



**WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
d/b/a THE COAST RTA
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday February 28, 2024
12:00 PM**

Board Present: Melissa Bilka
Katharine D'Angelo
Darrell Eickhoff
Lillie Jean Johnson
Marvin Keene
Elijah Metherd
Robert Sheehan
Bernard Silverman
Nicholas Twigg

Staff Present: Brian Piascik, General Manager/CEO
Ron Prater, CFO
Candace Brown, Senior Planner/Special Projects
Ann-Martin Buffkin, Board Liaison
Lauren Morris, Director of Strategic Communications

Visitors: None

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the 2024 meeting schedule was provided to the press at the beginning of the 2024 fiscal 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 February 28, 2024.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sheehan called the meeting to order at 12:06 PM and welcomed everyone.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Dr. Sheehan gave the invocation, then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard; the minutes were approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Eickhoff asked to amend the minutes to include “layout of options regarding grants” under New Business. This change was made. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard; the minutes were approved unanimously.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS: None.

SERVICE/PAC COMMITTEE: Mr. Piascik presented slides that re-cap Service/Pac committee meeting topics. In that, was the discussion of Route 16 – Service Adjustment and the pros and cons of what that change will have. Public involvement is in process with one more public involvement meeting in Georgetown on 02/28/24 and the Myrtle Beach Transfer Center on 02/29/24. Mr. Piascik asked the board to vote on this change which is set to begin March 10th, 2024. Dr. Keene asked what, if anything, could happen at the Georgetown meeting that would keep this adjustment from taking place. Mr. Piascik stated it would depend on the number of people who attended the meeting in opposition. Dr. Twigg requested that there be a motion to defer the action on Route 16 to the executive committee, Mr. Eickhoff seconded. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard; the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Piascik reviewed ridership comparison from FY2023 to FY2024. He also stated that 5310 award will include the purchase of transits and the 5339 award will provide the Authority 1 cutaway. Also, the Authority will be replacing two engines in the New Flyers by summer services. There is also a state program in place to replace a few of the Authority’s NABIs. There will be a public involvement program put out by Kimley Horn regarding the Authority’s Organizational Plan. Regarding Vanpool, Brittain has signed a contract. Ms. Bilka stated Brittain is re-doing the maps for the properties and hoping to have enough interest generated to get something going in April 2024. Authority staff is actively working on Triennial, which will be in July 2024. Lastly, an update on the entertainment shuttle worked out routing in Barefoot Landing. Both North Myrtle Beach and Myrtle Beach are ok with fare free service. Dr. Sheehan made a motion for the board to approve the entertainment shuttle to be fare free. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

Dr. Twigg has asked for a monthly report on customer complaints. Mr. Piascik stated staff will be working on getting this information.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Mr. Silverman recapped financials from the committee meeting. The fares are below last year. Salaries/benefits and overtime maintenance percentages are high. Operating expenses are down 1.6%. Operating and capital revenues are up. The LGIP total balance is \$87,000 and Mr. Silverman is concerned that it was the same number as last month, meaning the \$12,000/month contribution did not happen. Mr. Piascik stated that total contributions are \$52,000 this year which is more than the \$48,000 scheduled. Ridership is down 5,000 from last year which could be explained by farebox breakdowns, because we use the fareboxes to count ridership. Mr. Silverman stated he would like to revisit vanpool six months from April 2024.

The Authority's funding agreement with Horry County calls for 5% of operating expense should be kept in reserve which would equate to around \$400,000, which is considerably more than the \$87,000 in the LGIP. Horry County has approved three extra months of monthly payments – going through June 2024, which helps cash flow. The County also approved a waiver of the Authority's lack of O&M reserve through the end of our fiscal year. In addition, the County wants the Authority to provide a budget revision by the end of March 2024 that shows how the Authority plans on how bring the O&M reserve into compliance. The County owes the Authority \$300,000 in escrow from road use fees from FY22; although, this may or may not go towards the O&M Reserve balance. Mr. Piascik has a meeting with Horry County staff on March 7, 2024, and will get a rundown on how the funding agreement will change.

Mr. Piascik has been working on the budget revision. The Board asked for a motion for approval for Mr. Piascik to present a draft budget revision with the intent that the Board will have a final vote on the budget revision to come by the end of March 2024. Mr. Eickhoff moved and Dr. Kenne seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

COMPENSATION COMMITTEE: None.

AD HOC COMMITTEES: Ms. D'Angelo asked about revisions to the By-Laws. The wording "Citizens Advisory Board" should be changed to the "Citizens Advisory Committee." Also, in the by-laws, Article 19 – Conflict of Interest states there should be a paper to sign. Board members are to look for a copy and provide it to Staff. Finally, Dr. Twigg requested to spell out Public Agency Coordination.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Bilka asked how many employers buy bus passes for their employees. Mr. Prater stated less than ten. She also asked if employers are aware of our routes and what Coast RTA can offer for employees to get to work. She states there is a need for this type of marketing and suggested to start with Myrtle Beach Hospitality Association to get the marketing started.

GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT: Mr. Piascik began by saying the TASC Legislative Reception is scheduled for next Tuesday (03/05/24) night at 5:30pm in Columbia SC. Mr. Piascik stated that if any of the Board members want to attend to let him know.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT: There was a motion by Ms. D’Angelo and a second by Mr. Silverman to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Sheehan adjourned the meeting at 1:41 PM.