

Minutes

RTA Governance Committee Meeting

10:28 a.m., April 16, 2019

Committee: Clough (Chair), Lucas (Vice Chair), McCall, Moss, Welo

Other Board members: Byrne, Joyce, Serrano

Not present: Bibb

Also Present: Anderson, Astolfi, Auref, Becker, Benford, Bitto, Bobich, Brooks-Williams, Caver, Ciesla, Dangelo, Davis (C), Davis (J), Diaz, Dietrich, Faith, Feliciano, Ferraro, Fields, Folbes, Freilich, Garofoli, Gautam, Gibbons, Gillan-Shafron, Gray, Halvorsen, Harris, , Hershman, Jaszczak, Jones, Kerg, Keshtkaran, Kirkland, Lewis, Loh, Longs, Manning, Manus, Metcalf, Ortega, Penning, Pickett, Pinkney-Butts, Ponder, Pugh, Ross, Rowe, Schipper, Scott, Shaffer, Shariff, Shildwachter, Smith, Stocking, Stover, Sutula, Tarka, Thomas, Togher, Vukmanic, Walsh, Weil, Wiehe, Wilson, Winn, Young, Zeller.

Mayor Clough called the meeting to order at 10:28 a.m. The secretary called the roll and reported that five (5) committee members were present.

Fare Code Amendments

Special Promotions

Steve Bitto, Executive Director of Marketing & Communications, gave the presentation. Currently the General Manager has the authority to offer complimentary free fares for a 24 hour period. Additionally, the GM can offer discounted fares up to, but not to exceed 50%, for a period up to 60 days. Today's request is to allow the GM's authorization to offer complementary free fares for up to a 30 day period.

Past ridership initiatives have offered discounted fares. But some of them were outside of the current Board policy. They include an annual direct mail campaign where a free week pass is offered to encourage use on targeted routes. The Ready to Ride program encourages work trip commuters to convert from driving to taking a bus or train. It offers two complimentary 5-day passes. The Resolution to Ride program offers prospective customers a 5-day pass to support their New Year's resolution. The direct mail campaign has run for the last 3-5 years. They target routes with good frequency, excess capacity, servicing communities where there is some dense populations. It connects people with high traffic destinations like employment centers, schools, colleges and healthcare. It was an oversized postcard with a snap off pass, good for 7 days' worth of ride for a specific period of time. Engagement was tracked through the fare box.

The Ready to Ride program has been running for the last 10 years. RTA partners with employers to encourage their staff to ride a bus or train. They direct them to a microsite where a personalized trip plan is generated for them. They receive two 5-day workweek passes. Some of the programs has been successful up to 1/3 of the participants converting to transit. The Resolution to Ride campaign launched in the New Year to get people to resolve to save money and reduce stress by using RTA. They also receive a personalized trip plan and a 5-day pass. About 1,300 greater Clevelanders signed up. Non-riders or infrequent riders, comprised 1/3 of who was targeted. A post program survey showed that 20% of the participants increased their service usage.

To change this policy, Section 840.12 "Temporary Promotional Discount Fares" needs to be amended. And Section 840.20 "Promotional Free Fare Programs to Community – Sponsored Events" and Chapter 1066.01 "Authorization of Programs" needs to be repealed.

Chief McCall didn't understand deleting programs and taking the authority from the GM. She cautioned making these type of changes while the GM search is in progress. She agrees with changing discount fares to programs in the title. She isn't sure about taking the duration from 60 days to 30 days. She didn't have a problem with Section 840.12 (b). The repealing of Section 840.20 doesn't speak to community sponsored events. Repealing Chapter 1066 takes away the GM's ability to do a special ridership program for a major event. Mr. Bitto said that giving the GM the authority to go free for 30 days doesn't restrict his/her authority to do free ride days with community events. The interim GM has that authority. This is extending the discount from 50% to free and to restrict it to 30 days so they can come back to the Board for any approval beyond that. She does not believe the proposed changes allows for promotional free fare programs to community sponsored events. Steve added that it was meant to simplify the policy.

Ms. Moss said this could be tabled since it is not urgent. She understands the changes as giving the GM the authority to give complementary rides. It just doesn't limit it to public events. She doesn't feel strongly about the 30 days versus 60 days. She made a motion to table. It was seconded by Chief McCall. Mayor Clough asked for a roll call. There were five (5) ayes to table and none opposed.

Postponement of Fare Increase

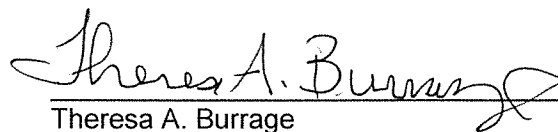
Kay Sutula, Director of the Office of Management & Budget, gave the presentation. This presentation will ask the Board to delay the fare increase, which was delayed a year ago. In 2016, a two-part fare increase was adopted to lessen the impact to customers. The first part was enacted in August 2016, raising the base cash fare from \$2.25 to \$2.50. The second phase was to raise the base cash fare from \$2.50 to \$2.75 in August 2018. The Board delayed the second phase until August 2019 in order to complete the Customer Impact evaluation. These evaluations include several of the Five Pillar Studies currently underway. These will not be completed until later this year. At that time recommendations will be made. Staff recommends delaying the second phase of the two phase fare increase until August 2020.

Mayor Clough asked for a motion to delay the fare increase for another year. It was moved by Mayor Welo, seconded by Rev. Lucas and approved by unanimous vote.

Mayor Clough adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.



Floun'say R. Caver, Ph.D., Interim CEO
General Manager/Secretary/Treasurer



Theresa A. Burrage
Executive Secretary