

BATA Regular Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Location: Hall St. Transfer Station, 115 Hall St. Traverse City, MI

Date/Time: 1:00PM, Thursday, October 23, 2025

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Schmidt at 1:01 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

3. Roll Call

- John Sommavilla - PRESENT
- Lance Boehmer – PRESENT
- Gwenne Allgaier – ABSENT
- Joe Underwood – PRESENT
- Fern Spence – PRESENT
- Sarah Bye - PRESENT
- Wayne Schmidt – PRESENT

4. First Public Comment*

Cindy Evans, Director of GTI, addressed the Board of Directors. GTI has a contract with BATA, to provide daily rides for about 90 riders to GTI. Cindy expressed her concerns regarding the 15% budget increase and the two weeks' notification that GTI was given regarding the significant increase amount. This is not something that GTI can sustain. Cindy said that she reached out to BATA staff and was informed that if they couldn't sign the contract or make the increase, that services would need to be looked into being cut. Cindy is still waiting for a follow up from BATA. GTI currently pays a premium rate, but that premium rate is significantly higher than what the community is paying.

5. Approval of Agenda/Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Wayne Schmidt moved to remove items 11a and 11g from the agenda and add items:

- 13 Closed Session to discuss a legal written opinion from attorney regarding a personnel issue.
- 14 Closed Session – Jeff Meilbeck requested to discuss matters brought against employee.
- 15 Second Public Comment to be added back onto the agenda.

Moved by Lance Boehmer and supported by Joe Underwood to approve the Agenda/Declaration of Conflict of Interest as amended.

- **Ayes: 6**
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

6. Consideration of Approving the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of September 25, 2025

Moved by Fern Spence and supported by John Somnavilla to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2025, Regular Board Meeting as presented.

- **Ayes: 6**
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

7. 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.

No items on the Consent Calendar at this time.

8. Chairperson's Report

Wayne Schmidt welcomed Sarah Bye to the BATA Board of Directors. Wayne gave a thank you to BATA. Also, gave a reminder that there is no November meeting.

9. Finance Reports

FY25 Q4 Finance Reports

Key Points Include:

- Operating Reserve Fund, earning 4.2% interest. Interest income is \$150,261.00
- FY26 budget has been updated for eligible expenses. In this fund BATA is not to exceed 30% and we are currently sitting at 25.4%
- Capital Reserve Funds, interest income was \$346,537. According to policy, BATA transferred 5% of our budget, which was \$653,745.
- BATA spent \$146,000 this year.
- New Facility Reserve Fund, interest income earned, \$158,000. The sale of Diamond was \$376,000
- All decreases listed are in accordance with Hammond and Hall St projects. The outstanding balance is the remainder of the Hall St project and the EV chargers at LaFranier Transfer. Fern Spence asked what level the chargers would be and if it was for public use. Justin Weston and Bill Clark responded that yes, they would be for public use and the chargers will be Level 2 chargers.

Moved by Joe Underwood and supported by Lance Boehmer to accept the FY25 Q4 Finance Reports as presented.

- **Ayes: 6**
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 0**

10. Old Business

No old business at this time.

11. New Business

a. Resolution to Approve a contract Between MDOT and BATA.
Item was removed during the approval of the agenda.

b. FY25 Capital Improvements Recap – Bus Stop Amenities
Key Points Include:

- 12 new shelters have been added.
- 19 new benches have been added.
- 6 existing benches have relocated to other stops with heavier rider traffic.
- 10 locations have been paved for ADA access.
- 10 bike racks have been added

c. 2026 Strategic Communications and Marketing Plan and 2025 Results
Key Points Include:

- Basic education was introduced, like how to ride BATA, how to pay and where does BATA go.
- Bus wraps were added to the buses.
- Weekly social media posts. Increase in social media engagement.
- Digital marketing. This information provides great tracking information. Also, a video was created for BATA 101 information.
- Targeted campaigns included TVC Airport, LaFranier Transfer, Cherry Festival, Bike-n-Ride
- Paper marketing and advertising.
- Ridership increase of 18.5%
- Community presentations increased as well. Previously 53, current 121
- Some of the plans for 2026 include education on the new fare system, updating videos, 40th Anniversary of BATA, BATA rider experiences, community value, hiring, LaFranier transfer.

d. Fare Structure Update

Key Points Include:

- BATA had its first introduction meeting the week of October 6, 2025
- BATA has 3-6 months to work out what the new fare structure will look like. More information is still needed.

- More information will be provided at the December Board meeting.

e. FY25 Capital Plan Closeout

Key Points Include:

- Under budget in all categories.
- Total under budget of \$268,000 for FY25

f. FY26 Capital Plan Request

Key Points Include:

- 6 buses to potentially be replaced.
- Local request for the fare system \$210,000
- Ticket vending machines \$150,000
- Grounds mower is added again, with a higher request than last year.
- Propane hardware and software potential replacement.

Moved by Lance Boehmer and supported by Fern Spence to approve the FY26 Capital Plan Request as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** John Somnavilla, Lance Boehmer, Joe Underwood, Fern Spence, Sarah Bye, Wayne Schmidt
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

g. Strategic Advance

Item was removed during the approval of the agenda.

12. Executive Director's Report

Chris Davis reported that the employee engagement survey went out to staff and BATA is happy with the participation at 95.5%. Chris and members of BATA attended the MERS conference that was held in Traverse City. A member of MERS came to BATA to discuss retirement with employees. Chris stated that she followed up with noon Rotary on the request of a Board member and BATA will be presenting to Rotary on April 21st. The bearings in the overhead doors are being replaced. Chris thanked Bill Clark and facilities members for the tremendous work putting up the new shelters and benches. A lot of hard work went into getting them done.

13. Closed Session

a. Closed session pursuant to Sections 8(1)(h) of the Open Meetings Act to consider an attorney's written legal opinion regarding a personnel issue that is exempt from public disclosure under state and federal law.

Moved by Lance Boehmer and supported by Fern Spence for the BATA Board of Directors to go into closed session at **1:45PM** to discuss an attorney's written opinion that is exempt from discussion disclosure under section 8(1)(h) of the Open Meetings Act to consider an attorney's written legal opinion regarding a personnel issue that is exempt from public disclosure under state and federal law.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** John Sommovilla, Lance Boehmer, Joe Underwood, Fern Spence, Sarah Bye, Wayne Schmidt
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

Moved by Lance Boehmer and supported by Fern Spence to adjourn Closed Session and reopen the Regular Meeting at **2:21PM**.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** John Sommovilla, Lance Boehmer, Joe Underwood, Fern Spence, Sarah Bye, Wayne Schmidt
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

14. Jeff Meilbeck opportunity to address the Board in closed session.

Jeff Meilbeck requested in writing to address the BATA Board of Directors in closed session.

a. Closed session pursuant to section 8(1)(a) of the Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.2681(a), to hear complaints or charges brought against an employee at the request of the employee.

Moved by Lance Boehmer and supported by Joe Underwood for the BATA Board of Directors to go into closed session at **2:22PM** to hear complaints or charges brought against an employee at the request of the employee.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** John Sommovilla, Lance Boehmer, Joe Underwood, Fern Spence, Sarah Bye, Wayne Schmidt
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

Moved by Fern Spence and supported by Lance Boehmer to adjourn Closed Session and reopen the Regular Meeting at **2:46PM**.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** John Sommovilla, Lance Boehmer, Joe Underwood, Fern Spence, Sarah Bye, Wayne Schmidt
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

Upon returning to open session, Joe Underwood moved to accept the resignation of Jeff Meilbeck. Supported by Fern Spence.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** John Sommovilla, Lance Boehmer, Joe Underwood, Fern Spence, Sarah Bye, and Wayne Schmidt.
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

Wayne Schmidt appointed Chris Davis as Interim Executive Director.

Lance Boehmer moved to approve Chris Davis as Interim Executive Director. Supported by Sarah Bye.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Ayes:** John Sommovilla, Lance Boehmer, Joe Underwood, Fern Spence, Sarah Bye, and Wayne Schmidt.
- **Nays: 0**
- **Motion Carries: 6-0**

15. Second Public Comment

No comments were made at this time.

16. Director's Comments and Announcements/ Open Floor

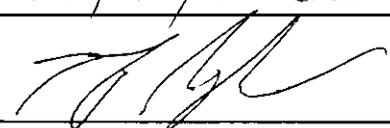
No comments were made at this time.

17. Adjournment

Moved by Lance Boehmer to adjourn the October 23, 2025, Regular Meeting of the BATA Board of Directors at 2:49 PM.

Meeting Minutes Submitted by: _____

Meeting Minutes Approved on: 12/11/2025

Lance Boehmer, Secretary:  _____