

**Savannah Mobility Management, Inc.**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, June 18, 2015**  
**Savannah, GA**

The meeting of the Board of Directors of Savannah Mobility Management, Inc. convened on Thursday June 18, 2015 at CAT Central, 900 E Gwinnett Street, Savannah, GA. Chair Jody McIntyre welcomed all present and called the meeting to order at approximately 8:45 AM.

The following directors were present:

Jody McIntyre (Chairman)  
Bob Coffey (Vice Chairman)  
Mark Dana  
Bill Hubbard  
Chris Crane  
Charlie Brazil

The following directors were absent from the meeting:

Marc Friday (Secretary-Treasurer)  
Dr. Chadwick Reese  
Veleeta McDonald  
Joe Marinelli

The following guests were also present at the meeting:

Nick Helmholdt, Administrator, SaMMI  
Marija Bumgarner, City of Savannah  
Jeff Hewitt, Visit Savannah  
Carlton Hodges, Caines Hodges & Company, PC  
Amanda Futrell, Caines Hodges & Company, PC  
Cedric Dumas, Chatham Area Transit  
Curtis Koleber, Chatham Area transit

The chair reported that a quorum of board members was present.

***Governance***

**Upon a motion made by Charlie Brazil and seconded by Chris Crane, the minutes of the April 16, 2015 Board of Directors meeting were approved unanimously.**

***Financial***

Carlton Hodges and Amanda Futrell of the accounting firm Caines, Hodges & Company, P.C. distributed and reviewed a Post-Audit Board Communication document. Copies of the 2014 Audited Financial Statements were also distributed. Mr. Hodges and Mrs. Futrell reported that no unusual accounting issues were encountered during the audit and no issues with internal controls were noted. **Upon motion made by Charlie Brazil, seconded by Bob Coffey, the 2014 financial audit was accepted unanimously.**

Nick Helmholdt presented year to date financial information. He stated that SaMMI is tracking \$15,132 unfavorable to budget based on current projections of revenues and expenditures. He stated that this was primarily due to lower than anticipated POR Fee revenue. He went on to state that year to date POR Fee revenue for 2015 was \$12,813 unfavorable to budget.

Nick Helmholdt presented the POR collections through April of 2015. He stated that recent collections tend to be more in line with reports from Smith Travel for occupancy. Mark Dana stated that the Inn at Ellis Square will close for renovations in July. Chris Crane asked if the city is having difficulty collecting the fee. Nick stated that doesn't appear to be the case based on reports produced by the city. Chris said that it is possible that hotels may not be paying for the appropriate month. Jody stated that the Homewood Suites is slated to open around September.

### ***System Ridership***

Nick Helmholdt presented the system ridership figures through May, 2015. He introduced the board to a new reporting format which was intended to clarify ridership trends over a longer span of time. He stated that the trend for the dot shuttle was in line with historical patterns for previous months. He stated that the water ferry ridership was slightly down compared to the previous year due to a lower number of conventions. He said that the streetcar ridership for the most recent period was zero because it remains out of service.

Mark Dana asked how ridership is measured. Nick explained that passenger counts are taken by hand on the streetcar and water ferry. He said operators on the dot express shuttle use digital farebox counters. He stated that safety regulations govern passenger loading on the ferry vessels.

Charlie Brazil asked if the report could include the prior year's ridership could also be listed with the variance.

### ***Program Elements***

#### Convention Transportation Fund

Jeff Hewitt presented the latest CTF projections. He said that he had challenged his staff to tighten up the CTF disbursements by evaluating which groups receive over \$8 per room night. He said that the net result led to significant savings for future years of disbursement. He pointed out that the cost per room night was now printed on the CTF report.

Bob Coffey asked what is included in the supplemental category. Jeff said that it would include signage in hotels for transportation. Jody asked if the ambassadors were included in supplemental costs. Charlie Brazil pointed out that Hosts were included in this category.

#### Wayfinding Presentation

Marija Bumgarner presented a brief history and overview of the wayfinding project which the city of Savannah has implemented in collaboration with SaMMI. She shared a document which described each sign and its location. She said that all 15 signs from the agreement with SaMMI have been fabricated and received by the city of Savannah. She said that the next goal was to move forward with parking signs using SPLOST funds and grants. Jody asked when the current batch of signs would be installed. Marija said that it would depend on finding a contractor to install the signs.

### Marketing Presentation

Nick presented the new printed materials designed by MY Agency. Mark Dana asked if the material can be shown on a digital monitor. Nick said that the design can be presented in a variety of dimensions.

### City Hall Landing Shelter

Nick presented an update on the landing shelter. He said that work started on June 11 after a preconstruction meeting the day before. He said that the contractor has agreed to a 60 day completion.

### Fare Feasibility Assessment

Nick presented a brief overview of the feasibility of charging a fare for the express shuttle. He said that the Visitor Mobility Plan of 2005 clearly states that SaMMI's mission is to provide fare free transportation. He said that the technology to charge a fare is readily available. He said that the addition of a fare would have substantial operational impacts and would threaten the ability for the shuttle to maintain a 20 minute headway. He also stated that a transit service with a fare would increase the demands of the customers.

Mark Dana said that he is in favor of adding a fare. He stated that the dot shuttle is a vehicle for homeless population. Jody McIntyre said there were many important considerations to examine before implementing a fare. Nick said that CAT would be reluctant to have a different fare policy for the dot than for its other vehicles. Mark said that he did not know what a rider's level of expectation would be for a \$1.50 fare. Nick pointed out that many walking trips are faster than using the dot shuttle due to its current one-way loop service design. Jody stated that guests are already paying fees into the system. Mark said that he believed the service was not meeting the expectations for visitors. Charlie asked about past fare policy for the water ferry which allowed hotel guests to board free. Bob Coffey said the water ferry charged a fare at one point and allowed hotel guests to use their room keys to board free. Bob further went on to describe the challenge of using a token-based system. He questioned whether or not it would be worthwhile to charge a fare after assessing the back office expenses associated with such a policy. Chris Crane said that he believed this was a potential revenue generator. He stated that he didn't feel the need to treat visitors differently than residents with regard to a fare policy; and that he believed awareness of the system may be a bigger challenge. Nick said that the initial direction from the SaMMI board was to increase visitor ridership, which led to the formation of the marketing committee and development of new web materials. Bill Hubbard said that he generally agreed with Mark and that he wanted to improve the visitor's ride experience. Bob Coffey stated that the utility of the transit was also an important factor in the visitor's experience on the service. Jody stated that the board will continue to monitor and assess this question.

Charlie stated that his company has experience operating fare free transit in other cities and this may be an option that SaMMI wants to consider. Bob Coffey described some alternatives for ways a privatized program could operate while meeting USDOT requirements for use of grant funds. Charlie said he would investigate the arrangements more in advance of the next meeting. Jody said that she would like to work with the city and the community to address some of the ongoing issues.

### ***Unfinished Business***

There was no unfinished business.

### ***New Business***

#### North Bank POR Fee Change

Nick briefed the board on the proposal to increase the POR fee for hotels on the north bank of the Savannah River (Hutchinson Island). The proposal would increase the fee from \$1.75 to \$2.50 with the entire amount of the increase (\$0.75) allocated to water ferry operations. Bob Coffey explained the proposal in greater detail regarding the projected revenues which would address an ongoing operational deficit that hits the Trade Center Authority. He stated that this year the expected deficit is over \$211,000. He said that the Westin hotel has expressed willingness to increase its POR fee and discretionary contribution for water ferry operations. He also said that CAT expects to contribute approximately \$100,000 of grant funding into maintenance for ferry vessels. Bob further said that this board is being asked to evaluate this and vote on a resolution to recommend a related change to the revenue ordinance to City Council, which would become effective in January, 2016.

Bill Hubbard asked what SaMMI earns from the water ferry. Nick clarified that SaMMI makes a formula contribution to Trade Center Authority of its POR fee revenue for water ferry operations, which was budgeted at \$532,400 for the current year. Bill asked why SaMMI should not share in the benefit of the proposed increased revenue. Bob responded that the operating costs are what they are; and this is a way to reduce deficits without reducing service. Bob said he would also work with Nick to propose other scenarios. The board discussed the share of contribution for each entity involved in funding water ferry operations.

#### Marketing Committee Report

Nick said that there was no further update beyond the presentation.

#### Bylaws Committee Report

Nick stated that the bylaws committee had met and discussed proposed revisions. The committee is currently evaluating a draft revision.

The CAT Control Center presentation was postponed due to the length of the meeting.

**Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Nick Helmholdt, Administrator  
For the Secretary