



**WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
d/b/a THE COAST RTA
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, September 30, 2020
4:00 PM**

Board Present: Darrell Eickhoff
Dr. Marvin Keene
Joseph Lazzara
Katharine D'Angelo
Lillie Jean Johnson
Bernard Silverman
Dr. Rob Sheehan
Greg James
Randall Wallace
Heather Edwards

Staff Present: Brian Piascik, General Manager/CEO
Ron Prater, Chief Financial Officer
Lynette Nobles, Board Liaison
Lauren Morris, PIO
Pamela Bellamy, Human Resource Manager
Kevin Parks, Procurement/ Grants

Visitors: None

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the 2020 meeting schedule was provided to the press at the beginning of the 2020 calendar year, stating the date, time and location. In addition, notice of this meeting was provided to the press and stakeholders, stating the date, time, and location on August 21, 2020.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Eickhoff called the meeting to order at 4PM and welcomed everyone.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. Eickhoff gave the invocation with a moment of silence for the Coast RTA Founder, Mr. Ivory Wilson, and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL/ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM: Roll call was taken. A quorum was present. The Board Chairman and Past Board Chairman asked that those absent from board meetings be

recognized as “Excused”, only if that board member informs the Board Liaison, in advance, that they are unable to attend. Board members who do not attend the meeting and do not inform the Board Liaison that they will be absent will be recognized as “Absent”.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – There was a motion by Mr. Lazzara and a second by Mr. Sheehan that the agenda be approved. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard the agenda was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – There was a motion by Mr. Sheehan and a second by Mr. Lazzara to approve the June minutes. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard, the motion passed unanimously.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: Mr. Piascik announced that Mrs. Lynette Nobles would be leaving and her last day is August 31, 2020. She has done an outstanding job over the years and she will truly be missed.

CHAIRMAN’S CORNER:

- Chairman Eickhoff- made two brief comments. The master project list which Mr. Piascik is going to show later in the managers’ report session overview. We’re getting most of Category A done. This is the time when we need to look at that some of the Category B’s need to be moved up.
- If looked at a month ago, I would have identified another platform for us to have these virtual GotoMeetings. Mr. Piascik explained that staff is looking into the issue. Staff has not determined the cause of the audio issues, but believe that it is not our software’s (GotoMeeting) fault and more of a hardware issue.
- Mr. Piascik then talked briefly about the project listing. The one on the list that doesn’t have any real update is #2 on the list, stop annunciation. We need to figure out what we’re doing and I blame COVID 19 a little bit. Annunciation will be something to which we will start paying a little more attention. We have a lot of information about what’s going on with the facility project. The succession plan will be completed today with the bylaws change. Mr. Eickhoff wants to add virtual meetings to the list. #6 is completed. Mr. Eickhoff suggest that when something is completed put a completion date so that is can be recorded. Mr. Piascik states that there have been some reported issues with the push-to-talk radios that the drivers use. We went from 3G to 4G and the system has lost some reliability, but we think we have a handle on it. Mr. Piascik

also discussed the Ride Guide for the North Myrtle Beach route. New production for the ride guide will happen in October. Advertisement will be in place for the new North Myrtle Beach route.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Dr. Keene led the discussion about the proceedings during two Finance Committee meetings. He mentioned the large overage in Operations-Overtime expense because of the shortage of drivers and additional COVID pay. Mr. Piascik agreed that Coast RTA is seeing large overtime numbers, but mentioned that they kind of balance off with the underage in the regular wages. The biggest thing is that the underage in transit, salaries and benefits, is bigger than the overage overtime. ***NOTE:** The revised financials were being shown on the screen during the meeting.* So between the two we're on budget. \$101,000 under budget for expenses overall. We have averaged \$24,000 per month in overtime but it should come down, as we added in 10 new drivers on transit and 3 or 4 drivers for paratransit. Some adjustments have been made between wages for those who have waged and the COVID pay has dropped from \$5 to \$4 per hour. Waged employees received a \$1 raise, which is essentially the cost of living portion they would have received in October. The salary employees did not have any changes in wages, which will be taken care of in October. The Balance Sheet was discussed. An operating and maintenance reserve is now shown \$500,000 in a money market account at CNB. It will be transferred over to the state investment pool soon but we have generated \$21 in interest so far. There is a running balance last week of \$750,000 and a little over \$200,000 coming in from the state through for July expenses.

Finance Committee had also discussed the 6-yr Financial Plan. Mr. Piascik mentioned that the Georgetown County contribution had been corrected. The year-end remaining balances got healthier with the change. The Plan now includes about \$700,000 in increase operating cost to cover route expansion. One major assumption in the Plan is the increase in farebox recovery in year three. We are assuming the increase in fares is a result of increased service and a new fare structure resulting from a Fare Analysis, a plan to look at our fare structure and a technology assessment to replace the farebox equipment. In FY23, we begin assuming a farebox return based on 12.5% of our operating cost. The Plan is designed to sustain the increased service levels through FY 26, but there enough horsepower to possibly get to 2028. The Board will be asked to approve the Financial Plan in today's resolutions.

The Finance Committee then talked about the FY 21 Budget, which is also being put before the Board for approval in the resolutions. Mr. Piascik spent a little time talking about the FY 21 Budget in general terms. The Budget is based on past experience but has been thrown into a little uncertainty related to the additional expenses and impacts to service related to COVID-19. Our ridership is about 60% of what we normally expected so a farebox recovery will not even reach the new budgeted level of \$300,000 in FY 20. Six new vehicles will be entering into the fleet so maintenance expense is expected to decrease even though we more miles in our service plan.

We have added 20,000 more hours for fixed route and 7-8,000 more for paratransit. Also a fifth supervisor was added in the budget.

SERVICE/PAC COMMITTEE: Ms. Johnson reviewed the proceedings from Service/PAC Committee. Coast RTA ridership and fare revenue is down about 50-60%. Fares were reinstituted on 7/20. Revenue for boarding are hovering around 90 cents per boarding. Normally, the influx of free trips on the Entertainment Shuttle lowers the per boarding rate. Because of COVID, the ridership for the Entertainment Shuttle is significantly lower this year. Last July, we had over 70,000 in total ridership for the month compared to this year with only 35,000. Paratransit numbers are down 13%. Summer months' paratransit are typically down due to no university work. The Georgetown Express is down due to the hospitality workers not working.

The Committee then discussed the alignment of new Route 17. Staff then described the outreach process. Discussions with Star Tech and McLeod have been very positive. Obviously, folks in North Myrtle Beach are excited. We have been working with the NMB Chamber and will be doing a public input meeting on Zoom hosted by the Chamber.

Mrs. Edwards asked about implementing stops across International near The Arms and The Grove. Mr. Piascik responded that it was good idea and asked that Ms. Edwards respond to the online survey and encourage her neighbors to do so as well. This time around there was not enough time in the route but maybe those stops can be added in the future.

Ms. Johnson inquired about the Georgetown Transfer Center in Category C listed as this should be moved up to #7. It is part of the new facility plan. Ms. Johnson also wanted to know if there is a delivery date on the new 6 buses and will the virus effect delivery. Four of the busses will go into production at the end of October and be delivered sometime in December. No delay at this time. The other two are waiting on the contract from the State.

Mrs. D'Angelo asked about the ending for the Entertainment Shuttle. The last day for the entertainment shuttle was on September 7, 2020, which was Labor Day. She also would like to see service go on Hwy 9 to service Seacoast Hospital.

Mr. Keene asked about the COVID pay and is it still active and when will it end. Mr. Piascik responded that it was still active and at this point, didn't precisely know when it is going to end.

The Service/PAC also received an update on the Facility Development updates Mr. Piascik briefed the Board on the most recent products from the consultant on the project, including the Area of Opportunity assessment and the Facility Programming document. The consultant identified potential area for optimized base of operations/maintenance based on where buses are going into service, how many buses at each location, drive time to these locations and where the employees live. Also taken into consideration were the hurricane evacuation zones and

making the facility hurricane-proof. The Team will try to find 10-12 sites and run them through an evaluation screening that will include order of magnitude cost, size and shape, impact on operations, ease of acquisition, access and environmental consideration. With all those things being considered, they can then pare down to three sites. The Programming document outlines the functional needs for the new building and estimates the size of parcel needed for the current operation plus two levels of potential growth. The idea property size between 6 to 8 acres. The architect's assessment of how much we need has gotten a little smaller but, it's dependent on whether or not we go with a single or two story building.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Piascik reported:

- The state Transit Association received some news out of Columbia as it relates to the lawsuit against Richland County and the use of sales tax for transit operations. The Department of Revenue released their opinion of how Richland County is using sales tax. The only thing that transit system should be used for is essentially capital expenses. The will be updated as things progress.
- Coast RTA will be changing payroll providers. It was an agreement to disagree type situation with Stroviss, but bottom line, there were too many discrepancies between actual pay and timesheets. Stroviss will receive a 30-day notice once we have reasonable comfort that new service is ready. The down side is that everyone would have to be train on the new time clocks.
- Mr. Piascik announced that Mrs. Lynette Nobles last day would be August 31, 2020. She will be truly missed.

RESOLUTIONS:

- **WRTA Resolution August2020-11** - Authorization to file FY21 53 11 grant application with the SCDOT.

Motion by Mr. Wallace and a second by Mr. Lazzara to approve the resolution. A vote was taken; no nays being heard. Resolution passed unanimously.

- **WRTA Resolution August2020-12** - Approval of FY20 budget.

Motion by Mr. Lazzara and a second by Mr. Wallace to approve the resolution. A vote was taken; no nays being heard. Resolution passed unanimously.

- **WRTA Resolution August2020-13** - Adoption of the WRTA FY 21-26 Financial Plan.

Motion by Mr. Lazzara and a second by Mr. Wallace to approve the resolution. A vote was taken; no nays being heard. Resolution passed unanimously.

➤ **WRTA Resolution August2020-13** - Adoption of the updated Bylaws.

Motion by Mr. Lazzara and a second by Mr. Wallace to approve the resolution. A vote was taken; no nays being heard. Resolution passed unanimously.

Mr. Silverman made motion to allow Mr. Eickhoff, Board Chairman, to sign these for all not present. Motion was seconded by Kitty D'Angelo.

Motion by Mr. Lazzara and a second by Mr. Wallace to approve the resolution. A vote was taken; no nays being heard. Resolution passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT:

There was a motion by Mr. Lazzara and a second by Dr. Wallace to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard the meeting was adjourned at 6:06pm.