

AS THE WHEEL TURNS



Spring 2014

Annual Legislative Visit

By Paul Davis



The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) annual Legislative Conference was held in Washington D.C. [this year in early March](#). The conference was attended by hundreds of mass transit leaders from across the Nation joined by the suppliers of equipment and services for the transit industry. I attended along with TTA Assistant Manager, Jennifer Woodall, and representatives from other WV transit systems.

This is a particularly critical year for the conference. The legislation that provides federal funding for TTA and mass transit systems throughout West Virginia and the USA has undergone major changes this year.

At the conference, we heard from people like the U.S. Secretary of the Department of Transportation and the chairman of the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV) is the Democrat who is second in seniority on that committee and in a powerful position to influence authorization.

On the final day of the conference we went to "The Hill" and met with our elected officials to remind them of the importance of mass transit services in West Virginia and the elements in upcoming legislation that will have the greatest impact on promoting and expanding our transit operations "back home." We were able to meet in person with Congressman **Rahall**, **McKinley**, **Capito** and Senator **Manchin**. Senator **Rockefeller** was not available, but assigned key staff personnel to meet with us.



Reauthorization of the transportation bill known as "MAP 21" was the main item on our agenda. As you may recall, the bill is a 2 year term bill and will expire at the end FY 2014.

All agreed that this was a great time to discuss reauthorizing mass transit legislation. Why? The Country has four major challenges facing it today. They are the economy, the environment, energy independence and the quality of life in America.

TTA is representative of most transit systems in our ability to help the Country address all four of these challenges.

TTA is all about jobs and economic development. Customers ride our buses and "Dial-A-Ride" for one or two major purposes...to earn money or to spend money. Neither happens if you can't get from here to there. TTA helps reduce the pollution that is created by automobiles. Imagine how much more carbon would be in our air if the 931,071 trips on TTA last year had made instead in single occupant automobiles. Think also how much fuel is saved by all the TTA customers who board a bus instead of turning the ignition switch on or calling a taxi. It is now widely accepted that mass transit will play a key role in reducing our nation's dependency on foreign oil.

Finally, is the most personal role TTA plays in the communities we serve. Customers who cannot drive can still go where most everyone else goes for entertainment, socializing, shopping, health care, education and the marvelous array of services available to the residents of the tri-state area. Customers who choose to drive less or not to drive at all have a choice.

Our time has come. Thank you to all who read our newsletter for the role that you have played in getting TTA where it is today.

Performance Report

Ridership for the month of January is down by 5,396 customers. The Dial-A-Ride ridership also had a decrease of 177 customers too. The bus side of the system decreased by 5,219 customers. As for year-to-date statistics, bus ridership is up by 14,153 trips or 3% and Dial-A-Ride is up 4,567 or .24%. The total system is up 18,477 or 3%.

The cost of operation in January 2014 was \$28,010.58 more than in January 2013 and \$33,271.54 less than budgeted. Year-to-date operating expenses have increased one percent and are eight percent below budget.

Operating revenue in January was \$7,669.07 less than in January 2013 and \$2,470.12 more than budgeted. Year-to-date revenue is \$23,070.94 over FY 2013 and \$29,370.35 more than budget.

New Buses

Our new buses started on the production line on March 25, 2014. TTA is receiving 6 buses on this order. The new vehicles should be on the

property in about four weeks. Hopefully by the next board meeting we should have our new buses at TTA.

FTA Allocation Tables FY 2015 -TMA Update

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has finally issued the Allocations tables for the ensuing year. The good news is it would appear that TTA will receive about the same funds as the previous year. The bad news is that costs continue to rise with no new funding. As with last year, the next step is to negotiate the funding split with the three transit systems. The TMA will receive \$2,185,615 and will need to be split among the three systems.

New Service

The new commuter bus service in Ohio will start April 7th. The new routes will connect the three transit centers making it convenient for our customers to easily travel around the tri-state area. We are calling it the Ohio Valley Commuter Express. Jeff will be conducting training for the drivers on Sunday, March 30, 2014. Schedules should be available one day next week



Milestones

YEARS OF SERVICE

Deborah Bryan-Bator	30
Stella Fowler	29
Jim Forto	28
Larry Collins	27
Curtis Hodges	27
Roger Kipp	27
Mark Hunt	27
Jeff Heintz	26
Paul Davis	25
Chuck Boggs	23
Robert Patrick	23
Fredrick Adkins	22
Danny Stanley	20
Jim Pine	20
Julian "Lee" Spires	16
Greg Kipp	14
Scott Stultz	14
Dianna McCallister	14
John Smiley	14
Robert King	12
Shaun Upchurch	12
John Webb	11
Randy Rodriguez	11
Janie Fraback	10
Brian Frazier	10
Donnie Tiller	10
Carole Holbrook	9
Peggy Miller	9
David Mannon	9
Ben Martin	8
Norman Andrews	8
James Edmonds	7
Jeffery Connor	6
Denny Wheeler	6
Keith Murdock	6
Ronald Thomas	6
Cathy J. Reed	6
DuVaughn Hale	6
Mary Marcum	6
David Budd	5

Donnie Adkins	5
Randall Waller	5
Steven Kunges	4
James Williamson	4
Lonnie Black	4
Mark Taylor	4
Tom Day	3
Jennifer Woodall	3
Brenda Wells	3
Scott Williams	3
David Banks	3
Casey Steele	2
Craig Miller	2
Howard Curtis	2
Timothy Ferguson	2
John Scott	2
Randy Mullins	2
Donald McKenzie	2
Steven Hughart	2
Gene Bragg	2
Brooks Johnson	2
Kim Baker	1
David Ball	1
Alan Roach	1
Mike Hamilton	-
Jim Boyer	-
Dale Reeves	-
Richard Burns	-
Nick Preston	-
Keith Dickman	-
Homer McKenzie	-



March 2014 Birthdays



Cathy Reed	03/01
Tom Day	03/01
Kim Baker	03/03
Robert King	03/13
Jeff Conner	03/13
James Williamson	03/14
Jennifer Woodall	03/15
Ronald Thomas	03/18
Mark Taylor	03/21
Alan Roach	03/26

April 2014

Fredrick Adkins	04/03
Brenda Wells	04/03
Mark Hunt	04/13
David Budd	04/17
Curt Hodges	04/24

If you should see these folks on their special day, please wish them a Happy Birthday.

JOKES



Travel Warning

The State Highway Department has issued a travel warning due

to snow storms and bad road conditions.

They suggest that anyone traveling in the current icy conditions should ensure that they have the following:

Shovel, blankets or sleeping bag, extra winter clothing including coats, hat & gloves, water, 24 hours worth of food, deicer, rock salt, flashlight with spare batteries, road flares or reflective triangles, 5 gallon gas can, first aid kit & booster cables.

I looked like an idiot when I got on the bus this morning.

A Solid Reason

Little Johnny walked into the house covered in filth.

His Mom asked, "Johnny, why do you always get so dirty?"

Johnny rolled his eyes and replied, "I'm a lot closer to the ground than you are!"

Counting His Age

When a new child visited our Sunday school, the teacher greeted him and asked his age. The little boy held up four fingers.

"Oh, you're 4," said the teacher. "And when will you be 5?"

The child stared at her and after a few seconds replied,

"When I hold up the other finger."

Finding the Cell Phone

We went to the movies the other night. I sat in an aisle seat as I usually do because it feels a little roomier. Just as the feature was about to start, a person from the center of the row got up and started working their way across.

"Excuse me, sorry, oops, excuse me, pardon me, gotta hurry, oops, excuse me."

By the time the person got to me I was trying to see the screen and I was a little impatient so I said, "Couldn't you have done this a little earlier?"

"No!!" was the loud whisper, "The TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE PLEASE" message just flashed up on the screen and mine was out in the car."

Jeff's World

By Jeff Heint



Teamwork

With the Superbowl in our minds, let us pause to draw some comparisons between the ultimate sporting event and

what transpires at TTA during the dark days of winter. I know it's a leap but try to keep up. Having played on sports teams from opposite ends of the spectrum, I feel qualified to make these analogies. Hey, it's my article and if I want to declare myself an expert, I can do it!

I played on softball teams in Cleveland that went 1-20 and were drubbed regularly. We were once beaten 55 to 0 by a team from Republic Steel). I was also fortunate enough to play on slick fielding, hard hitting teams that refused to surrender and won on a regular basis. The common thread that runs through most winning teams is selfless teamwork. Without further ado, may I introduce the lineup that TTA typically brings to the snow-filled icy days of winter.

Leading off on a typical snowy day are the route supervisors and yours truly, rolling out of bed before 4 A.M. to check out the "playing field." The hills, ridges and known trouble spots must all be checked before the first bus ever rolls from the garage. A fine balance must be maintained as we attempt to meet the needs of the riding public without compromising safety. When it's really coming down, multiple checks are needed because passable roads can become treacherous quicker than you can imagine.

Next, I will introduce to you, the dispatchers? They are the coaches whose task it is to take in all of the incoming information and disseminate it to the drivers and public. Phone traffic is easily quadrupled as people frantically clamor for the latest route and schedule information. Mix in the occasional employee calling off sick at the last minute and you have a stress maelstrom that only Tums can relieve.

Where would we be without the maintenance department? Without these men, nothing moves from the garage. The cleaners remove the sludge and road salt each night. Inside and out, each vehicle is made to shine before we greet the public the next day. The sad part about their job is that it doesn't last. The bus only has to travel a mile or two down the road before all of that hard work is completely undone! The mechanics of course are tasked with keeping everything moving. They work hard at making sure that the riding public takes them for granted and that their ride will be delivered without interruption. There's nothing worse than the dreaded call of a bus unexpectedly breaking down or freezing up. It is a fact of life that cold weather takes its toll on the equipment and they do a great job of keeping things moving.

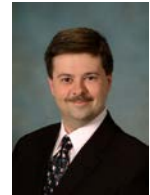
Lastly we come to the drivers. Without them we have a garage full of pretty looking, finely tuned vehicles that aren't doing our riders a bit of good. When the baton is finally passed to their hands the final piece of the puzzle comes into play. Using the tools and knowledge that have been supplied to them, they are tasked with carrying the ball over the goal line. They receive information from the supervisors, but their constant feedback on road conditions is invaluable to the route supervisors. What they see through the windshield is important. Many times we have to shift strategies in "mid-game." When the roads are at their worst our team focus in on safely covering the route. As conditions improve we begin to make plans to get everyone back on schedule. This is accomplished in a variety of ways but the bottom line is we get things done AS A TEAM. As I like to tell new members of the team going through their first winter, "Don't worry, don't get in a hurry, it will turn out okay in the end just trust us."

When you take a step back and take a look at the big picture it's really quite amazing. The intricacies of what each employee (and the department that that they represent) blend together in symphonic arrangement that might make Leonard Bernstein stand up and applaud. Take a

good look at the sports dynasties of the Steelers, Yankees and Montreal Canadians. Year after year they seemed to effortlessly produce winning teams. For decades this well-oiled machine we call TTA, goes about its business delivering in like manner, uninterrupted, quality service to the citizens who so kindly support us.

From the Chief

By Scott
Stultz



Beneficiary Designation Updates

We are asking all employees to complete new Beneficiary Designation forms for the Defined Benefit Pension Plan. Even if nothing has changed since you last completed your beneficiary designation, we are asking you to complete a new one. This will make certain that your information is updated.

First, everyone will need to mark the second option stating that you are a current plan participant and that you are updating your beneficiary information.

If you are married, then you will select the Married Participant box and

then choose one of the two options under that heading. If you choose to leave your pension to someone other than your spouse, then you will need to contact me for additional forms to be completed.

If you are single, then you will select the Unmarried Participant box at the bottom of the page.

Once you have made your selections, please date and sign the form. You will need a witness to verify your signature, so please ask a co-worker to witness your signature.

The form will only take about one or two minutes to complete, and it will help to keep your records updated.

The dispatchers will have the forms for all bus and van drivers. Also, the Maintenance Superintendent will have the forms for all maintenance employees. Finally, I will distribute and collect the forms for management employees.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with keeping your information current! ☺



Editor's Corner

By Jennifer Woodall



Assistant Manager Update

The "iT" bus to Charleston carried an average of 25 people per day during the month of February for a total of 506. KRT carried 589 passengers in January.

NEMT Brokerage update

The Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) rescinded the first Request for Proposals (RFP) for a brokerage to take over the Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation in West Virginia. On February 27, 2014, they issued a "new" RFP with an opening date of March 26, 2014. On March 20th DHHR issued an addendum which addressed a number of questions which were posed by the potential bidders. Some of the questions address the technical components of the RFP, while others address the actual service and transportation providers.

The addendum clarified that WV DHHR paid over \$20 million to "Friends and Family" at \$.47 per mile. If true, this would equate to over 42.5 million miles were provided by "Friends and

Family". DHHR only paid \$4.9 million to Medicaid enrolled NEMT and Behavioral Health providers who bill a higher reimbursement rate.

One of the other items in the addendum clarifies the reasoning of DHHR where the RFP calls for 100% of all NEMT Members receiving behavioral health services to be transported by a behavioral health transportation provider. "Behavioral health members have behavioral health needs that are typically better met by behavioral health centers."

Construction Update

Our construction project update consists of a few things on the punch list still pending. We are still working with Portco and Bob Summerfeldt on the ADA door control, completion and correction of the exterior caulk and some exterior concrete work. We have added the light to the flag pole and the downstairs men's bathroom floor is refinished and turned out great.

