

**THE COAST RTA-WACCAMAW RTA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

MAY 27, 2015

9:00 AM

Board Present: Bernard Silverman, Chair
Joseph Lazzara, Vice Chair
Katharine D'Angelo
Chuck Ottwell
Lillie Jean Johnson
Ivory Wilson
Wilbur James
Robert Sheehan
Gary Loftus
Johnny Vaught

Staff Present: Brian Piascik, General Manager/CEO
Lynette Nobles, Executive Assistant/Board Liaison
Tom Arends, Material Control and IT
Michelle Cantey, Marketing & Communications Manager

Also Present: Darrell Eickoff
Scott Donahue, SCDOT
David Gray, SCDOT
Nicholas Twigg, concerned citizen
Jason Rodriguez, The Sun News

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the 2014 meeting schedule was provided to the press at the beginning of the 2015 calendar year, stating the date, time and location. In addition, notice of this meeting was provided to the press, stating the date, time, and place on Monday, May 25, 2015.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Silverman called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and welcomed everyone.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. James gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS: Mr. Silverman welcomed Mr. Eickoff, Mr. Rodriguez, Mr. Donahue, and Mr. Gray.

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PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: There was a motion and a second to approve the minutes from the April meeting and the May 8th special called meeting. A voice vote was taken, with no nays, the minutes were approved.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: Mr. Piascik expressed how proud he is of the staff, given the resources and uncertainty of leadership in the past year and a half, that they are doing a pretty good job. Even though there's no one particular employee, he wanted to recognize staff for doing a pretty good job. Mr. Silverman added that he has spoken with some staff and they are thrilled that Mr. Piascik is here, they're glad to work with him, they see a new light coming into Coast.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Piascik began with a slide presentation. He shared with the board that he is not comfortable releasing financial information until he has a better handle on how things are. He will be discussing the FY2015 budget revision and the FY2016 budget later in his report.

Mr. Piascik began by saying that in his eleven (11) days here, he's met with each board member, individually. One of his observations is that funding is based on population of 300K when in the summer season, the population is 600-800K. In essence, the system is under-funded due to that issue; which we need to think about when we begin discussing dedicated funding. Even though we don't have many tourists riding our buses, we need to think about designing services for them so that we can get their help in paying for the system. If we are able to expand our services, based on serving those individuals, that we'll, inherently, improve services for the permanent residents. Moving forward, that's something we need to keep in the back of our minds.

Mr. Piascik continued by saying that the system is struggling to be everything to everybody. The service area is very linear in nature. Mr. Piascik added that he is not sure that the system is reaching some of the rural areas it should be reaching, given the rural funds coming to this agency. He will be looking for more peer analysis, in areas of density of service (how many buses do those other services put out on the street), the nature of their service areas (other coastal areas), how they're funded, and/or from a staffing perspective (are we top heavy compared to those systems).

Another of Mr. Piascik's observations is that Coast RTA is suffering from a poor public image. He shared that part of his job is to improve that image. Transparency and providing more reliable service are key to improving the public image. Mr. Piascik stated that he feels we need to provide more reliable service before we consider expansion.

Mr. Piascik expressed his gratitude for the board members meeting with him, in the office, and in some cases, in the board member's home or other location, to discuss their concerns. He went on to say that everyone present at the table really cares about the system and we need to focus on that when we're conducting our business here. We care about the system and we all want to make it better. The meetings also gave Mr. Piascik a better understanding of who each board member represents and everyone shared the names of individuals he should contact. He's trying to get around and talk with people. In addition to the board member interviews, Mr. Piascik had a very positive meeting with John

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Peterson and Jack Walker (City of Myrtle Beach); met with Mark Hoeweler (WRCOG); Johnny Morant and Sel Hemingway (Georgetown County); gave an interview with The Sun News; and had dinner with the South Carolina general managers at their transit association board meeting. Mr. Piascik will be meeting with Diana Seydlorsky (Horry County) on Friday. He has been in contact with Mark Lazarus (Chairman, Horry County Council) and they will be meeting in the next couple of weeks. He has been exchanging phone messages with Doug Frate (SCDOT); will be attending a Georgetown Chamber event next week; is meeting with Tom Keegan (Tom Rice's office) next week to talk about the TIGER grant. The Conway and North Myrtle Beach Chambers are on the schedule, as is Brad Dean (Myrtle Beach Chamber).

Dr. Sheehan asked for the attributes which would be considered in the agency selection for the peer review, to which Mr. Piascik replied that a scientific approach will be taken in the selection.

During his meeting with each board member, Mr. Piascik gave them a list of nine (9) items and asked that the board member rate the items in order of importance. After their conversation, he asked them to, again, rate the items in order of importance. Some made changes and some did not. Mr. Piascik had rated the items himself, and shared a slide showing the comparison.

Regarding one of those nine (9) items, reparations with the County, Mr. Piascik shared that his desire is to have them trust us with their money, as does the board. Staffing issues seemed to be of concern; however, Mr. Piascik said that he hopes you (the board) feel that he has a good handle on that, and as we move forward with the peer review, we'll see how other systems are staffed and how they divide the functions.

Mr. Piascik then moved to maintenance, saying that they are doing a pretty good job; we're up to 23 buses that are up and running. The question was asked, how many buses are needed to run summer service, to which he replied that he wants about 17. It takes about 12 or 13 at the peak, but you want 17 that you can depend on because you don't want them running all day. Mr. James then asked about not being able to raise the buses in order to perform maintenance. Mr. Piascik stated that we can raise one bus at a time outside on the pad; however, all of the operational savings associated with moving our maintenance facility somewhere to the east, the biggest concern with our current maintenance facility is that we have safety issues. Mr. Loftus asked if our California guru is still here and if he's worth anything, to which Mr. Piascik replied, "Absolutely". Halsey is really accomplishing three (3) things for us. We've got standard procedures for each type of vehicle now, which is huge in terms of making sure the mechanics are performing the PM's (Preventive Maintenance) correctly and on time; he's going to help me identify and get some contacts for identifying new, or new used equipment; and the biggest thing is that we have six (6) vehicles on which we need to pursue the "lemon law", and actually get the money back for them. Ms. D'Angelo asked what's meant by "lemon law". Mr. Piascik explained that these were not well-constructed vehicles. Further, if Halsey is able to get us half of the money back, it will have paid for his contract. He's already working on the documentation to go the National Traffic Safety Board. Mr. Loftus asked if we've considered pits as opposed to lifts. Mr. Piascik answered that he's not sure there are any improvements to that pit that would make it more useable. Mr. Piascik said that he will find out more; however, Halsey advised that we fill that pit with concrete. He will ask Halsey about using ramps to raise the bus enough that the mechanic could get under it to work.

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Mr. Silverman shared that when Halsey was here conducting the FTA Triennial, he said that the pit is 1950's and he had not seen one in many years. Most importantly, he told us that should we have a serious accident, or any accident, with our paperwork and our maintenance protocol, we would not be able to defend ourselves in a liability suit; that's what we needed to change. Mr. Silverman then asked if he (Halsey) is working on that. Mr. Piascik confirmed that he is. Dr. Sheehan asked if there was an announcement out regarding the maintenance manager position. Mr. Piascik shared that we have gotten 6 resumes, 4 of which Pam (HR Manager) says are worth looking at. They will be meeting the first of next week to review those resumes. Mr. Vaught asked if there's any precedence on the buses being specified as lemons. Mr. Piascik answered that there are none of which he is aware; they're the Arbocs and the Internationals. The issue is not really any one component, the issue is that they have combined, they've put a chassis together and then they've got aftermarket systems they're putting on top of it and it's just not working well together. These are 2011, 2012's. Mr. Ottwell asked if Halsey is aware of the problem, to which Mr. Piascik replied that he is; he's been through this process before, but I'm not sure if it was this particular kind of vehicle. Additionally, on the list of nine (9) items, each of you had the opportunity to add to that list and two board members each added one item. Those items added were safety (Mr. Silverman), and improving our public image (Mickey James).

Mr. Piascik shared that he had hoped to have a FY15 budget revision but we haven't gotten there yet. We're going to be converting some federal funds from 50/50 match to 80/20 match. He requested that the finance committee meet as soon as possible. Regarding the FY16 budget, Mr. Piascik has been able to review it and will be revising some of the assumptions as to funding levels. Mr. Piascik reported that he has met with Georgetown County and we have the \$220,000 in funding from them. There is a need for one-time capital expenditures; and Georgetown County agreed to provide additional funding should they have money left over at the conclusion of a project or if any money should become available. The budget also includes only 2/3 of our allocation for federal funds, as FTA has not released the final 1/3 for FY15 allocations; they should do so before July 1. They're behind on that, but they may be waiting for congress to pass a transportation bill. Mr. Ottwell asked if Mr. Piascik will be using the same format as in the past, to which he replied, "Probably not." He feels we should be looking at more of a 3-4 year outlook. We have a lot more flexibility regarding when we actually use the federal dollars; you have 3 years, plus the year the funds are allocated, in which to use them. For example, for a capital purchase, we can use FTA funds from FY14 (part of the FY15 budget) and funds from FY15 (part of the FY16 budget), pooled together to have a stronger plan. Mr. Piascik asked Mr. Ottwell to what formatting changes he was referring. Mr. Ottwell said that he assumes we will be using the same software (Sage), which, in his opinion, is very antiquated. He would like to see input from the department managers and not use strictly a 12-month period, rather use a 13-month period. Mr. Piascik said that he would like to have that discussion with Mike (Levitan, the temporary part-time employee who will be assisting in the role of CFO for four (4) months.) Dr. Sheehan expressed that he would like to see any compensation adjustments delayed until the first of the year, instead of July 1st, as in the past. There was discussion regarding posting the FY16 budget for public comment, as to whether it should be before or after the board has approved it. There was a question as to cutting services in Georgetown. Mr. Piascik shared that he has ridden then Georgetown route and is amazed that those people get to work at 8:30 AM and have to be back on the bus at 3:30 PM to go back home. He feels we need to have a bus leaving Myrtle Beach later in the day, year round.

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Mr. Silverman asked about the separation of duties issue. Mr. Piascik answered that he is hiring Mike Levitan as a contract employee, having signatory authority, and one of his duties will be to assist in finding a permanent CFO. He wants the CFO on board prior to the FMO (Financial Management Overview) in August.

The other topic Mr. Piascik wished to discuss is the TIGER grant application he's working on, which has a \$12.5 million threshold for project size, which presents some issues. This would be looking at a new maintenance facility, fifteen (15) vehicles, and has spoken with the City of Myrtle Beach about moving the existing transfer center from 10th Avenue to another parcel over by the old train station. While it won't be a permanent home, it would get them off the street and is something that we want to pursue. He has had conversations with both the City of Myrtle Beach and GSATS about the TIGER grant application and the city did say that they will give us a support letter stating that they will help identify a city-owned parcel for the maintenance facility. We would be able to use that parcel as a local match. We'll be doing more research as to the land value; I have \$400,000 in there but it could be closer to \$1 million, as the value of land is all over the place. Mr. Ottwell asked if Mr. Piascik is aware of an engineering study...Mr. Piascik said that's his next bullet. He has spoken with GSATS about that and both the City and MPO are chomping at the bit to get that study going again. That's also good for the application, as it presents a plan that we are working toward what this thing is going to look like, how big it needs to be, getting a lot more details generated about what the project is. The nice thing about how this application is set up is that it's modular in nature. Almost none of these applications get fully funded; so, the goal here is to get \$6 million of the \$12.5 million, and we get at least one (1) piece of it, which makes it a lot easier to deal with the local match issue. Ms. D'Angelo asked what type of facility Mr. Piascik is considering, as in the past it was discussed as wanting a world-class facility, and we're just not world class. Mr. Piascik expressed that we want a facility that we can expand someday and that a \$6 million facility is more than we would need. Further, he would like to have some of the benefits for a LEED-certified building, just because there are benefits associated with cost of that type of facility. Mr. Ottwell shared that with the intermodal center, we were looking at having Greyhound and public sector included. Mr. Piascik said that the study is actually looking at three (3) functions; a transfer center, admin building, and maintenance facility. According to Jack Walker, the committee was moving away from having those all co-located. You're not going to want to put a maintenance facility somewhere where you're going to have an ideal transfer center. It would be better to put the admin offices with the maintenance facility because if you're going to have any office space at the transfer center, you're going to want to lease that out and make some money. That study is going to be looking at both locations, both the transfer center and the maintenance facility. It'll give us a lot of detail, as far as the maintenance facility piece of it, which is the primary one he would like to get funded. Mr. James said that he thought the TIGER grant was no longer in existence. Mr. Piascik said that there's this round on June 5th and possibly one more round under the Obama administration. Mr. Piascik shared that he has a meeting with Tom Rice's staff on Monday to get their buy-in on the project.

Mr. Piascik said that he will be sending a new organizational chart out to the board after he has gotten staff input. He will be meeting with Mr. Lazarus in the next week or so to discuss what he would like to include in the FY16 funding agreement. Further, streamlining board meetings is high on everyone's list; he suggested using the By-Laws Committee to start thinking about that. We need to reconstitute the committee structure; start using the committees for discussions and talking about issues; then use the

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board meetings to take their recommendations to the full board, getting out of the meetings in a reasonable amount of time. Mr. Piascik will bring recommendations to the board on how he believes the committees should be structured, what their duties will be. There was a committee for dedicated funding; that might be something we resurrect, maybe not right away, but soon to at least start those discussions. We have a lot of conversations with the business community and other folks about how we might go about doing that. Having the board members as a sounding board to discuss options would be good. Mr. Piascik would like to get an on-board survey done sometime in August and has spoken with Dr. Sheehan and Professor Twigg about having CCU do that, which may be tough in the summer. He wants to do both counts and rider (origin and destination) surveys, which will give him information to take back to the county and cities as to how we're doing and our effectiveness of our system. Dr. Sheehan would like to see a plan in place to get information, by route and by stop, on cell phones; a public information program component to marketing. Mr. Piascik agreed that rather than focusing on marketing, that we do work on a public information program. Mr. Lazzara mentioned that we need to get bus signs out. Mr. Piascik said that he was glad that Mr. Lazzara had brought that up as we want to eliminate flag stops, eventually. At the outset, the public information would be in the form of a text, for which riders could sign up. Mr. Piascik then called attention to one item on the list, getting rid of buses before the next board meeting. He then shared that he had asked staff to rank the same nine (9) items and their top five (5) were the same as the board's top five (5), which is good. Staff, in their view, has a heightened need for training, to which a cost-effective approach will be applied. Mr. James suggested that we bring trainers in rather than sending staff to training. Mr. Piascik said that along those same lines, use of webinars is huge and pooling our resources with other transit agencies in the state. We still have to figure out what we need and move forward on that.

The next item is restarting the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC). It's incredibly important to have that committee active. Moving forward, he would like to include riders, as well as the business community. The CAC will be assigned to Ericka to run and manage. More information will be forthcoming. Mr. James suggested advertising for volunteers for the CAC.

Over the course of the next year, eliminating flag stops is huge from a safety, as well as a schedule-adherence, perspective. We'll be taking a low-key approach on this. Michelle will be going out and establish actual stops on each of the routes. Then, the drivers will begin training riders that we need them to access the system at these locations.

We have some emergency management responsibilities and it may be important that everyone at this agency have a CDL, in case they have to take a bus and go pick up people for evacuation.

Mr. Silverman thanked Mr. Piascik for a very complete report and that he is pleased to see a plan, which is something we've been missing. Mr. Vaught commented that he has never seen anyone hit the ground running as hard as Mr. Piascik has. Mr. James asked that should an accident/incident occur, Mr. Piascik notify the board.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS:

Ms. Nobles read the following resolutions into the record.

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**WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. MAY2015-22**

**AUTHORIZED SIGNERS ON WACCAMAW REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY'S ACCOUNT AT THE CONWAY NATIONAL
BANK**

A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority authorizing the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer to submit a Corporate Authorization Resolution to The Conway National Bank to list the following: Brian Piascik, Ivory Wilson, John Glover, and Lynette Nobles as authorized signers on the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority's account.

There was a motion and a second to accept the resolution. Mr. Silverman asked if more than one (1) signature is needed. Ms. Nobles replied that we require two (2) signatures on each check. Mr. Loftus asked if it's two (2) real signatures, not a stamp. Ms. Nobles replied that it's real signatures, we have no signature stamps. It was mentioned that we may have to add Mike Levitan as a signer; however, Ms. Nobles said that due to separation of duties, the CFO has never been a check signer. A voice vote was taken, no nays being heard, the resolution passed.

**WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. MAY2015-23**

**APPLICATION FOR THE TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT GENERATING
ECONOMIC RECOVERY, OR TIGER DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAM**

A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority authorizing the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer to apply to the Federal Transit Administration for TIGER Grant (The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, for DTOS59-15-RA-TIGER7, TIGER Discretionary Grant program, .

There was a motion and a second to accept the resolution. Dr. Sheehan asked if we could change to a consent agenda so that items could be reviewed in advance by the board. There was a discussion as to whether or not to read the resolutions aloud. We will look into this.

Mr. Loftus expressed that was some concern that three of the last four chairs have come from governmental entities that do not contribute to Coast RTA, which has caused some angst among some (members of county council). Mr. Loftus made a motion to suspend the rules (by-laws). The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaught. Mr. Wilson asked why you would want to suspend the by-laws. Ms. D'Angelo, Chair of the By-Laws Committee, explained that he does not want the present vice chair to go into chair; he wants to put someone else in place, preferably someone who donates money to the cause. Mr. Loftus stated that the by-laws are a little confusing in that the first part of the by-laws don't

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match Article VIII. Mr. Vaught stated that Article VIII talks about the board officers and their duties and at one point talks about the vice-chair and so forth, and then talks about the vice- chair and the chair may be removed by a 2/3 vote. Then you go over to section VII, it's no longer the vice-chair now, it becomes the vice-chair elect. Ms. D'Angelo then asked don't you usually take someone out of office because they have done something detrimental? Mr. Vaught responded, "Not according to our by-laws." Ms. D'Angelo said that according to the by-laws, it doesn't say anything about it. Mr. Vaught then referred to section IV, removal of the chair or vice-chair, may be removed by a 2/3 vote of the directors when the best interest of the Authority would be served, thereby. Ms. D'Angelo clarified by stating, "The person who is going in to be chair now, you want removed, that's what you're saying." Mr. Vaught responded, "Yes." Ms. D'Angelo said you may as well take a vote on it. Mr. Silverman reiterated that there is a motion on the floor to suspend the by-laws and asked if there was any more discussion on the motion to suspend the bylaws. A voice vote and a vote by show of hands were taken; with 5 Yea's and 5 Nays, the motion failed. Mr. Silverman then called for nominations for vice-chair. Mr. Vaught nominated Dr. Sheehan; Mr. Loftus seconded the motion. Mr. Loftus made a motion to close the nominations for vice-chair and to elect Dr. Sheehan as vice-chair. A voice vote was taken, no nays being heard, the motion passed. Mr. Silverman congratulated Dr. Sheehan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Silverman announced that there is a budget meeting (Horry County) this afternoon and he was going to try to get there.

Dr. Sheehan had a question; at the last meeting he thought that staff had assured the board that all drivers would be available to handle the summer extension and all the buses that were needed would be brought back into service. Now with the revised date, do we have staff assurance that we will be able to move to that expanded service? Mr. Piascik responded, "Yes, ideally we would like to get four (4) more drivers, but where we're staffed at this point, we might run a little extra overtime so we can run it." Dr. Sheehan then expressed that he thought we needed eight (8) buses. Mr. Piascik responded, "We're at 23 up and we need 17." Dr. Sheehan then said, "At the end of the day, its stuff like that that's probably what we're really about; and I am just echoing something Bernie had said, that, at the end of the day what we are about is service."

Mr. Loftus asked why members of the board have to sign resolutions, other than we've always done it that way. Ms. Nobles replied that she will try to find the purpose for doing so.

Dr. Sheehan asked if the spreadsheet showing all of the vehicles is in the notebook. Mr. Piascik said that it is in the notebook, but is not formatted as he would like.

ADJOURNMENT: It was properly moved and seconded that the Board adjourn. A voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the Board was adjourned at 10:35 AM.

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