

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUTER RAIL DIVISION OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

The Board of Directors of the Commuter Rail Division of the Regional Transportation Authority met in a public session for a Meeting of the Board on Friday, October 16, 2009, following the Finance & Long-Term Capital Planning Committee Meeting, in the Metra Board Room at 547 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, pursuant to notice.

Chairman Doris called the meeting to order and the roll was taken:

ROLL CALL

Present: Carole R. Doris, Chairman
James V. Dodge
Larry A. Huggins
James C. LaBelle
Arlene J. Mulder
Edward Paesel
Jack Partelow
Willis E. Pennington, Jr.
Jack Schaffer
William A. Widmer, III

Absent: Caryl J. Van Overmeiren

Item 2: Approval of the Minutes from the September 11, 2009 Board Meeting

Director Pennington moved, and Director Widmer seconded the approval of the September 11, 2009 minutes. The motion carried with nine ayes. Director Mulder abstained from voting.

AYES: Dodge, Huggins, LaBelle, Paesel, Partelow, Pennington, Schaffer, Widmer and Chairman Doris
ABSTAINED: Mulder

Item 3: Report on the State of Metra Operations

Bill Tupper, Deputy Executive Director of Operations, reported that Metra's September weekday on-time service, both peak and off-peak, exceeded last year and our five-year average with slightly over 97%. However, the weekend on-time performance was almost a replay of August. He pointed out that 50% of the delays were associated with ridership, with again, half of the delays occurring on Labor Day weekend which featured Jazz Fest and generally pleasant weather. Also September, like August, is one of our heaviest construction months. While crews work on the different lines throughout the summer, work is concentrated during off-peak hours and on weekends, with a subsequent impact on our on-time performance. This accounted for another quarter of the weekend delays. He added that when we do have delays over five minutes, no matter what the cause, audio and visual announcements are made at the stations so our riders are aware that the trains are running late. He concluded that we were able meet the 50% target, with 59% of the delays we did have between six and ten minutes.

**APPROVED BY THE
METRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2009**

Item 4: Monthly Ridership Report for August 2009

Lynnette Ciavarella, Assistant Senior Division Director of Capital & Strategic Planning, reported that system ridership for August, including the Senior Free Ride and Circuit Permit Programs, was 7.2% lower than the same time period in 2008. August 2009 had the same number of weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays when compared to August 2008. In August, Metra provided 7 million passenger trips. As Mr. Tupper mentioned in his report, during the summer months, Metra's ridership is enhanced for our core market by people coming downtown to enjoy the various festivities, but also taking the services to the various suburban towns that offer festivities as well.

She continued that when examining our ridership by each of the lines, what is being seen is a decline across the entire Metra system. The lines in the South and North regions are down by about 8% from last year, and about 6% in the West region of the area. She stated that as discussed in previous months, we have experienced a dramatic decrease in the cost of a gallon of gasoline for the personal automobile. Last August, a gallon of gasoline was \$4.10. At \$2.82 per gallon this year, the average consumer is paying \$1.28 less per gallon this year versus last year. Considering that the average gas tank holds about 15 gallons, this equates to a savings of about \$20.00 each trip to the gas station.

She explained that regional employment levels for August 2009 was substantially lower than August employment levels from last year. Although employment had increased slightly for the last few months, a decline was seen between August and July of this year. The number of people employed in the region has decreased 38% since last year, with about 184,000 fewer people employed this August versus last August.

Director Dodge asked Ms. Ciavarella if she had any percentages of what unemployment looks like for Illinois. He believes that it is somewhere between 11% - 13%, so it is above the national level. Ms. Ciavarella responded that Director Dodge is correct. He continued that he also knows that the federal government takes a look at some of the softer unemployment numbers, such as those who might be under-employed, and those numbers are fairly high. He wondered if at some point those numbers could be worked into the report because this percentage is fairly important, and he believes that this is a tide that we are swimming against in terms of our ridership. Ms. Ciavarella responded that they would attempt to get those numbers for future presentations.

She continued that Metra is not alone in the decreasing of ridership. Apparently the economic downturn and other factors have contributed to the decrease in ridership. She explained that across our peer agencies, CTA is down about 5%, and in August, Pace was down 18%. Nationally, Metra's peer commuter rail agencies who also down ranging from 3% in Boston to about 8% at the New Jersey Transit.

Ms. Ciavarella stated that year-to-date, Metra has provided 55.2 million passenger trips, and after experiencing unprecedented growth for the last four years, we are seeing a return to our 2007 ridership level. She concluded that at this time, we are forecasting year-end ridership to be 5 to 6% lower than where we were last year, somewhere in the range of 82.5 to 83 million passenger trips.

Chairman Doris pointed out that she believes that last month we had put into context that despite the decrease, we still had almost record highs except for 2008, which was a system-wide high. She believes that the chart on the national ridership trend is helpful for putting in the kind of perspective that Director Dodge brought to our attention.

Item 5: Report on the Corporate Website Activity for September 2009

Chairman Doris stated that there is a new report on the Agenda this month regarding our corporate website activity. She believes that this will be helpful to see the improvements that were made, for which we received no funding from the state or any other source, and are self-funding out of our operations. She stated that Ms. Pardonnet from our Media Department is going to give us the report this morning.

Judy Pardonnet, Senior Division Director of Media & Passenger Services, explained that this report is for September 9th, the day the website was launched, to September 30th, and as we go forward we will continue to monitor the usage of our website so that we will be able to make a comparison. Although we do not have an entire month comparison, we do know that we have had a tremendous amount of interest in the site. She continued that compared to our previous site, we have probably had an increase of 24% to date. The total number of hits since the launch of the website is 54,663,336. The number of unique visitors per day is 30,884, and the average time spent on the website is four minutes. The total number of English page views is 2.6 million, and for the Spanish page, 1,882.

She continued that of the top twenty pages viewed, number one is the home page. The second most viewed is the Metra system map, with the third top viewed is tickets. There is a variety of the different lines that are viewed on four through nine, and number 10 is the My Metra log-in registration. She stated that number 11 is additional tickets at my Metra account, and 12 through 19 is more information on the line. The Metra Electric District line map is the 20th most frequently viewed page. For the period, the total number of My Metra Account is 12,116 with My Metra registrant logging in on return visits exceeding 19,000. The average value of the tickets is \$76. The total number of ticket orders for the period is 6,356, with a breakdown of monthly tickets at 2,123, and ten-rides at 4,233.

She concluded that they did notice after the incident on the Kennedy expressway that from the past Wednesday to the previous Wednesday, we had an increase of 3,000 visits to the page, so hopefully people were looking at Metra as an alternative.

Director Paesel stated that he knows that it is very early, and he does not want to draw any dramatic conclusions, but it seems to him that with regards to the Spanish page views and the fact that the Hispanic population approaching a third of the region, that we may want to look at how we can outreach to the Hispanic community. Ms. Pardonnet responded that when the website was launched, there was a large outreach to a number of Hispanic media outlets. She added that they can continue to do that to make sure that there is awareness that the entire site is in Spanish.

Chairman Doris added that to those Board Members who have not logged on to My Metra Account, getting the service updates is very helpful. She explained that she signed up for service alerts from the entire region, although she would not want everyone to do this as it clogs up your blackberry or iPhone, but it gives a snapshot of where the problems are and how it is looking. It works pretty well, and she complimented staff on a good job.

Director Dodge stated that he has had a couple of conversations with Ms. Pardonnet about this, as he set up the alerts for both the SouthWest and Rock Island. So he, too, gets multiple alerts and staff is working on how to tweak that. Ms. Pardonnet commented that they have had quite a bit of feedback. They are working on addressing how to be more selective on when you would receive the alert, as most customers do not need to know about the outbound trains that are late when you are at work.

Director LaBelle asked if there has been any progress on the transit check issue. Ms. Pardonnet responded that they have been in contact with the RTA about this issue. The RTA has said that they should have an on-line ordering system available by the first of November. They would be using the third-party administrators who handle the transit benefits, so the employers and the third-party administrators would be able to work through the RTA, and the customer would be able to do on-line ordering that way. The bulk tickets would then be sent out from Metra. However, she added, it still does not address the issue of partial payment toward your fare median. For example, if your company gives you \$50 transit check, the RTA program still does not address how to manage that. She concluded that they are looking at ways to manage that internally as well.

Item 6: Ordinance Authorizing the Release of Metra's Preliminary 2010 Operating and Capital Program and Budget, the 2011-2012 Financial Plan and the 2010-2014 Capital Program

Director Schaffer moved, and Director Mulder seconded the motion to approve the ordinance. The motion carried with ten ayes.

AYES: Dodge, Huggins, LaBelle, Mulder, Paesel, Partelow, Pennington, Schaffer, Widmer and
Chairman Doris

Director Widmer commented that the Board needs to vote on the second part of the Ordinance, authorizing release of the Preliminary Program & Budget for public hearings. Chairman Doris stated that Director Widmer moved, and Director Schaffer seconded a motion authorizing public hearings to be held in the six county region: Chicago, Suburban Cook county, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will for the times and locations specified in the legal notice. Director Schaffer requested leave for the last roll call. The Board granted leave for the last roll call. The motion carried with then ayes.

AYES: Dodge, Huggins, LaBelle, Mulder, Paesel, Partelow, Pennington, Schaffer, Widmer and
Chairman Doris

Chairman Doris mentioned that the Board Members will be attending the various presentations to the County Boards in the six-county region, as well as attending public hearings with staff.

ORDINANCE NO. MET 09-12

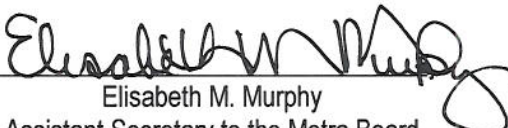
BE IT ORDAINED:

1. The Board of Directors of the Commuter Rail Division of the Regional Transportation Authority ("Commuter Rail Division") hereby releases the Preliminary 2010 Operating and Capital Program and Budget, the 2011-2012 Financial Plan, and the 2010-2014 Capital Program for Public Hearings and public discussion.
2. The Board of Directors of the Commuter Rail Division also authorizes said Public Hearings to be held in the City of Chicago, Suburban Cook County, DuPage County, Kane County, Lake County, McHenry County, and Will County with times and locations as specified in the Legal Notice. This is in compliance with Section 3B.10 of the Regional Transportation Authority Act, (70 ILCS 3615/3B.10).

Item 7: Adjourn to Executive Session for Matters Relating to Litigation (Section 2 (c) (11)), Security (Section 2 (c) (8)), Personnel (Section 2 (c) (1)), and Executive Session Minutes (Section 2 (c) (21))

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Doris asked for a motion to adjourn to Executive Session. Director Widmer moved, and Director Pennington seconded the motion to adjourn. Chairman Doris requested leave from the Board for the last roll call. The Board granted leave for the last roll call. The motion carried with ten ayes.

AYES: Dodge, Huggins, LaBelle, Mulder Paesel, Partelow, Pennington, Schaffer, Widmer and
Chairman Doris


Elisabeth M. Murphy
Assistant Secretary to the Metra Board

I, Arlene J. Mulder, in my capacity as Board Secretary of the Commuter Rail Board of the Regional Transportation Authority do hereby attest that the following minutes are a true and accurate reflection of the Board's meeting on the date so stated. In compliance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, I do hereby authorize their release and publication.


Arlene J. Mulder, Secretary to the Metra Board of Directors