

**THE COAST-WACCAMAW RTA  
BOARD MEETING**

**June 22, 2011**

**12:00 p.m.**

**Board Present:**

Katherine D'Angelo, Chair  
Ivory Wilson  
Bernard Silverman  
Dr. Nicholas Twigg  
Joseph Lazzara  
Glen O'Connell  
Wilbert G. "Mickey" James  
Dr. Covia Stanley

**Staff present:**

Myers Rollins, General Manager  
John Glover, Director of Transportation  
Services  
Julie Norton-Dew, Director of Finance  
Felicia Beaty, Director Human Resources &  
Organization Development  
Yvette Jefferson, Director of Marketing &  
Community Relations  
Lynette Nobles, Office Manager

**Also Present:**

Eugene Harriott  
Herman Elliott  
Phillip Herriott  
Franklin Tucker  
Joe Lance  
Gladys Tucker  
Cas Pyatt  
Albert Tucker  
Abraham McLean  
Yvonne Tucker Harris  
Matthew Holmes  
Isaac Smith  
Betty Benson  
Red Pye  
Charles Alston  
F. Washington

Pam Creech, President of Citizens Advisory  
Committee  
Gary Loftus, Horry County Council  
Gina Vasselli, The Sun News  
Samuel Pyatt  
Arthur Herriott  
Laura Tucker  
Helen Tucker Proctor  
Hattie Tucker  
Elizabeth Lance Thornton  
Calvin G. Waters, AAC  
Charles Pyatt  
A.X. Weathers  
Betty S. Firzie  
Irving Weathers  
Wilhemena Pyatt  
Rev. George J. Weathers

*In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), notices of the meeting were provided to the press stating the time, date, and place of the meeting on June 20, 2011.*

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson D'Angelo called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Dr. Stanley gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM/ROLL CALL:** Roll call was taken. A quorum was present.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VISITORS:** Chairperson D'Angelo welcomed all visitors.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Reverend George J. Weathers spoke on the matter of the Sandy Island Ferry, saying he is a native of Sandy Island and the chair of the Sandy Island Community Action Committee for 15 years, in addition to working for 40 years to improve Sandy Island. He said he hopes the Board will work with Mr. Rollins, and praised Mr. Rollins for a job well done. He additionally thanked the Board, and said he prays it will consider the condition and needs of the residents of Sandy Island, to work together despite critics.

Charles E. Pyatt spoke, saying he was the CEO of the Sandy Island Project Program. The goal is to have transportation for Sandy Island. Mr. Pyatt said he'd been present two years prior when the tragic drowning deaths occurred, and had pulled the little boy out of the water. He said he wants no more deaths, and will fight for the ferry.

W.H. "Bill" Murray spoke, saying he was born on Sandy Island, and has been involved in efforts to raise the funds necessary to move the ferry to South Carolina, having been informed that the project was in jeopardy because no funds were available to transport the vessel. He was contacted because he'd helped raise money for the funerals of the drowning victims. Mr. Murray said the Sandy Islanders thereafter joined to raise money for the ferry's transport, and that within 90 days, more than half of the necessary amount had been raised, with donors being promised the money would be used for the vessel's transit. He asked the Board to consider what Sandy Island residents did for themselves to get safe transportation. He noted that the issue had been put off for 44 years, and said people in wheelchairs had a difficult time traveling to and from their homes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** It was properly moved and seconded that the minutes from the previous meeting be approved. Dr. Stanley said he hadn't been properly recognized as commending Ms. Creech for her work, and asked that the minutes reflect that commendation. There being no further questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS:**

Ms. Nobles read the following resolutions into the record:

**JUN2011-23: Adoption of ADA Policy and Procedures** -- A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority to adopt a policy and procedures and service guidelines for the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the US Department of Transportation regulations for implementing ADA, and applicable South Carolina laws and regulations.

Mr. Rollins said this was to make sure Coast RTA was in compliance with all ADA requirements.

It was properly moved and seconded that Resolution JUN2011-23 be adopted. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried.

**JUN2011-24: Approval of Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority 2012 Budget --** A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority to adopt the 2012 Budget for the period July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 and authorizing the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer to manage the fiscal affairs of the Authority in accordance to the fiscal year 2012 operating budget amounts.

Mr. Rollins indicated that this marks the fifth year in a row of a balanced budget, and the first of dedicated funding.

It was properly moved and seconded that Resolution JUN2011-24 be adopted. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried.

**JUN2011-25: Authorization to Rescind Acceptance of Hokes Bluff Alabama Ferry Vessel --** A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority d/b/a Coast RTA authorizing the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer to rescind acceptance of the Hokes Bluff, Alabama ferry vessel.

Mr. Rollins said he and his staff have spent two years looking for a transportation solution to Sandy Island, and that he respects the residents there a great deal. However, when he was hired in 2004, he was directed to run the agency like a business. He therefore recommends disaffirming acceptance of the ferry, for these reasons: The vessel is 90 feet, with two 15 foot hydraulic lifts. It weighs 96,000 pounds, with a rated weight capacity of 40 tons. The distance it is to travel is only 9/10 of a mile and shallow, which means it may not be able to navigate. It will need retrofitting to accept passengers. Finally, it is not certified by the Coast Guard, which makes it a possible risk and waste of money.

Mr. Rollins acknowledged the fundraising efforts by those supporting Sandy Island, but said the ferry is not the best use of those funds if it cannot be made operational.

Mr. Rollins said that over two months, he has talked to experts, including the engineers of Etowah County. The vessel itself is free, but the associated costs include travel, approximately \$400,000 of infrastructure, the retrofitting, and whatever needs to be done to make it Coast Guard certified, if it can be. He therefore recommends notifying FHA and SCDOT to rescind Coast RTA's acceptance of the vessel.

Mr. Rollins indicated the issue of looking for ways to improve mobility to Sandy Island was not being abandoned.

Dr. Stanley asked if there was another ferry. Mr. Rollins recommended a re-evaluation period. He intends to notify Georgetown County administration and Council. There are two grants to support the effort. State officials said they can request to capitalize the vessel, if suitable. However, the door is closed on a car ferry at this time.

Mickey James said the Board empathizes with the safety priority for the residents of Sandy Island, but that he cannot vote to approve an unsafe vessel. He said he is sure Mr. Rollins will investigate.

Mr. Lazzara said he lives in Pawleys Island and has been on the Board for 2 years, and it is his opinion that this boat is not a good solution. He wants to work with Georgetown County to find a suitable boat.

It was properly moved and seconded that Resolution JUN2011-24 be adopted. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried.

**JUN2011-26: Authorization to Receive Annual Dedicated Funding from Horry County** -- A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority authorizing the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer to accept dedicated funds in the amount of \$1,055,000 from Horry County for mass public transportation improvements.

Mr. Rollins said this resolution marked the culmination of a long push to get dedicated funding, including a referendum asking citizens if transit was valuable and whether it should be supported. He noted that the referendum passed with 63% of the vote. He also pointed out that those funds can be leveraged, and thanked Horry County Council and the voting public.

Mr. Silverman thanked Gary Loftus and County Council, and said the money would be used to benefit the public.

Mr. James thanked Mr. Rollins, Ms. Jefferson, the staff, and the Board.

Chairwoman D'Angelo thanked the Citizens Advisory Committee for their work helping to achieve this goal.

Mr. Wilson thanked staff for their work on the referendum, and thanked Council.

Dr. Twigg thanked staff and Council, but asked for an explanation of the term "dedicated funding." Mr. Rollins said that starting in January, he won't have to spend all his time raising money. The County has put stipulations in place, but if those stipulations are met, the money can be anticipated annually.

Mr. James said Mr. Rollins would be free to do other things, and not have to beg for money.

Chairwoman D'Angelo said he would be free to go to those cities which haven't provided funding.

Dr. Stanley thanked Ms. Creech.

Dr. Twigg read the previous resolution requesting annual funding, and said he hadn't heard the words "reliable recurring funding source."

Pam Creech said the funds are not dedicated. Council provided the funding and asked for criteria. It was voted upon, not written in the Council minutes.

Mr. James asked Gary Loftus if Coast RTA was the only entity funded which had to provide reports.

Mr. Loftus indicated Coastal Carolina, the Accommodation Tax Commission, Humane Society, and EDC were examples of other entities required to provide reports to Council. Mr. Loftus also clarified that the funding was 3/10 of a mil and extra from the general fund. He said Council had been leaning to dedicating 3/10 mil, but was told by legal counsel that they could not. He suggested striking the verbiage "dedicated" funding, but indicated that if everything goes as expected, all should be well.

Chairwoman D'Angelo said she would pull the resolution until the wording could be clarified. Mr. Loftus recommended contacting Arrigo Carroti, County Attorney.

#### **CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

Pam Creech reported that the Board, staff, and Citizens Advisory Committee had all worked on the funding. Though it is not dedicated, it is good to get the amount budgeted, and performance requests indicate Council's intent to fund transit. She wants to see that Coast RTA does such a good job in each Council member's district that all Council members are glad to fund. Additionally, she wants to talk to more of the public, and with Coastal Carolina and other organizations to educate on the value of public transportation. The Citizens Advisory Committee will meet the second Tuesday of July at 10:00 a.m. The meeting is open to the public and all are welcome.

Mr. James said Ms. Creech demonstrated wisdom and intellect, and thanked her for bringing to the Board's attention that the funding was not dedicated.

**ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR:** Ms. D'Angelo said the vote would be taken at that time, in order to accommodate a Board member who had to leave. The election is for the Vice Chairmanship. Mr. Rollins reminded the Board that the Chair serves for a two year term, and then the Vice Chair moves into the Chair position. Therefore, the person selected will be chairman in two years. The Board members running for the position are Bernie Silverman and Mickey James.

The ballots were distributed. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to call Mr. Frazier in order to obtain his vote. After the voting period, the ballots were collected and given to Ms. Creech to count.

The vote resulted in a tie. As no one was able to reach Mr. Frazier. Chairwoman D'Angelo said the vote would have to be taken again the following meeting, and encouraged everyone to make sure they were in attendance.

#### **MONTHLY REPORTS:**

**Finance and Procurement:** Mr. Lazzara said the committee had met and discussed the financial reports. The reports have been reviewed and accepted. He said Ms. Norton-Dew was doing an excellent job. Ms. Norton-Dew said there had been a meeting with Myrtle Beach and Horry County regarding documentation needed for funding. Mr. Rollins said Myrtle Beach deferred its funding decision until Horry County's decision. Myrtle Beach builds the funding into their base funding as a "department" which provides information. Ms. Norton-Dew gave an overview of the budget provided to the Board. The budget will be posted in the internet until the next meeting for public input.

**Planning and Operations Committee:** Dr. Twigg said the committee had met and discussed the Sandy Island project. He deferred some of his report regarding updates to Mr. Rollins. Mr. Glover presented the new bus route to Market Common, which is on the 15 South Route, adding 4.5 miles and 15 minutes. Dr. Twigg asked the drive time from the transfer center. Mr. Glover indicated it was 26 minutes to the destination, and 21 minutes returning. Mr. Rollins indicated this provides access to Horry Georgetown Tech's campus in Market Common, as well as the VA clinic.

**Marketing Committee:** Mr. Silverman said the committee had met, and that Ms. Jefferson has many activities in the works. Ms. Jefferson said ridership had already passed 700,000. There will be a celebration on July 14, where those interested can attend the Pelicans game for \$5, and will be recognized. Riders have been educated through the efforts surrounding the referendum, and will continue to be so.

**By-Laws Committee:** Mr. Wilson said the committee had met, and that some changes may be necessary. The bylaws of other RTAs will be used for comparison; suggestions are deferred until the next meeting.

**General Manager:** (none)

**OLD BUSINESS** (none)

**NEW BUSINESS:** (none)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The Board applauded Ms. D'Angelo for her service.

Mr. Glover said the new service truck and bike rack were out front, if anyone wished to see them.

Chairwoman D'Angelo asked Mr. Loftus about his comments regarding changing the Board, noting that North Myrtle Beach and the City of Georgetown have indicated that they pay more in county taxes than in city taxes, and shouldn't have to fund the RTA.

Mr. Loftus said normally those who provide funding are those who have representation on a Board.

Chairwoman D'Angelo said Coastal Carolina provides \$500,000 and has no representation on the Board, as Dr. Twigg represents the Horry County Delegation. Why don't Aynor and Surfside have representatives? Mr. Loftus also recommended that no elected officials serve on the Board, saying it was a complete conflict of interest. He also suggested not only a limit to the number of years of a term, but a limit on the number of terms a member could serve.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

It was properly moved and seconded that the Board adjourn. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried. The Board adjourned at 1:30 P.M.