BATA Regular Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Location: Hall Street Transfer Station, 115 Hall Street, Traverse City, MI 49684
Date/Time: Thursday, June 25, 2026 / 1:00 PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Lance Boehmer at 1:04 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

3. Roll Call

- John Sommavilla – PRESENT
- Gwenne Allgaier – PRESENT
- Sarah Bye – PRESENT (Virtual)
- Janice Wyant – PRESENT
- Fern Spence – PRESENT
- Lance Boehmer – PRESENT
- Wayne Schmidt – ABSENT

4. First Public Comment*

Justin Reed from the Traverse House Clubhouse addressed the Board regarding concerns with the new fare system. Their organization distributes paper tickets to passengers. They will be asking a representative from BATA to make a presentation at one of their upcoming meetings.

5. Approval of Agenda/Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Motion by Fern Spence, supported by Gwenne Allgaier, to approve the June 25, 2026, Regular Board Meeting/Agenda/Declaration of Conflict of Interest as presented.

- **Ayes: 5**
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 5-0**

6. Consent Calendar

The purpose of the Consent Calendar is to expedite business by grouping non-controversial items together to be dealt with in one Board motion without discussion. Any member of the Board, staff, or the public may ask that any item on the Consent Calendar be removed and placed elsewhere on the agenda for full discussion. Such requests will be automatically respected. If an item is not removed from the Consent Calendar, the action noted in parentheses on the agenda is approved by a single Board action adopting the Consent Calendar.

Consideration of Approving the Following

a. Regular Board Meeting Minutes of May 28, 2026
b. Special Board Meeting Minutes of May 29, 2026
c. Special Board Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2026

Consideration of Accepting the Following Reports

d. Local Advisory Council Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2026
e. Monthly Income Statement
f. Correspondence - Staff Compliments
g. BATA Board Tracker

Motion by Gwenne Allgaier, supported by Fern Spence, to approve the June 25, 2026, Regular Board Meeting Consent Calendar, with the exception of item 6c. Special Board Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2026, which was removed by John Sommavilla for discussion.

- **Ayes: 5**
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 5-0**

7. Any Items Removed from the Consent Calendar.

Item 6c. Special Board Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2026
John Sommavilla recommended the Board make two corrections to the minutes as presented: under item 11. Director's Comments and Announcements/Open Floor (on page 17 of 37 in the June 25, 2026, Board packet) correct his name from Jim to John in the first bullet, and strike the sentence in the second bullet within the parentheses that states "Administration confirmed that Fern did receive orientation on June 5, 2025, at the Firefly Restaurant with Chris Davis", because the statement added to the meeting minutes was not made during the public meeting on June 11, 2026. The Board agreed with the recommendations to correct the minutes.

Motion by John Sommavilla, supported by Fern Spence, to approve the June 11, 2026, Regular Board Meeting Minutes, as amended.

- **Ayes: 5**
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 5-1**

The Board discussed the onboarding process for new Board members and expressed interest in a more formal process. Chris Davis, as Interim Executive Director, implemented meeting one-to-one with new Board members to share and review an orientation binder. John Sommavilla noted as Governance Chairperson he previously attended Board orientations for new Board members. Ms. Davis noted that she was not made aware of this previous practice when she became Interim Executive Director. It was agreed that Administration will work on expanding and formalizing the orientation process for incoming Board members and will bring a proposed orientation plan to a future Board meeting.

8. Executive Director's Report

Chris Davis, Interim Executive Director, provided the Board with the June 2026 update, highlighting the following items: Hosted the Try Transit Day breakfast for over 160 people at BATA's Hall Street Transfer Station and provided 1,455 free rides to passengers across the fixed route system; Administration handed out anniversary service pins to BATA employees at the monthly Communications meetings, and the recognition was very well received. The service pins represent about 700 years of experience collectively among BATA employees; Operations is in the midst of preparing for Cherry Festival week with expanded hours and ambassadors positioned at Hall Street to assist with questions; All EV chargers at headquarters and Hall Street have been commissioned; BATA's service during the Bayshore Marathon was a great success with expanded hours and increased usage over last year; and, in preparation for transporting seasonal workers, BATA met with Interlochen Center for the Arts, The Homestead in Glen Arbor, and the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa to talk about routes and schedules.

9. Chairman's Report

No report at this time.

10. Old Business

No old business.

11. New Business

a. **Link Service Recommendations**
Eric Linguar, Director of Communications and Development, Adam BeVier, Operations Manager of Demand-Response and Dispatch Supervisor, and Ben Gordon in Partner Success at Via, presented an overview of proposed enhancements to the BATA Link on-demand service. Link service has been in place for six years and is extremely successful and popular. The presentation outlined a phased approach to improve service by creating separate urban and rural service zones to better address differing rider needs. Proposed changes include expanded advance scheduling options for rural riders, improved reliability for work and medical trips, and increased efficiency through software enhancements. Staff also discussed evaluating fixed-route and on-demand service integration during a future second phase to better utilize resources. Board members discussed rider accessibility, commuter service, scheduling flexibility, coordination with neighboring transit providers, and prioritizing door-to-door service for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Staff emphasized that the proposed changes are intended to improve service levels and efficiency without increasing operating costs. No Board action was requested or taken.

b. **Onboarding Process for New Executive Director**
The Board reviewed the draft onboarding plan for incoming Executive Director Patrick Preusser. His first day on the job is scheduled to be Wednesday, July 22, 2026, and the press release announcing his appointment went out to media on June 25, 2026. Any questions regarding the press release should be directed to Eric Linguar. The Board discussed prioritizing Patrick's one-on-one meetings with Board members before August 13, 2026, regular Board meeting while maintaining flexibility in scheduling. The Board also recommended prioritizing introductory meetings with BATA Directors, followed by key community partners and local government officials throughout the month of August. Additional suggestions included conducting orientation activities aboard BATA buses when practical, introducing Patrick at the Michigan Township Association (MTA) meeting – Fern Spence said she will forward the MTA meeting information and contacts to

Chris Davis, and hosting public meet-and-greet events with Patrick at both Hall Street and BATA Headquarters to engage passengers, community stakeholders, and the public. Administration will refine the onboarding schedule based on the Board's feedback and provide the revised draft document to Patrick for his input. Once approved, Kelly Walter will contact all stakeholders to schedule the meetings.

12. Second Public Comment

No public comment was offered.

13. Director's Comments and Announcements/Open Floor

- John Sommavilla asked about hiring efforts for open positions. Chris Davis provided an update on current hiring efforts, including the recruitment of bus drivers and the onboarding of the new Accounts Payable Specialist/Administrative Assistant, Kelly Walter. Two drivers are completing new hire training this month, and four drivers start training on July 6, however more drivers, as many as eight, are still needed.
- Fern Spence reported on the regional planning efforts related to the Coalition to End Homelessness, and BATA's role in this effort. The City and County are working collaboratively on passing a resolution of support, and Fern said it would be helpful if we could provide a statement to the City and County that BATA is a supportive partner in this effort. Board members discussed emphasizing the importance of coordinating transportation planning, funding for transit services, rider access to bus passes, and ongoing communication with community partners. Administration reported that BATA has participated in preliminary discussions with various organizations and will continue to monitor and engage in the planning process as appropriate. Once a resolution is passed, Lance Boehmer will ask the City Manager and Fern Spence will ask the County Administrator to forward the resolution to BATA Administration.
- Gwenne Allgaier expressed her appreciation to Interim Executive Director Chris Davis for her leadership and service in the absence of an Executive Director, keeping BATA going and keeping staff spirits strong while continually working to build the organization. Board members concurred thanking Chris for her service.

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:57 PM. The next BATA Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 13, 2026, at 1:00 PM at the Hall Street Transfer Station,115 Hall Street, Traverse City, MI 49684.

Meeting Minutes Submitted by: *Kelly Walter*

Meeting Minutes Approved on: August 13, 2026

Gwenne Allgaier, Secretary: Gwenne Allgaier