

**TOMPKINS CONSOLIDATED AREA TRANSIT, INC.  
SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Monday, April 11, 2016  
4:00 PM TCAT Conference Room  
737 Willow Avenue, Ithaca, NY

Attendees: D. Howe, B. Brady, J. Dotson, D. Klein, J. Gutenberger, D. Nguyen, F. Proto

S. Brock, A. Eccleston, R. Andrascik, N. Oltz, P. Poist, D. Tome, D. Swarts,  
T. Wright and S. Persons Recording Secretary

Other Attendees: R. Segelken, D. Mengel, H. Chang

**Agenda**

**I. Call to Order**

D. Howe called the meeting to order at 4:07 PM, and welcomed everyone to the April 11, 2016 TCAT, Inc. Special Board of Directors Meeting.

**II. Board Member Items**

There were no board member items.

**III. Public Comment**

R. Segelken stated he is a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee and he wanted to suggest that whatever the Board decides this afternoon that you owe a real debt of gratitude to the professional staff of TCAT, the communications and marketing people, the transportation planners, the operations people for rolling out publicly what has been the latest in a multi-year series of bad news here at TCAT. I hope that you can give them something positive to put out, sooner rather than later, this is the time when the public confidence in the TCAT system is what he considers to be at an all-time low. People need to know that the bus is going to be there for them and one thing after another has affected that confidence. He stated he does not know what this good news will be but he's sure the Board will come up with something. You need to do something to show that TCAT is moving forward, that it is learning from this latest difficult time and things are going to be better.

**IV. Action Items**

Consider Resolution {2016 - 09} Approval of Summer 2016 Service Reductions. D. Howe presented resolution {2016 – 09} approval of summer 2016 service reductions.

**RESOLUTION 2016 - 09  
APPROVAL OF SUMMER 2016 SERVICE REDUCTIONS**

WHEREAS, despite its ongoing recruitment efforts, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc. (TCAT) is experiencing an unprecedented shortage of bus operators that is also being experienced on the local, regional and national levels, and

WHEREAS, to maintain its current service levels, TCAT has contracted with National Tour Integrated Resources, Inc. for temporary professional contract bus operators since November, 2015, and

WHEREAS, the contract costs exceed TCAT's normal operating costs by approximately \$ 33,000.00 per week for 10 bus operators, and TCAT cannot continue to incur these contract costs on a long-term basis, and

WHEREAS, at its March 24, 2016 meeting, the TCAT Board considered a draft list of proposed summer service cuts for the May 22-August 20, 2016 period prepared by TCAT's Service Development Department, which cuts would enable TCAT to provide summer service without the need for contract bus operators, and

WHEREAS, TCAT's Policy on Public Notice for Fare Increases and Major Service Reductions requires TCAT to inform the public of, and explain to the public, temporary service changes, which are defined to include service changes due to uncontrollable circumstances that last 180 days or less, and

WHEREAS, in addition to informing the public and explaining the proposed summer service reductions, TCAT also sought public input on the proposed reductions; TCAT's efforts have included four information sessions held in downtown Ithaca and on or near the Cornell University campus, a notice on TCAT's web site, press releases, social media outreach, and signs on buses and at key shelters, and

WHEREAS, the Board has considered all public input and determined that the proposed summer service reductions in the document titled "TCAT Summer 2016/Proposed Cuts and Adjustments", dated April 11, 2016 (the "Document"), are appropriate and necessary so that TCAT may provide its service without the need for contract bus operators,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the TCAT, Inc. Board approves the aforementioned service reductions, effective Sun., May 22, 2016, and be it further

RESOLVED, that additional service adjustments and/or cuts beyond those listed in the Document may be made if the need for them becomes apparent through the run cutting process, the Acting General Manager approves them, and they are: (1) trip timing adjustments of 30 minutes or less; (2) additional service cuts that result in a decrease of up to 10% of the revenue hours (which equate to 32 revenue service hours) identified in the Document; or (3) reinstatement of trips or bus stops slated to be cut or moved, respectively, in the Document, where the run cutting process shows cutting those trips will not decrease the number of FTEs needed to provide service. All other additional major service adjustments or cuts require Board approval.

The resolution to approve summer 2016 service reductions was moved by F. Proto; seconded by B. Brady. Discussion followed.

F. Proto asked for a brief summary as to how we got to where we are.

A. Eccleston stated as of last spring we were in a situation where staffing levels were starting to drop, as we moved into last summer we built a little more overtime into our assignments and our numbers continued to drop. As we went into the fall we recognized that it was going to be very difficult to bring our service to the community and at that point it was a decision point for TCAT as we were working extremely hard to rebuild our workforce but we were not able to bring it to the level that it needed to be to deliver that level of service. So through the Board of Directors we brought on contract drivers in November 2015 and that was for a period of 3 months as we continued to work hard to recruit to build our workforce. At that time we also had the maintenance team that was low staffed so it was not only the bus operations but also our maintenance. As we work through our recruitment the results are our maintenance program is almost fully staffed, we do still have one vacant position there. We also brought on some new operators but we are still not at the level that we need to be in order to deliver the service that we typically put on the streets for our summer service. We are still down for our staffing levels we've pretty much pulled out all the stops with recruiting, doing public outreach, we've promoted our positions and also we have reached out to other transit agencies and we are also finding out that it is challenge with regard to finding people to

fill these positions. There is a lot of competition and with the improvement of the economy; more people are out to work so therefore the recruiting pools are low for this type of work. She stated we are competing with not only the trucking industry but also with many of the other bus agencies and other companies that use CDL drivers. We recognized that one of the things that we could do to improve our recruiting pools was to actually train for the commercial driver's license, we have been doing that for a number of years now and have been very successful in training candidates without a commercial driver's license. It continues to be a challenge, it is not only Tompkins County it is a statewide issue as well as nationwide issue, longer term we will have to come up with creative ideas and solutions but in the immediate to give us a little more time for this recruitment effort that we have been embarking on very hard we are looking at emergency reduction in service for summer. She stated typically we do reduce it for summer but we are doing a little more reduction, one of the things that we did do as a group is to look at reducing service across the whole service to make it as equitable as possible. This is something we are not happy about doing but it is necessary because there is nothing worse than a bus not showing up because we didn't have someone to drive. We also had four public sessions, even though it is an emergency temporary reduction in service and we are not required to do that we felt transparency and talking with the community about it was extremely important. She stated that brings us to tonight with this resolution and asking the board to approve the service reduction for summer.

H. Chang stated these service changes are supposed to be temporary for the summer, what are the chances that they will be permanent if the situation doesn't change?

A. Eccleston stated our goal is to build and recruit the workforce and to that end we are going to be focused on that, in the unlikelihood that we are not able to we will need to reconvene and look at what we need to do with the fall. At this time we can't say because we don't know if we will be in the position to reduce fall service but certainly our focus is to not do that if at all possible.

J. Dotson stated she wanted to echo what Roger said about thanking all the staff because this grew out of overload on drivers and now has hit every department, it's really hard and nobody wants to do this but they've done a great job. Discussion followed.

The resolution passed unanimously.

## **V. Next meeting**

D. Howe announced the next meeting date of April 28, 2016.

## **VI. Adjournment**

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by J. Dotson; and seconded by D. Nguyen. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.