6, 2014

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on February 6, 2014 at 10:30 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

#### **Board Members Present**

Frederick L. Daniels, Jr.  
Jim Durrett  
Roderick E. Edmond  
Noni Ellison-Southall, *Chair*  
Freda B. Hardage

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Keith T. Parker, AICP; Chief Operating Officer Joseph Erves (Acting); Chief of Staff Rukiya Eaddy; Chief Administrative Officer Edward L. Johnson; Chief Financial Officer Gordon L. Hutchinson; Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill; AGMs LaShanda Dawkins (Interim), Shyam Dunna (Interim), Rod Hembree (Acting), Cheryl King, Ryland McClendon and Terry Thompson; Executive Director Ferdinand Risco; Sr. Directors Rhonda Briggins and Donald Williams; Director Lyle Harris; Managers Tony Griffin, Kelly Hayden and Beverly D. Williams; Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Manager, Executive Office Administration Tyrene L. Huff; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Davis Allen, Carlos Arrieta, Jeremy Craig, Diane Graham, Anthony Pines, Srinath Remala, Tuan Vo and Dansby Wade.

Also in attendance Charles Pursley, Jr. of Pursley Friese Torgrimson, LLP; Adelee LeGrand of AECOM; Alisa Jackson; Saba Long.

#### **Consent Agenda**

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Mrs. Southall requested a motion to approve the following item on the Consent Agenda:

- a) Approval of the January 6, 2014 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

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On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Dr. Edmond, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 3 to 0, with 3 members present.

**Individual Agenda**

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**Resolution Authorizing the Solicitation of Proposals for Transit Advertising, RFP P32607**

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Mr. Griffin presented this resolution for Board of Directors approval authorizing the General Manager/CEO or his delegate to solicit proposals for the procurement of Transit Advertising by means other than competitive bidding, in accordance with Section 14(m) of the MARTA Act, through the use of Request for Proposals.

Dr. Edmond asked if MARTA will entertain suggestions as part of the RFP.

Mr. Griffin said that will be a part of the criteria – extra points will be given for novel ideas.

Dr. Edmond asked about companies in the nation that provide these services.

Mr. Griffin said the major markets are targeted by Titan and CBS. MARTA will be fortunate to have two to compete.

Mr. Durrett said maybe it makes sense to extend the current contract to see if market conditions improve.

Mr. Griffin said the contract has been extended for two options years. If MARTA tries to extend again at the minimum guarantee, CBS will likely deny it.

Mr. Daniels asked what forms of advertising are some mid-range transits doing.

Mr. Griffin said CBS has not made a lot of money on the last contract. MARTA has talked with other agencies and they are doing the same types of advertising including alcohol. That is why in the scope of the RFP calls for creative concepts.

On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Dr. Edmond, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 5 to 0, with 5 members present.

**Briefing - Media Monitoring Briefing, 3Q and 4Q Calendar Year 2013**

Mr. Harris briefed the Committee on the subject matter and tone of MARTA's news coverage during July 1 – December 31, 2013.

*Analysis of News Stories 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters*

- Tone
  - Positive - Either entirely positive or very few negative or dissenting points
  - Negative - Either entirely negative or primarily negative
  - Neutral - Purely informational, general mention of MARTA, balanced
- Subject Matter - Examples include stories about
  - "Take MARTA"
  - Security
  - Service
  - System Improvements
- Earned Media (generated from press releases, events and outreach) vs. Media Generated stories

*Subject Matter of MARTA Stories 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters*

- Heavy "Take MARTA" messages: July 4th events, Braves playoffs, Music Midtown, SEC Championships, Christmas Parade, New Year's Eve
- Security preparations for July 4<sup>th</sup> and the "See & Say" app
- New Code of Conduct: "Ride With Respect"
- Emergency exercises: "Operation High Stakes"
- Job fairs: MARTA Police Department and Bus Operators
- State of MARTA
- Urine Detection Device installation received major national coverage
- Braves move to Cobb: Stories focusing on access to transit
- Arrests of Breeze Card hackers

- Business relocations due to access to MARTA

*Tone of Media Coverage 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter*

- Positive – 58%
- Negative – 7%
- Neutral – 35%
- Positive coverage attributed to:
  - "Ride with Respect"
  - Heavy "Take MARTA" message for special events
  - Job fairs for MPD and Bus
  - MPD officer helping to save passenger who fell wayside at Five Points Station

*Tone of Media Coverage 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter*

- Positive – 49%
- Negative – 23%
- Neutral – 28%
- Negative story increase due to:
  - Atlanta Braves move and numerous negative mentions by political leaders and citizens about any possible MARTA expansion to Cobb County
  - "Pop Up" fashion show vandalism at Buckhead Station
  - Breeze Card security after counterfeit arrests (Mixed coverage: Some stories were positive, others were negative, questioning the security of the Breeze system)
  - Shooting on bus

*"Ride With Respect": Tone of Media Coverage 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters*

- Positive – 86%
- Negative – 10%
- Neutral – 4%

*Publicity Value of Positive vs. Negative Coverage 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters*

- Positive Coverage - \$1,177,546.04
- Negative Coverage - \$432,087.70

*Findings and Recommendations*

- Continue to push the "Take MARTA" message for every major event and regular travel
- Plan media briefings to gain positive coverage outlining event preparations, new initiatives, etc. - July 4th preparations briefing and "Ride with Respect" press conference yielded numerous positive stories for the Authority
- Proactively "pitch" the good news of MARTA and its employees to news media
- Rapidly respond to negative stories to provide accurate information, including responses to rumors, misinformation about accidents, inaccurate service information, customer complaints, etc.
- Continue utilizing our own communications channels to tell the MARTA story (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and [www.itsmarta.com](http://www.itsmarta.com))

Mr. Daniels asked how is the Publicity Value quantified.

Mr. Harris said Publicity Value is based on an industry standard. Values are based upon how often and where a story is mentioned.

Mr. Craig said the value also relates to television spots and audience.

Mrs. Southall asked who is doing the tracking.

Mr. Harris said Vocus, MARTA's Media Monitoring Service.

**Briefing - Public Hearing Results for the May 2014 Markup**

Ms. Briggins briefed the Committee on the results of the Public Hearings held on January 21 and January 23, 2014 for May 2014 Markup.

*Community Outreach Summary*

- Station Outreach

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- Five Points Station – January 16, 2014
- 8:00 – 10:00 am – 1,500 Flyers distributed
- 3:00 – 6:00 pm – 1,500 Flyers distributed
- Neighborhoods/Community Distribution
  - High Rise/Senior Facilities
  - NPU's City of Atlanta
  - Schools in Service Area
  - LEP communities
- Newspapers (Advertising)
  - 5 local newspapers targeting Spanish, Asian, African-Americans and other minorities
  - Atlanta Journal Constitution

### *Public Hearings Attendance*

- Atlanta City Hall
  - Date – Tuesday, January 21, 2014
  - Attendance – 29
  - Speakers – 18
  - Media – 0
- College Park Safety Complex
  - Date – Tuesday, January 21, 2014
  - Attendance – 2
  - Speakers – 1
  - Media – 0
- North Fulton Service Center
  - Date – Thursday, January 23, 2014
  - Attendance – 2
  - Speakers – 1
  - Media – 0
- Maloof Auditorium
  - Date – Thursday, January 23, 2014
  - Attendance – 7
  - Speakers – 3
  - Media – 0

- Adamsville Recreation Center (Public Meeting)
  - Date – Saturday, January 25, 2014
  - Attendance – 1
  - Speakers – 1
  - Media – 0

*Additional Public Hearing Comments*

- Public Comment Line (Voice Mail) - 0
- Emails - 0
- Petitions - 0
- Letters - (1) - Route 180 peak service needs to be extended because of overcrowding and mid-day service needs to be changed to 20 minutes not 25 minutes.

*Common Comments during Public Hearings*

- Twenty-nine residents (29) of the Dixie Hill community came out in support of the proposed changes to the Route 67, while eighteen (18) of them made comments in support
- Two (2) individuals were opposed to the bus doors being closed citing individuals with disabilities
- One (1) individual opposed the proposed reduced frequency on the Route 89

**Other Matters**

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Mrs. McClendon announced the following upcoming events:

- February 12 – City of Atlanta Transportation Committee Meeting
- February 19
  - GTA Legislative Day
  - City of Atlanta State of the City
  - South Metro Development Outlook Conference

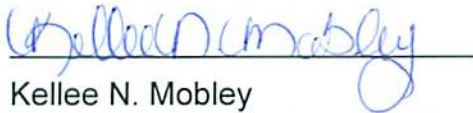
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**Adjournment**

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The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kellee N. Mobley  
Senior Executive Administrator to the Board