

Resolution 14-45

JOB ACCESS REVERSE COMMUTE FUNDING

WHEREAS, Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC) was awarded Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funding through a State of Michigan competitive grant award program beginning in FY 2008.

WHEREAS, the JARC program was intended to pay for new transportation services designed to help low income people have access to employment.

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) solicited proposals from transit systems and selected the new transportation services it would fund under JARC.

WHEREAS, all the JARC funding received by BWATC, both Federal and State, came from the State of Michigan.

WHEREAS, total JARC funding for BWATC reached \$1.114 million in FY 2011 and remains at that level through FY 2015, which constitutes over 22% of BWATC's total budget for general public transportation.

WHEREAS, BWATC utilizes JARC funding to operate Extended Evening Service hours (e.g. Service until 11:00 p.m. on Monday-Thursday and 3:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday) as well as two Commuter Routes to Macomb County that connect with the SMART bus system.

WHEREAS, the JARC funded services increased access to transportation for people going to and returning from work.

WHEREAS, the Federal JARC program funding was eliminated under the MAP-21 transportation authorization bill that took effect in FY 2013.

WHEREAS, for FY 2013 and FY 2014, MDOT used funding from different sources to continue to fund BWATC's JARC program at 100%.

WHEREAS, for FY 2015, MDOT has agreed to used 100% State funding to fund BWATC's JARC program.

WHEREAS, for FY 2016 and beyond, MDOT has not agreed to use 100% State funding to continue the JARC program services and instead proposes to pay only 50% of the JARC program costs, which will reduced BWATC's total budget for general public transportation by over 11%.

WHEREAS, BWATC has acquired, operates, and maintains 76 CNG-powered buses, the largest CNG fleet in Michigan, which results in very high fixed costs to the point that substantial funding reductions by Federal and/or State governments requires a substantial reduction in public transportation services.

WHEREAS, if the Federal and State governments do not continue to fund JARC programs at 100%, BWATC will be forced to eliminate the Commuter Routes to Macomb County and reduce the Extended Service hours.

WHEREAS, BWATC's JARC services have been very successful and are a substantial reason for a 90% increase in BWATC's total ridership since 2008.

WHEREAS, BWATC's rider survey on the Commuter Routes determined that over 30 people were depending on the Commuter Routes to get to jobs.

WHEREAS, the increased ridership attributable to the JARC service has resulted in reduced vehicle emissions and improved air quality in the region.

WHEREAS, improved access to employment attributable to the JARC service has resulted in lower unemployment and reduced need for government assistance in the region.

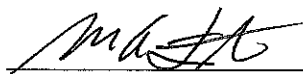
WHEREAS, because MDOT chose to have BWATC start such a large amount of new service, MDOT's elimination of half the funding will cause a dramatic hardship to our passengers and our community.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the St. Clair County Board of Commissioners does hereby request that our Federal representatives use all reasonable efforts to reinstate the previous Federal funding percentage for BWATC's JARC program.
2. That St. Clair County's state representatives ensure that BWATC's JARC program is funded with State funds at 100% until Federal funding is restored.

DATED: October 29, 2014

Reviewed and Approves as to Form by:



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ST. CLAIR COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

