

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING - BLOOMINGTON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
CORPORATION (BPTC) APRIL 20, 2021, 5:30 P.M.
MINUTES**

Chair Obermeyer convened the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Bloomington Public Transportation Corporation. The meeting was held electronically using a Zoom meeting accessed at:

<http://us02web.zoom.us/j/88092042662?pwd=ZUpqVmRESTZSLOFzRThZMjlnZUQ0QT09>

Meeting ID: 880 9204 2662
Password: 552175

The Zoom meeting was also accessible at the following phone numbers:

(312) 626-6799

Meeting ID: 880 9204 2662
Password: 552175

ROLL CALL

Board Members and staff present: Chair Nancy Obermeyer, Board Member Marilyn Hartman, Secretary James McLary and Board Member Doug Horn. Also present were Lewis May, General Manager, Christa Browning, Controller, Brenda Underwood, Director of Human Resources and Marketing, Zac Huneck, Planning and Special Projects Manager and Eli McCormick, Customer Service Manager/BT Access Manager.

Members of the Public: Barbara McKinney, Attorney, Doug Bruce, Dave Warren, Deborah Myerson, Ruby Hopkins, Susan Dabkowski, Vauhxx Booker, Brian Jones, INDOT, Dave Askins, B Square Beacon and Wendy Hall, SIHO

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS ON NON-ACTION ITEMS

Dave Askins, B Square Beacon, he said that the governor or possibly the State Legislature could make meetings over Zoom for public bodies no longer an option. The Monroe County Government is making plans to make arrangements so there will be a hybrid zoom portal available to the public to attend and participate. He wanted to weigh in that he is in favor of the continued use of Zoom even though the meeting itself might be taking place in person. It would allow him to attend two meetings at one time.

MESSAGES FROM BOARD MEMBERS

There was no comment from Board Members.

MESSAGES FROM THE MANAGER

Mr. May began the meeting with a discussion of Conflict of Interest Resolution. Mr. May noted the current Deputy Mayor Mick Renniesen is retiring on April 23, 2021. Mayor Hamilton has appointed a new Deputy Mayor, Don Griffin, who will take Mr. Renniesen's place. Mr. May also noted, Mr. Griffin has personal business interests including Griffin Holdings LLC. The City of Bloomington is asking City Boards and Commissions to consider adopting a resolution as included in the Board packet in which the Board or Commission would agree not to engage the services of Griffin Realty Holdings LLC or real estate, or any related services of Mr. Griffin personally, during his tenure as Deputy Mayor.

Mr. May asked Barbara McKinney, our legal counsel with the City, to be present at the Board meeting in case you have any questions on this subject. Mr. May welcomes any questions at this time the Board may have about the proposed resolution. Board Member Horn questioned whether entering into an agreement with Deputy Mayor, Don Griffin individually still applied. Attorney Barbara McKinney confirmed this is correct. Board Member Marilyn Hartman questioned why this resolution would be necessary because typically when someone takes a position in the Government they divest themselves of anything that could be potentially a conflict. Also we are not part of the city, so could you give me a better idea what it is that has prompted this resolution to be put forth in front of us? Attorney Barbara McKinney replied, it is being requested by the City out of an abundance of caution. She added that Deputy Mayor Don Griffin does have business interests and interactions with entities in the City. He is not required to divest himself of his business interests. He will have a minimal role in his business while he is in the Deputy Mayor position. He possibly will be working around 5 hours a week with the company and will be involved with advertising. He will no longer be the voice of the company. Ms. McKinney noted that the City doesn't want him doing any business with the City or with any municipal agencies to avoid any appearance of a conflict. She added that BPTC is its own entity but it has numerous interactions with the city since the Mayor and the Council appoint the Board Members. In Indiana you must disclose and file a disclosure of any conflict of interest and the City desires to go beyond that through this proposed resolution that City Boards and Commissions are being asked to consider.

Board Member Horn questioned whether there have been any similar resolutions that we passed? Secretary McLary noted a conflict of interest disclosure that he once disclosed for a business he owned. Board Member Horn posed a question on the process of amending a proposed resolution. Mr. May noted that the Board can amend a resolution prior to adoption. Board member Horn suggested he would like to amend the resolution in some way to include all employees and elected officials of the City of Bloomington. Attorney Barbara McKinney said unless there a financial conflict of interest, Indiana law is friendly. In other words she said, you can do a lot without violating the law. Mr. Horn stated that perhaps we can extend it to others in the City besides the Deputy Mayor. Mr. Horn asked to continue this item until the next meeting. He's happy to talk to other board members to get a better handle on this.

Board Member Marilyn Hartman stated in some ways it would be better not to be specifically singling out a person. Dealing with employees generally would be pretty broad. You could include elected officials who have decision making authority and members of boards. This would

make the resolution a little broader but not so over encompassing. Mr. May stated staff is fine with continuing the matter and will have Attorney Barbara McKinney to explore this further. Everyone agreed to continue the matter until the next meeting.

Mr. May noted that since the March board meeting, there have been some major employee medical claims in excess of \$100,000 total submitted on our group health insurance plan. As such, the reinsurance premium cost has increased for renewal of our group plan as the updated worksheet in the Board packet indicates. Mr. May noted the key takeaways from the updated worksheet are as follows:

- Expected claims project to be 5.0 percent higher in the upcoming plan year.
- Total fixed costs project to be 14.6 percent higher.
- Total maximum cost projects to be 7.2 percent higher
- The specific stop loss on each employee would remain unchanged at \$40,000.
- The aggregate stop loss on the group would be \$346,250, about 5 percent higher than the current year.
- The 3rd party administrative fee would be \$43.11 per employee which is 2.4 percent higher than the current plan year.
- The recommended reinsurance firm would remain as IOA Re.

Mr. May noted that included in the Board packet is another worksheet that shows the premium equivalents for the employer and the employee broken down for the PPO plan and the HSA plan. Under the current agreement with our AFSCME union, BT pays 80 percent of the employee-only premium for both PPO and HSA plans. BT pays a maximum of \$1,030/month for any employee who elects dependent care coverage. That \$1,030/month includes the cost of coverage for the employee plus any dependents. Key takeaways from the premium equivalents worksheet are as follows:

- Employees in the PPO plan would pay \$8.22/bi-weekly more than what they're currently paying for employee only coverage. This is an increase of 9.2 percent.
- Employees in the HSA plan would pay \$5.06/bi-weekly more than what they they're currently paying for employee only coverage. This is an increase of 9.2 percent.
- Employees in the PPO plan who elect dependent care coverage would see major increases ranging from 15-27 percent. However, there currently are no employees enrolled for dependent care coverage in the PPO plan.
- Employees in the HSA plan who elect dependent care coverage would see decreases of 34 and 15 percent respectively for employee + spouse and family coverage. We currently have 5 employees who currently elect employee + spouse coverage, and no employees elect family coverage. Employee + children coverage would increase 7.5 percent or about \$4.52 more per bi-weekly pay period. We have 3 employees who currently elect employee + children coverage in the HSA plan.

Mr. May noted that for employees who elect the HSA plan, BT matches up to \$100/month in contributions to the employee's health savings account which can be used for any out-of-pocket medical expenses. The employee only deductible for the PPO plan would remain unchanged at

\$750 which is a relatively low deductible as PPO plans go. The employee only deductible for the HSA plan would remain unchanged at \$1,500 which is also low as high deductible HSA plans go.

One final note as explained by Mr. May, we have had zero increases in employer or employee contributions over the last 4 years. As per SIHO, trend in the health insurance market is 10-12 percent higher for this year. With that in mind, we've done great over the past 4 years and the increases for the upcoming 2021-2022 plan year are within the market trend for those who elect the employee only coverage.

Mr. May introduced Wendy Hal from SIHO, our 3rd party administrator, who is here to help answer any questions you may have. The plan renewal date is May 1, 2021. Board Member Horn inquired how much reserves we have. Mr. May stated the reserves are currently about \$350,000.00. At one time these reserves were in the range of \$700,000 to \$800,000. Board member Horn asked if the large claims would affect the reserves. Christa Browning, Controller, stated we already have paid the bulk of the figure as of now. If we do not have any more large claims everything should be okay. Wendy Hal from SIHO said as a point of interest we are seeing a typical market trend in the 10-12 percent range for employee contributions so we are actually beating that. She said the relatively small increase is a reaction to the large claim that came in the last month as well as plan experience over the past year. It is still lower than what we see from a trend standpoint in the marketplace. Mr. May stated this is the first increase in four years which is an indication of how well our plan has performed.

Board Member Hartman asked Wendy from SIHO if the large claim was from several employees combined or just one. The response was it was one claimant. Board Member Horn reported our stop loss is \$40,000.00 on each employee, that's our share. Christa Browning, Controller stated we have already paid some of it and we have one more claim coming through. Board Member Horn asked if it's not unusual in a typical plan year to have several employees who exceed the \$40,000.00 specific stop loss. Mr. May said we just had one this year. Board Member Hartman confirmed with Wendy from SIHO that we are leaving the stop loss at \$40,000.00. Mr. May noted under new business we have a resolution to authorize the continued self-funding of group health insurance, the purchase of third party administrative services from SIHO, the purchase of specific and aggregate reinsurance through IO Re and continued funding of our medical claims fund to pay claims that come in on each employee. Resolution 21-11 is included under New Business for your consideration.

Mr. May noted we recently re-bid the roof replacement services for our membrane roofs on the administrative and maintenance buildings at Grimes Lane. We received a total of six (6) bids this time. Included in your packet is a tally of the bids received as well as other important information such as completion time, submission of federal and state certificates, etc. The six (6) bids ranged from a low of \$178,500 to a high of \$275,000 as shown in the table.

Bidder	Bid Amount
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Steve's Roofing	\$178,500
Foster Contracting	\$183,000
Vanzzini Roofing	\$197,211
Building Associates	\$202,561
Amos Exteriors	\$231,200
BNL Metal	\$275,000

Steve's Roofing was the low bidder at \$178,500. Their completion time for the work is 90 days. Our architect, Doug Bruce, has experience with Steve's Roofing and speaks well of them from past experience. Steve's Roofing would provide us with a 100 percent performance and payment bond in addition to the 5 percent bid bond they've already provided. All bidders were careful to submit the required Federal and State certificates and affidavits. Mr. May recommended award of contract to Steve's Roofing in the amount of \$178,500.

Mr. May responded that he found it interesting that the two high bidders did not bid the second time. Steve's Roofing lowered their price by about \$30,000.00. Foster Contracting price went up and we had four new bidders. Doug Bruce, Architect for the project, stated how high all construction material is increasing in price. He has no idea how bidders are getting their numbers and keeping their numbers for very long. He is sure material prices are some of the differences in some of the numbers in the quotes. Mr. Bruce added the unit prices for insulation materials and the ninety days completion is about what we expected. On a roof project almost all of it will be self-performed by the contractor. He doesn't believe change orders are going to be a significant issue. Mr. Bruce stated that he feels the low bidder is well qualified based on past experience he has had with Steve's Roofing on quite a few projects. He also stated that they have two or three projects with Indiana University and Indiana University is not an easy client to please. Contractors have a lot of requirements to go through to get the job with IU. Mr. May noted that Resolution 21-12 is included in your packet for consideration under New Business.

Mr. May noted that we've struggled mightily in hiring drivers and mechanics. We currently are down 10 drivers and 2 mechanics. We have 4 months to hire and train 10 drivers which are about what we need to provide full service in the fall. Based on what we see happening in the labor market, staff believes that bold efforts will be necessary to have any chance at meeting our hiring goals. As such, staff has developed the following proposals that we make to the Board to address recruiting efforts:

- Increase the current employee referral incentive from \$1,000 currently to \$3,000. This incentive would be paid to any employee who refers an applicant that we hire and stays for at least a year. The employee making the referral also has to be employed with us at the time the new employee reaches the 1-year milestone. In the almost two (2) years we've had the \$1,000 employee referral incentive in place, we've only paid out the incentive to one (1) employee.
- Implement a new employee hiring incentive of \$3,000 that would hopefully attract new applicants for open driver and maintenance positions. This would be structured so as to pay an incentive to a new recruit in increments of \$500 for reaching the 3-month milestone after completion of training; an additional \$1,000 for reaching the 6-month

milestone after training; and an additional \$1,500 for reaching the 1-year milestone after completion of training.

- Hold a BT on-site job fair in mid-May in which we would advertise the \$3,000 hiring incentive via social media, newspaper, and radio. We propose to set up a tent in the admin building parking lot and interview applicants on the spot rather than setting up interview appointments.

In an effort to win the approval of our AFSCME Local for these new incentives, we've offered to provide all employees with a \$100 COVID-19 vaccination incentive for all BPTC employees. AFSCME has agreed to all our proposals with respect to the hiring and employee referral incentives as well as the COVID-19 vaccination incentive. A copy of the side letter agreement with AFSCME is included in your packet.

A few other important details about the incentives are as follows:

- BPTC can discontinue any or all of the incentives with seven (7) days written notice to AFSCME.
- With respect to the hiring incentive, any bargaining unit employee whose employment terminates with BPTC and is later rehired for a bargaining unit position must have had a break in service of at least two (2) years to be eligible for any future hiring incentive.
- All incentives are subject to required payroll taxes, withholding, and any other mandatory deductions.
- The decision to take a COVID-19 vaccination is entirely at the discretion of the employee and not required by BPTC as a condition of employment.
- All incentives are not subject to the grievance procedure under the collective bargaining agreement.

We've noticed some employers in our area are starting to offer hiring incentives. Examples include Crane who is offering a \$5,000 hiring incentive for some positions and the local Toyota dealership which was also offering a \$5,000 hiring incentives for technicians. I participated in a Zoom meeting last week with several other Indiana transit systems that was specifically focused on the driver shortage issue as all transit systems are dealing with this. Indianapolis (IndyGo) is 53 drivers short, Lafayette is 20 drivers short, South Bend is 10 drivers short, and Fort Wayne is 5 drivers short.

Staff recommends that we not go forward with proposed service changes effective in August 2021 given that we need to be absolutely certain that we'll have adequate numbers of drivers before we launch the system redesign. Instead, we will do our best to recruit and train up to 10 additional drivers between now and August 2021 so that we can provide full service starting in August when IU is expected to return to normal in-person classes. If we are successful in

recruiting and retaining 10 or more drivers for the fall, we could consider implementation of the service changes in January 2022 or possibly in August 2022.

Secretary, James McLary inquired if we are returning to a full schedule in the fall when students return. Mr. May said Indiana University has told us that they plan to resume in-person classes in the fall. He stated for us to be able to restore the full level of service to the IU Campus we will need to hire around 10 drivers. He said we have about four months to make these hires. That is why we are proposing these incentives tonight. Secretary McLary asked if new service changes are on hold until January. Mr. May stated we do not want to roll out a whole new service network redesign and not have enough drivers to put that service out on the street, so we recommend postponing until we get our driver roster numbers up so we can do it right. He said we can't recommend implementation of the major service changes until such time that we have a full roster of drivers. We want to ensure any new service is reliable with sufficient numbers of drivers. Our recommendation would be to postpone the service changes until January 2022 at the earliest.

Board Member Horn questioned if we have considered reaching out to personnel agencies or other search firms as a way of locating additional applicants? Mr. May said in the past he and Brenda Underwood, Director of Human Resources and Marketing have talked with some personnel firms. Our recollection of those discussions is that the personnel agencies wanted a piece of the employee's salary which was a concern for staff. Board Member Horn noted that given this is a crises situation then we need to give you the latitude to consider options such as employment agencies. Mr. May stated they will be glad to go have these conversations with employment agencies. Board Member Horn would like to achieve the hiring goal by using more than one or two options. Mr. May said it is a good idea to cast a wider net. Board Member Marilyn Hartman was curious on how we advertise when hiring. Brenda Underwood Director of Human and Resources and Marketing stated we don't send employment advertisements to personnel firms. She noted that we advertise in the local classifieds of the HT, post notices with Work One, and attend job fairs. She also said she had just been to a job fair and spoke to Express Employment who said they do not have any applicants they could send to us. There are others in town we could possibly reach out too. Mr. May noted that is a very challenging situation that we are in and it is not even unique to Indiana, public transit systems are struggling to get drivers all over the country. Mr. May added that a number of transit systems have had to reduce service because they do not have enough drivers.

Mr. May noted that resolution 21-13 is included under New Business for your consideration to authorize execution of a side letter with the union to implement the proposed incentives

Mr. May provided an update with respect to COVID-19. He noted in March 2021, we carried 45.4 percent of what we carried in March 2020 for an average weekday. This is better than 18-20 percent average we've been averaging since the pandemic began. The reason for the improvement in the percentage is that the pandemic hit during spring break of March 2020. Ridership in the second half of March 2020 was greatly affected by the pandemic. April should give us a better apples-to-apples context of where we stand with ridership now compared to the first full month of the pandemic last year. The average weekday ridership per month since the pandemic began is shown in the table below. Mr. May noted that we carried about 19.7 percent

of what we carried in February 2020 on an average weekday as shown in the data that was included in the Board packet.

Average weekday ridership per month since the pandemic began is shown in the table below:

MONTH	2020/2021 Average Weekday Ridership	2019 Average Weekday Ridership
January	12,487	12,183
February	16,922	14,740
March (thru spring break)	10,736	9,618
March (post spring break)	1,503	14,746
April	1,266	14,081
May	1,399	5,651
June	1,913	5,051
July	1,990	4,779
August	2,630	8,213
September	3,627	17,028
October	3,562	16,672
November	3,039	14,494
December	2,147	11,656
January 2021	2,298	12,487
February 2021	3,330	16,922
March 2021	3,543	7,798

In Monroe County in the past month the number of positive cases for COVID-19 by day has increased after steadily declining since the start of the year as shown in the graphic included in the Board notes from the Indiana State Department of Health:

Given the uptick in positive cases in the past month, Mr. May said staff recommends the following actions:

- Continue operating both fixed route and BT Access service fare-free for the near term and re-evaluate again in mid-May. Also, continue operating with rear-door boarding and alighting for ambulatory passengers so as to provide as much space as possible between the driver and customers. Non-ambulatory persons would be allowed to use the front doors for boarding and alighting.
- Continue the closure of the Downtown Transit Center indoor passenger waiting area and restrooms to the public. We would continue to provide outdoor portable restrooms for the public at the Downtown Transit Center. We would re-evaluate in mid-May as local conditions change relative to the pandemic.

- Continue with the closure of the Grimes Lane facility to the public. Re-evaluate in mid-May as local conditions change relative to the pandemic.
- Continue remote working for designated administrative and management employees. Re-evaluate again in mid-May as local conditions change relative to the pandemic.

Mr. May noted as we've discussed the past few months, he remains optimistic that a July 1 target get for resumption of fare collection and possible re-opening of our facilities to the public is possible. However, we need to monitor impacts of vaccination efforts on the positive case rate for Monroe County prior to making a final decision on this. Board member Horn voiced his concern that we are still not charging for our services and thinks we need to have that as an objective as soon as we can.

Under New Business, an action item is included for the Board to consider approval of the staff recommendations with respect to COVID-19 actions.

Mr. May reported that our first battery electric bus has been delivered to BPTC by the manufacturer, Gillig. The second bus is expected to arrive in early to mid-May 2021. Our charging stations have been installed by our electrical contractor. We're awaiting hookup of the charging stations by Duke Energy which is projected to be completed in early May. Staff will soon begin training provided by Gillig on maintenance and operations of the vehicles. That training is estimated to take 4-8 weeks. During that time we will be installing fare collection equipment, two-way radios, bus tracking technology, and voice annunciator technology on the buses to prepare them for revenue service. I anticipate the buses will be ready to begin revenue service sometime in June or July. Photos of the first bus and a charging station were included in the Board notes. We have some other good news to report regarding battery electric buses. I'm pleased to report that INDOT has approved a competitive grant request we made for funding for another battery electric bus and charging station. We received a total of \$1,005,777 in Federal 5339 funds which combined with a 20 percent local match will be more than enough for an additional battery electric bus and charging station in the future.

In addition, I'm pleased to report that we have been approved by Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for \$53,200 in Federal planning funds that we'll use to supplement the \$100,000 of local funds BPTC has set aside in the 2021 budget to conduct and infrastructure and investments will be necessary to charge additional electric buses in our fleet. We hope to issue an RFP for that study during the summer of 2021.

Zac Huneck, Planning and Special Projects Manager, reported that fixed route ridership was down 50.2 percent in March 2021 compared to March 2020. BT access ridership was up 3.7 percent in March 2021 compared to March 2020.

MESSAGES FROM THE CONTROLLER

Controller Browning gave an overview of the March Financial Report as included in the Board Packet.

PUBLIC COMMENT – ACTION ITEMS

Dave Warren expressed his support in wanting to extend fare-free service through at least May 18th as this is a lifeline for a lot of people. Dave volunteers at a soup kitchen that is on the bus line. Every 15 minutes when the bus comes there are people coming in to get free nutritious food and he expressed it is a really important connection for people, more so for people without homes. He stated it is unfair for people like him to have resources because he teaches a class at IU and other people who have very few resources would have to pay. Mr. Warrant also stated that he is hoping Bloomington Transit has a seat at the table on the talks on how to use the dollars coming to the city from the Rescue Act. He suggested perhaps some of that money could be used as a bridge to continue fare-free service until a more permanent solution is found.

Debra Myerson also expresses her support for fare-free service. Debra has volunteered at Shalom Center in the past so it is possible some things have changed a little bit when there were fares in place. From her experience the transit vouchers run out quickly. She would like the current fare-free to extend another month. She would like for the board to look closely at what opportunities their might be to continue this.

Vauhxx Booker noted he was one of the first managers for the emergency shelter for Shalom. He uses public transit every day to go to work and meetings. He wants to urge not only the staff and board members but everyone in the community to think how we can make public transit a priority.

Ruby Hopkins could not stay on the line. She wants everyone to know that she agrees with everyone above in reference with fare-free service through mid-May.

NEW BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

Board Member Hartman made a motion to continue Resolution 21-10 until the next meeting; a resolution relating to potential conflicts of interest related to the City of Bloomington Deputy Mayor. The motion was seconded by Chair Obermeyer. The motion was approved unanimously.

Secretary McLary made a motion to approve Resolution 21-11; a resolution authorizing the following; continued partial self-funding of group health insurance for BPTC employees; the purchase of third party administrative services from SIHO; the purchase of specific and aggregate reinsurance through SIHO; the continued funding of a medical claims fund to pay self-insured claims costs and all other costs associated with the partial self-funding self-insured claims costs and all other costs associated with the partial self-funding of group health insurance; and the establishment of employer/employee contributions for the May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022 plan year. The motion was seconded by Board Member Horn. The motion was approved unanimously.

Board Member Horn made a motion to approve Resolution 21-12; a resolution awarding Steve's Roofing for construction services to install a new membrane roof on the Grimes Lane

administrative and maintenance buildings. The motion was seconded by Secretary McLary. The motion was approved unanimously.

Secretary McLary made a motion to approve Resolution 21-13 a resolution authorizing the BPTC General Manager to execute a side letter agreement with AFSCME Local 613 to implement and employee COVID-19 Vaccination incentive of \$100; a new employee hiring incentive of \$3,000; and increasing the employee referral incentive to \$3,000. All such incentives shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the side letter agreement between BPTC and AFSCME Local 613. The motion was seconded by Chair Obermeyer. The motion was approved unanimously.

Secretary McLary made a motion to continue operating fixed route and BT Access service fare-free through May 18, 2021; continued closure to the public of the indoor passenger waiting area of the Downtown Transit Center and The Grimes Lane facility; and continued remote working for designated administrative and management employees. The motion was seconded my Chair Obermeyer. The motion was approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

MINUTES

February 16, 2021, And March 2, 2021 Secretary McLary made motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Board Member Horn. The motion was approved unanimously.

CLAIMS

The claims for April 20, 2021 were presented for approval by Board Member Hartman and seconded by Secretary McLary. The claims were approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT


APPROVE:



Nancy Obermeyer, Chair
Board of Directors BPTC

06-15-21

ATTEST:



James J. McLary, Secretary
Board of Directors BPTC

06-15-21