Bay Area Transportation Authority
Board of Directors
Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 24, 2026
1:00 PM
Suttons Bay Library
416 N. Front Street, Suttons Bay, MI 49682

1. **Call to Order**
   The meeting was called to order by Chair Wayne Schmidt at 1:22 PM.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence**

3. **Roll Call**
   - John Sommavilla – PRESENT
   - Gwenne Allgaier – PRESENT
   - Sarah Bye – PRESENT
   - Janice Wyant – ABSENT (EXCUSED)
   - Fern Spence – PRESENT
   - Lance Boehmer – ABSENT (EXCUSED)
   - Wayne Schmdit – PRESENT

4. **Public Comment – Agenda Items**

   Susan Leithauser representing Peninsula Housing's proposed attainable workforce housing development at 926 and 980 South Herman Road in Suttons Bay Township provided public comment on their request of the BATA Board to provide a letter supporting the development. Ms. Leithauser provided Board members with a one-page "Project Fast Facts" document for reference.

5. **Approval of Agenda / Conflict of Interest**

   Fern Spence and Gwenne Allgaier disclosed conflicts regarding Agenda Item 15 and recused themselves from consideration of that matter.

   Motion by Gwenne Allgaier, supported by Sarah Bye, to approve the September 24, 2026, Regular Meeting Agenda 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.

a. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes for August 13, 2026
b. Approval of the Study Session Meeting Minutes for September 9, 2026
c. Acceptance of the following reports
    1. BATA 2026 Strategic Work Plan Update
    2. BATA Board Tracker

Motion by Fern Spence, supported by Gwenne Allgaier, to approve the September 24, 2026, Consent Calendar as presented.

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

7. Consent Calendar Items Removed

No items were removed from the Consent Calendar.

8. Executive Director's Report

Patrick Preusser provided his Executive Director's report as detailed in the Board packet and highlighting financial reporting, service and staffing reliability, fare-system implementation, millage information, fleet updates, and engagement with employees and regional partners, including local schools. He also recognized employees for their contributions to safety, customer service, teamwork, and school outreach.

9. Chairman's Report

Chair Wayne Schmidt noted a compliment from local resident who lives in the Long Lake area and regularly uses the Park and Ride at Meijer even though he could drive.

10. Guest Presentations

There were no guest presentations.

11. Financial Update

Executive Director Patrick Preusser reviewed BATA's financial position through August 2026, as detailed in the Board packet. He reported that monthly financial statements were current through August and that the operating position before depreciation was better than budget. He outlined outstanding grant reporting and reimbursement submissions, accounting support from Rehmann, and audit and fiscal year-end priorities. He thanked staff for their work maintaining progress during the Finance Director transition.

Member Sarah Bye requested that staff incorporate the topic of winter tires into future budget discussions for safety and employee satisfaction reasons.

Motion by Fern Spence, supported by Sarah Bye, to accept the FY26 Finance Report as

presented.

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

12. Discussion Items

a. FY2027 Proposed Capital Budget

Executive Director Patrick Preusser reviewed the proposed FY2027 Capital Budget, as outlined in the Board packet. The proposal totals approximately $2.64 million, including $1,502,338 for ongoing and continuing projects, $896,040 for proposed new projects, and $239,838 for contingency. Major investments include replacement buses, vehicle equipment and repairs, stop improvements, fare-system completion, potential technology initiatives, and a potential equipment storage building. Mr. Preusser noted that the previously proposed ticket-vending machines and a grounds mower were no longer included in the budget. Mr. Preusser also noted that staff are evaluating the scope and potential funding sources for a strategic plan and Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA), with further information to be presented as the work develops.

Mr. Preusser requested Board input on the plan's overall direction, investment level, and alignment with BATA's operational and strategic priorities. Staff will refine project scopes, costs, carryforwards, funding sources, and the projected effect on capital reserves before returning with a final recommendation for Board action in October. No action was taken.

Board Member John Sommavilla questioned the need for an equipment storage building, noting that staff had previously provided assurances that the new facility would have sufficient space. Mr. Preusser recognized staff's work incorporating daily operations and workflows into the facility design to improve efficiency. He agreed that staff would further evaluate the storage need and its priority relative to other anticipated capital needs.

Board Member Sarah Bye noted that, if an equipment storage building proceeds, its size should account for tire storage needs. She also requested that staff consider winter tires in future budget discussions, citing concerns related to safety and employee satisfaction, and requested a driver survey. Mr. Preusser agreed to conduct the survey and complete a risk assessment to inform further consideration.

13. Action Items

a. Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Updated Signatory Authority Resolution

Patrick Preusser explained that the proposed resolution updates BATA's signatory authority following the Executive Director transition, approves MDOT Master Agreement No. 2027-0040 for fiscal years 2027–2031, and authorizes the Executive Director position to execute Master Agreements and related project authorizations under Agreement Nos. 2022-0015 and 2027-0040.

Mr. Preusser noted that the Master Agreement establishes funding terms and requirements but does not itself award funding or authorize a specific project. The delegation remains subject to BATA's approved budgets, procurement requirements, and applicable Board approvals.

Motion by Sarah Bye, supported by John Sommavilla, to approve the Michigan Department of Transportation Updated Signatory Authority Resolution as presented.

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

b. Consideration of Suttons Bay Workforce Housing Letter of Support

Executive Director Patrick Preusser presented a draft letter of support for Peninsula Housing's proposed 38-unit workforce housing development in Suttons Bay and the use of tax increment financing at the Board's request following its discussion at the August 13, 2026, meeting.

Mr. Preusser noted that the proposed Brownfield Plan estimates approximately $64,900 in future BATA tax increment revenue would be captured over 30 years, while BATA would continue receiving revenue based on the property's current taxable value. Actual capture amounts would depend on taxable values, millage rates, development timing, and the duration of the capture.

The letter would not commit BATA to additional funding or new or expanded transit service. Any future service changes would be considered separately through BATA's planning, budgeting, and Board review processes

The Board discussed Tax Increment Financing and its relationship to millage revenue and housing and community projects.

Motion by Sarah Bye, supported by Gwenne Allgaier, to accept the draft letter as presented and authorize Executive Director Patrick Preusser to sign and send the letter to Peninsula Housing.

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

14. Public Comment – General Matters*

No public comments were made.

15. Closed Session

The Board did not enter closed session. With two Board members absent and Fern Spence and Gwenne Allgaier indicating they would recuse themselves from consideration of the matter, a quorum was not available to proceed.

Board Member Sarah Bye noted that she could not attend the October 22, 2026, Regular Board meeting. Chair Wayne Schmidt requested that Recording Secretary Kelly Walter survey Board members to confirm whether a quorum would be available and, if not, coordinate rescheduling the meeting to Monday, October 19, 2026, subject to Board member availability.

16. Other Business

a. Traverse City DDA Infrastructure First Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan, 2028–2047

Chair Wayne Schmidt proposed that the Board consider a letter of support for the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority's Infrastructure First Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan, 2028–2047. Following Board discussion, Chair Schmidt agreed to work with Executive Director Patrick Preusser to prepare background information and a draft letter for Board review and consideration at the October meeting. No action was taken on the proposed support**.**

17. Next meeting

Monday, October 19, 2026
1:00 p.m.
Hall Street Transfer Station - Conference Room
115 Hall Street, Traverse City, MI 49684

18. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

Meeting Minutes Submitted by: *Kelly Walter*

Meeting Minutes Approved on: October 19, 2026

Gwenne Allgaier, Secretary: _____