

Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
5/7/2024

I. Call to Order:

Board Chair, John Waltman, called the May 7, 2024 meeting of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority Board to order at 10:31 a.m.

II. Roll Call was taken:

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Waltman, Brandon Wheeler, Joe Henne, Nick Huyck, and Lynda Garlitz

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

III. Pledge of Allegiance:

Those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

IV. Agenda: It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Lynda Garlitz	Approve the April 4, 2024 agenda with the addition of USCG presentation before public comments.
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V. Introductions of USCG – Director Paramski introduced Captain Bendel, Commander Swintek, and Commander Evans of the United States Coast Guard.

- Director Paramski gave a short introduction of the current situation regarding the Neebish Island Ferry hours:
Previous operation was not in compliance with the required USCG rest and manning requirements. A 12-hour operation requires an uninterrupted rest period of 6-8 hours. Director Paramski also provided information that the Neebish operation has changed from contract employees to in house (EUPTA) employees. This was due to the previous contractor retiring, who resided on the island.
- Captain Bendel; Commander Sector Northern Great Lakes. Captain Bendel set the record straight that the USCG is not at odds with EUPTA. The regulations are not new regarding the hours. The safety of the passengers, crew, and marine vessels is ultimately the Sector's responsibility. Captain Bendel reviewed the conditions of operations and the CFR. Neebish was operating outside of the COI and a formal letter of warning was sent to EUPTA.

VI. Public Comment:

- Michael O'Connor
- Tim Glaserman
- Bob Malpass
- Cele Malpass
- Dan Jones
- Pamela Jones
- Lori Miller
- Brad Sommers
- Jim Traynor
- Tim Moher
- Dennis Reed for Matt Keller
- Phyllis Reed
- Kristi Olson
- Brad Kuusinen
- Janae Darcy
- Amanda Burke

VII. Minutes: It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Nick Huyck	Approve the April 4, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented.
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VIII. Closed Session Minutes: It was moved and carried by unanimous vote:

MOTION: Lynda Garlitz SECOND: Nick Huyck	Approve the April 4, 2024 Closed Meeting Minutes as presented.
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IX. Finance Director Report:

- Ms. Gordon discussed the A/P and EFT transfers and fielded questions from the Board. No questions.
- Bussing – We are currently six months into the fiscal year. There was a 22% increase in fares YTD from last fiscal year. There was a 2% increase in March. The Rides to Wellness program is maxing out vehicles every week with NEMT. There are delays on production for the new wheelchair van and we have not received any new information on delivery of the vehicle.
- Ferries – This weekend is Jeep the Mac on Drummond. Last year there were 582 jeeps for this event. There was an 8% increase in fares for March, and a 10% increase in first 6 months. Passenger counts are up 5%, and vehicles counts have increased 6 % from last year.
- Ms. Gordon reviewed Graphs for the first 6 months of FY2024.
- Discussed NEMT

X. Director's Report:

- Neebish – Reviewed packets of the information that was provided. Director Paramski recapped the draft proposal schedule and the latest schedule. Director Paramski stated that you can see difference of schedules side by side. The new schedule provides two schedules per year instead of four. There were two runs added on Tuesday and Thursday to better accommodate deliveries
- Moved the 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m during the week to accommodate the 12 hour schedule and added an 8:00 p.m. on Sunday.
- Winter schedule changes were reviewed. EUPTA has met most of the requests from the NIIA, who Director Paramski has met with several times during this process. The changes have improved the normal daytime schedule. Director Paramski provided a list of the counts provided in a report for June-September. There is also a compiled list of all specials for the year (after hours or during regular runs), financials on in house employees and contract.
- There were two main problems with emergency runs; 1. A response issue with Cloverland electric power outage. Director Paramski met with Cloverland Electric administration and Neebish Island captain and there is a new plan going forward. Cloverland will be brought over to the island during an outage and will assess the situation to determine the plan after that. Director Paramski also spoke with 911 Dispatch and a policy and procedure has been set up with Central Dispatch. There are copies in packet.
- We are cutting late runs at Neebish but we have added 16 runs. Out of approximately 48 runs per week we are eliminating 2 runs per week on the average.
- Director Paramski is looking for a motion from the board to accept new schedule as provided.
- Chairman Waltman stated that he reads all of the letters from the customers. He stated that the numbers are very low of the evening runs vs. the passion from the letters. There is an absolute mandate from the USCG. The possibility of the late night seems implausible. The crew cannot continue 16 hours weekdays
- Trustee Huyck commented on the passion from all who have commented/written/called and understanding the difficulty of the schedule. This is a hard decision, and it is about people. Mr. Huyck has met with residents. He wishes there was a way but this looks at this time this is the decision we are going to have to go with
- Trustee Garlitz stated that EUPTA is doing everything possible to find funds to help this situation. She stated that Covid funding is gone. She also stated that this is going to be tough and we will do everything in our power to continue to look for funding and answers to fix this situation. At this time is not feasible.

It was moved and unanimously carried.

MOTION: John Waltman SECOND: Brandon Wheeler	To approved the Neebish Ferry Schedule as presented.
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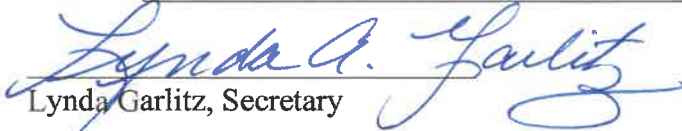
XI. New Business None

XII. Board Comment:

- Nick Huyck

XIII. Adjourn: It was moved and carried by roll call vote to:

MOTION: Joe Henne SECOND: Nick Huyck	Adjourn the meeting at 11:36 AM
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Lynda Garlitz, Secretary


Bonnie Kaunisto, Recording Secretary

Board Approved: