



**WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
d/b/a THE COAST RTA  
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, February 24, 2022  
12:00 PM**

**Board Present:** Darrell Eickhoff  
Marvin Keene  
Bernard Silverman  
Rob Sheehan  
Randall Wallace  
Katharine D'Angelo  
Joe Lazzara  
Greg James

**Staff Present:** Brian Piascik, General Manager/CEO  
Ron Prater, Chief Financial Officer  
Lauren Morris, PIO

**Visitors:** Robert Pawlowski

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the 2021 meeting schedule was provided to the press at the beginning of the 2021 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 December 4, 2021.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Keene called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM and welcomed everyone.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Dr. Keene gave the invocation, 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. Eickhoff and a second by Ms. D’Angelo that the agenda be approved. The agenda was amended by the Board where a resolution was added to the agenda. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard the agenda was approved unanimously.

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

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:** Mr. Pawlowski made comments regarding some of the items that came up in the most recent Service/PAC, including service issues related increased ridership in the summertime, driver shortage/recruiting inland, and recovery from the pandemic.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Mr. Silverman summarized the proceedings from the February Finance Committee including the need for a budget revision due to expenses in facility maintenance, use of COVID funding and outlining expenditures for the Board, and improvements in system ridership which indicate a recovery to pre-pandemic numbers.

Mr. Silverman also told the Board that the Finance Committee also received an update on fare collection and the intended use of a procurement in California, where Coast RTA can select from a menu of potential vendors to address front-end software, validating hardware and the backend banking. The Committee also discussed the latest preferred site (Grissom Pkwy) for the new Maintenance Facility, split operations, potential short and long range local funding sources and the possibility of hiring a planner to support Mr. Piascik.

Mr. Piascik discussed other factors that are pushing the Authority toward a budget revision, including: the need for another wage step increase; increase in expense due to split operations; fuel costs increases; and, changes in revenues for federal, state and local grants. The budget revision will incorporate a sizeable increase, and we need a better understanding of where local funding stands for FY 23. SCDOT is also an unknown but should become clearer soon, since they have about \$34M statewide to be distributed. The ARPA funds from the County are still in place and could help subsidize operations by using them for the fare collection data plan, for instance.

Dr. Keene asked about how driver pay rates would change with the step in increase. Mr. Piascik responded that entry level would go from \$16/hour to as high as \$17/hour, but as stated in the Compensation Plan, the Authority’s goal is to move toward an average wage that allows someone to earn a decent retirement while working at Coast RTA.

**SERVICE/PAC COMMITTEE:** Ms. D’Angelo summarized the proceedings at the most recent Service/PAC meeting held in February. The leased lot across Powell St. will no longer be available as of April 1, as a result Coast RTA will be splitting operations by moving maintenance functions

to a leased facility off of US 501 Business about 3 miles away. North Myrtle Beach is eager to implement an entertainment shuttle when possible, and Mr. Piascik is examining potential methods for being able to provide the service, including the acquisition of vehicles. The Committee discussed service issues on Routes 14, 15S Ext. and 16 and received an update on the Sunshine Service initiative. The Committee was given an update on the status fleet.

Mr. Piascik updated the Board on where we stand with each of the Authority's funders, including the strategy for each as we go through their respective budget processes.

Dr. Sheehan reminded the Board that the reason for hiring a planner was to free up Brian to work on advocacy for funding outside of the office.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES** – No Reports from the Ad Hoc Committees. Ms. D'Angelo asked if any changes were needed to the Bylaws. Mr. Eickhoff asked about how the Bylaws address committees, most notably Ad-Hoc committees are addressed. Mr. Piascik recommended a meeting of the Bylaws Committee to conduct a review of the Bylaws. He could not mention anything specific, but raised the potential of a new funding source may require a re-consummation of the RTA, which in turn may elicit changes to the Bylaws.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Dr. Keene informed the Board about his efforts to reach out to Board members about serving on the Ad Hoc Committee for Funding. Mr. Piascik let the Board know that he would reach out as well, and that he was waiting on some more legal information before convening the Ad Hoc Committee.

Mr. Piascik let the Board know that renewal letters for Board Member terms were prepared and sent out to their respective appointing organizations.

**NEW BUSINESS:** No new business was discussed.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:** Mr. Piascik informed the Board that he would be attending the TASC Annual Conference March 3-6<sup>th</sup>. There will be a meeting to discuss ramping up the Association's lobbying efforts, to include budgeting, impact on dues and framing the efforts needed to get transit into legislative discussions.

Mr. Piascik talked about his conversations at the MB Chamber Legislative Reception where he spoke with a number of the local delegates about Road Use Fee, alternative transit funding and TASC agenda items. He spoke with the Lt. Governor to try and resurrect her efforts to increase the conversation about transit among Chambers. Ms. D'Angelo asked about TASC hiring a lobbyist and Mr. Piascik said that the Association will be hiring one. Mr. Piascik informed the Board the FTA has added a new rule to force joint procurements for any small bus buys, and that

TASC would be meeting with SC Material Management to put together a statewide bid for large buses.

The Board discussed Mr. Piascik's continued conversation with Lt. Governor related to how we might leverage that into more regional discussion about transit. Ms. Morris added that there is a new director of the Downtown (MB) Development Alliance who is a transit supporter and may be a key person to help us.

Mr. Lazzara asked about vanpool. Mr. Piascik said that it was still on the table and Coast RTA was working with PDRTA on a joint procurement.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**Motion:** A motion by Mr. Eickhoff, seconded by Dr. Sheehan to go into executive session, was approved unanimously.

**Motion:** A motion by Ms. D'Angelo, seconded by Mr. Silverman to come out of executive session where no votes were taken and no decisions were made, was approved unanimously.

**For the Good of the Order:** The Board scheduled the March meetings for March 24<sup>th</sup> for committees and March 31<sup>st</sup> for the full Board Meeting.

Ms. D'Angelo mentioned that the Bylaws she was referencing were not the latest version. Mr. Piascik pulled up the latest version of the Bylaws (August 2020) and the Board verified the structure of the Executive Committee and other committees. The Bylaws Committee will review and address how Ad Hoc Committees will be structured.

Dr. Keene said that the website will be updated with new Board Member

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

There was a motion by Mr. Eickhoff and a second by Mr. Wallace to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard the meeting was adjourned at 1:31 PM.