

## BATA Regular Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

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

Date/Time: March 26, 2026, at 1:00 PM

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Schmidt at 1:03PM.

### 2. Roll Call

- John Sommavilla — Present (Virtual)
- Lance Boehmer — Absent
- Gwenne Allgaier — Present
- Fern Spence — Present
- Sarah Bye — Present (Virtual)
- Wayne Schmidt — Present

### 3. First Public Comment

Yasmeen Abu Assa, a resident of Kings Court and college student, addressed the Board. As part of a social work class assignment, she attended to speak at a local committee important to both her and the community. She expressed concerns about the distance between certain bus stops, particularly for individuals with young children. She noted that there is currently no bus stop near the daycare where she works and brings her two small children. She emphasized that navigating this distance during the winter months is especially difficult.

Angel Hockett, a resident of Fife Lake, and a student in the program, addressed the Board regarding challenges in rural areas when using public transportation. She noted concerns related to inconsistencies in service and timing, which can make it difficult for riders to arrive at school and work on time. Angel thanked the Board for providing transportation in her area and shared that she is an active rider.

Chris Davis invited both students to leave their contact information and noted that BATA could provide confirmation of their attendance if needed for their class assignment.

Wayne Schmidt added that a member of BATA staff could follow up regarding their concerns.

Fern Spence thanked the students for attending and asked for their teacher's name, noting that it was great to have them present.

#### **4. Approval of Agenda / Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

No motion was made to approve the agenda or declare conflicts of interest due to the lack of a physical quorum. All items will be moved to the April Board meeting for approval.

#### **5. 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 public may request that an item be removed and placed elsewhere on the agenda for full discussion. Such requests will be automatically respected.

#### **Consideration of Approving the Following:**

A. Organizational Board Meeting Minutes of February 26, 2026

#### **Consideration of Accepting the Following Reports:**

- B. Monthly Income Statement
- C. Correspondence – Staff Compliments
- D. BATA Board Tracker

These items will be moved to the April agenda. No motion was made.

#### **6. Items Removed from the Consent Calendar**

No items were removed from the consent calendar.

#### **7. Interim Executive Director's Report**

Chris Davis reported that BATA is in discussions with the Commission on Aging to help provide non-emergency medical transportation services.

Chris and the BATA Operations Team worked with Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties, emergency services, and road commissions regarding road conditions, weather, and transportation services. Due to safety concerns, BATA suspended services Monday and Tuesday, March 16 and 17<sup>th</sup> with a late start on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Chris thanked everyone who helped clear stops and shelters.

Additional updates included:

- Attended virtual session with 2026 Urban Transit
- Met with state representatives Coffia and Roth at the 2026 Michigan Transit Legislative Conference in Lansing with Justin Weston

- Met with union representative Tony Pletscher
- Hosted the Saginaw Transit Authority, which is considering redesigning its headquarters; approximately 20 staff members attended
- Met with Cherry Festival representatives regarding this year's festival
- Asked to co-present at the MPTA Conference at Crystal Mountain in August regarding MERS
- Addressed the recent tragic event at Cherry Capital Airport; the Safety Team reviewed the incident and discussed other high-traffic areas of concern

## 8. Chairperson's Report

No report was given.

## 9. Governance Committee Update

### a. HR Partners Update

John Somnavilla informed the Board that Lance Boehmer will serve as an alternate to the Governance Committee going forward. John then introduced Kate Greene to the Board.

Kate Greene informed the Board that the Executive Director position has been posted on:

- BATA website
- Indeed
- APTA (American Public Transit Association)
- MPTA (pending)
- Transit Talent
- Michigan Municipal League (MMO)
- Traverse Connect
- Social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram

Previous candidates have also been contacted to confirm continued interest.

The Search Committee will meet again on April 23 prior to the Board meeting. Kate will conduct phone interviews, after which the Search Committee will meet to determine candidates to move forward.

Interview dates are scheduled for May 13–14. Final candidates will be presented at the May Board meeting.

Wayne Schmidt noted that the Leelanau meeting will need to be rescheduled.

Fern Spence thanked Kate for her enthusiasm, communication, and scheduling efforts.

## 10. Old Business

No old business.

## 11. New Business

### a. Fare System Update

Key Points:

- Design configuration has started; Masabi team was onsite to inspect vehicles
- Bus configuration to begin soon and continue through the end of May
- Training expected to begin near the end of May
- Testing to follow training
- Launch scheduled for August
- Phase 2 to begin in fall, including open-fare payment (credit cards, Apple Pay, etc.)

Sarah Bye expressed concerns about potentially eliminating cash payments and requiring riders to travel to a physical location to purchase passes.

Eric Lingaur stated riders will be able to purchase passes online, through kiosks, at the Hall Street facility, and other locations. Payment thresholds will be brought back to the Board for discussion.

### b. Millage Discussion

Chris Davis stated that the millage passed in 2022 expires in December 2027. Eric Lingaur provided historical information in the packet.

Options discussed:

- Pursue renewal in 2026
- Wait until 2027

New legislation allows public transit millages for up to 20 years. BATA currently operates under a 5-year millage. A potential 7-year millage was discussed, which would extend through 2034.

July 28, 2026, would be the timeline if the Board chooses to pursue renewal this year.

c. GMV Update

Key Points:

- BATA's 3-year agreement is expiring
- Renewal cost: \$66,291.00, which is already built into the budget
- GMV is BATA's fixed-route technology system
- Includes passenger counters, automated announcements, CAD, and AVL software

This item will return to the April meeting for approval.

John Somnavilla requested staff be prepared to discuss long-term plans, including potential RFP or extended agreement options.

**12. Second Public Comment**

No public comment.

**13. Director's Comments and Announcements / Open Floor**

Chris Davis noted that March has historically been difficult for scheduling meetings and suggested reviewing future scheduling options.

Fern Spence shared that she recently rode the Bayline bus and complimented the driver and overall experience.

Gwenne Allgaier shared that her nephew is a driver and enjoys his position.

**14. Adjournment**

Moved by Wayne Schmidt to adjourn the March 23, 2026, Regular Meeting of the BATA Board of Directors at 2:05 PM.

The next BATA Board meeting is scheduled for April 23, 2026, at 1:00 PM at Hall St.

Meeting Minutes Submitted by: Chris Davis

Meeting Minutes Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

Gwenne Allgaier, Secretary: Gwenne Allgaier