



BATA - Local Advisory Council Minutes
Monday, September 12, 2022

Council Members Present:

Dan Buron / Goodwill Northern Michigan
Mandy Joppich / Community Representative
April Missias / Leelanau County Senior Services
Lana Payne / Commission on Aging
Mitch Treadwell / Traverse City Commissioner

BATA Staff Present:

Kelly Dunham, Eric Lingaur, Bill Clark, Mary Meredith

Also Present:

Linda Joppich / BATA Director

Eric Lingaur welcomed the attendees at noon and introduced Bill Clark and Mitch Treadwell. Bill is a former teacher and a BATA rider, who is our new Mobility and Outreach Coordinator. Mitch Treadwell, also a BATA rider, is a Traverse City Commissioner.

1. Millage Request – Nov. 8, 2022

The campaign has recently begun, and an informational brochure was shared with the Council. Bill Clark noted this is a smaller millage than previously requested, although the same revenue is expected. Milestones since the last millage request were highlighted. We will be continuing to provide existing services as well as bringing back some pre-COVID services.

Eric noted there are other initiatives on the ballot in November. He also said that since this is a renewal request, he is hopeful it will be approved by the voters.

A copy of Bill Clark's presentation is attached to these minutes.

2. BATA Next Wave – Transit Master Plan Update

Bill reviewed the Transit Master Plan status. There will be several frequency improvements as well as new routes. The Plan is available for viewing on the BATA website. Also included on the website is a survey which will gather feedback from riders.

The LAC was part of the initial rollout of the Plan which has also been shared with the BATA Board of Directors and BATA staff.

3. Service Updates

All revamps are dependent upon staffing. Some Saturday and Village Loops will be brought back.

- *Summer Festivals*
Ridership was reviewed. A benefit to our area roadways, by decreasing traffic, was one of the topics discussed under this category.

- **Shopping Shuttle**
This was a new service this summer of 2022 providing rides to Meijer and Walmart. Again, an idea generated by the LAC. We are seeing about 6-7 people taking advantage of this service per trip. Eric notes that so far this pilot has been successful. Bike-n-Ride is also showing some strong ridership numbers.
- **School Transportation Support**
The various routes were discussed regarding this service that helps students and parents reach their various school locations. BATA was involved in some of the orientation events put on by the schools as well.

4. New Operations Center Update

- BATA officially closed on the LaFranier property. Closing occurred in August and ground-breaking may be in the spring of 2023. We are very excited about this valuable project and how it will better serve the community.
- TC Housing received initial funding for its portion of the project.

5. Transit Technology Project

New technology will provide excellent tools for riders and our dispatchers. The timeline is early 2023 for having these new programs onboard. Buses will be able to be requested in real time, giving the riders more autonomy in managing their own rides. The real time tracking will enable riders to better plan their trips. Mandy Joppich feels this will be very helpful.

6. Staffing Levels

We recently hired 18 new drivers. We would like to add an additional 10. Bill asked the Council to send any referrals to his attention. The Dispatcher positions are based on-site at the Cass Road and Hall Street locations and are not set up as a remote position at this time.

7. 2023 cadence and meet in person or continue virtually

We are looking for the following dates as options either virtually or in-person:

Jan. 23rd or 30th, 2023

The consensus was to meet 3-4 times per year via Zoom (as at least with a Zoom option) with a meeting in-person once per year. Mitch Treadwell also appreciates the Zoom format as it facilitates his calendar more efficiently. In-person could be scheduled for the spring with the remainder via zoom. Lana Payne agrees with the virtual meeting format with in-person once per year. A tour would be a good goal for the in-person meeting to better acquaint agencies with BATA operations.

8. Roundtable

The floor was open to agency representatives and some of the comments were:

- Route 10 still travels to Suttons Bay with an express route on Saturdays.
- April Missias reports they are gearing up to operating in a more “normal” world after COVID. They are also working on some social activities to get people out more. Eric offered BATA services on events such as this for seniors. April thinks in the spring this would be a good idea.

- Linda reports her church was appreciative of Eric's recent visit.
- Linda also asked about connecting to Wi-Fi on the buses. Eric explained how to connect.
- Mitch Treadwell would like to see input from BATA on the Bayline route and the east west corridor of State Street. Eric reports that BATA was able to adopt however turning onto State from Park or Cass was a bit difficult to maneuver. Of course, any bridge closures would further complicate the flow of traffic. Mitch also asked, if we were able to hire 10 more drivers, how this would impact service frequency. Evenings are not quite as busy after 9pm. Eric would consider extending the timeline however if we were to get to full staffing levels again.
- Dan Buron reports that Goodwill is experiencing the same staffing challenges. However, overall things are going well. The new shelter location is in a better place now. Dan asked about the millage rate and why it is somewhat lower. Eric explained with the current post-COVID climate it seemed to be a better option.
- Lana Payne reports they are also up for a millage renewal. However, they are looking at a ten-year millage to make sure there is a commitment to the senior population in the next decade. Their revenue is almost all from the millage, so it is very important. Some of their staffing issues are being resolved. However, nursing aids are still needed. Eric reports the transition from COAST to LOD has been working well and Lana agreed with this assessment.
- Mandy continues to be a frequent rider. She will be attending the Friends of Transit Meeting next week.

Bill thanked the Council, encouraged them to contact him with any suggestions or concerns, and adjourned the meeting at 1:10pm.

Submitted/Recorded by: Mary Meredith, Administrative Services

2022 Local Advisory Council Membership

- Dan Buron: Goodwill Northern Michigan
- Mandy Joppich / Linda Joppich: Community Representative
- Michelle Krumm: Senior Center Network
- April Missias: Leelanau County Senior Services
- Amanda Molski / Heidi Gustine: Area Agency on Aging
- Jim Moore / Demarie Jones: Disability Network No. Michigan
- Matt Moritz: Community Representative
- Susan Odgers: Community Representative
- Lana Payne: Commission on Aging
- Mitch Treadwell: Traverse City Commissioner