



**WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
d/b/a THE COAST RTA  
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, January 27, 2022  
11:00 AM**

**Board Present:** Darrell Eickhoff  
Marvin Keene  
Bernard Silverman  
Rob Sheehan  
Randall Wallace  
Katharine D'Angelo  
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 11:04 AM 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 Dr. Sheehan and a second by Mr. Eickhoff 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 Mr. Eickhoff and a second by Mr. Randal to approve the December minutes. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard, the motion passed unanimously.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:** No visitors were present at this point in the Agenda due to connection issues. Public Comment was pushed to later in the agenda since Mr. Pawlowski joined the meeting late.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Mr. Silverman summarized the proceedings from the January Finance Committee including a rundown on the Monthly Financials from November and December. He said that aside from an overage in facility maintenance (caused by the delays in parking lot repairs) that the Authority is running fairly close to budget. He remarked that ridership was exceeding levels from pre-COVID corresponding months (2019).

The Finance Committee was updated on the annual audit (which according to staff was going along smoothly); the Facility Development Program; Procurement Manual and the Cost Allocation Plan.

Mr. Piascik briefly presented some of the slides regarding the facility development task orders. To date Coast RTA has obligated \$587,650 through five task orders, of which there is still \$135,274 in unspent funds. Kimley-Horn will be developing a 6<sup>th</sup> task order for the programming and site evaluation of the Myrtle Beach Transit Center.

The Committee reviewed the changes to the Procurement Manual which were a direct result of Triennial review findings and mostly pertained to new legal language to be included in our contracts. Mr. Piascik also let the Committee know that staff had submitted a new indirect cost rate proposal to FTA because our FY 22 rate was dropping more than 20% of our approved rate. The decrease in the rate was attributable to higher labor expenses (rate increases and more service hours) and was generating revenue that exceeded our administrative costs. FTA did not require a new approval for the rate because the rate went down.

The Committee briefly discussed remaining COVID impacts on expenses and asked Mr. Piascik to provide an update in the March full Board meeting.

**SERVICE/PAC COMMITTEE:** Even though the Service/PAC Committee had not met since the last full Board meeting, Ms. D'Angelo asked for an update on driver retention and recruitment. Mr. Piascik said that our schedule was stabilized, although there is still one afternoon shift every day

that is not covered. Overtime had been lower than budget. We continue to training drivers for their CDL and that the program has been modestly successful.

Ms. D'Angelo asked about the service improvement planned for North Myrtle Beach. Mr. Piascik recalled his conversation with the City about the potential of a private operator providing a shuttle within North Myrtle Beach.

Going back to the issue of fares, Dr. Sheehan questioned the timing of the implementation of a fare collection system and wondered if increases in formula funding. Mr. Silverman was concerned that going to a fare-free system would not be well-received by our local funders. The Board talked about being reasonable on the timeline so that we avoid a system that is flawed or somehow does not work for Coast RTA. However, if it goes too long then our customers will grow overly accustomed to riding without fares. Mr. Piascik expressed is gratitude for the Board's willingness for patience, but said that the California RFP was about to be awarded and Coast RTA could take advantage of selections without the time needed for a full procurement process. Piascik added that the planning project (RFP from GSATS) would also offer a simplified fare structure that could reduce the base fare and still increase revenue.

Dr. Keene asked about the potential for increased funding due to higher ridership. Mr. Piascik reviewed the formula and said that only a small portion of the funds is based on passenger miles, a statistic that is not currently kept at Coast RTA, because we need better fare collection technology and established bus stops throughout the system. Dr. Sheehan stated that we need to get back to collecting fares, since we get more out of the farebox than we would though the calculation of passenger miles.

Mr. Piascik responded to a number of comments about the need for a public involvement/education program prior to launching a new fare collection system, the need to address the "unbanked" and that fares can be collected via credit card, debit card, or card issued by Coast RTA or possibly a phone.

Ms. D'Angelo asked if the Authority is still transporting individuals with COVID. Mr. Piascik responded that we are still under contract to provide that service but we haven't had a request since June.

Mr. Silverman asked about tenure agreements for employees who train for CDLs. Mr. Piascik said that we do not and he also said that industry rules are going to change that formalizes training.

#### **AD HOC COMMITTEES – No Reports Ad Hoc Committees**

**OLD BUSINESS:** Dr. Keene asked about open seat on the Board. Mr. Piascik said that he did not have any new candidates, but that letters to represented entities would be sent out soon.

Mr. Piascik presented a new COVID Policy that he felt it important to show the Board the procedures related to the Policy before approving it (Policy attached). He outlined some details on how Coast RTA was applying the procedures to those on quarantine. The Board discussed the policy. Piascik let the Board know that we were still distributing surgical masks.

**Motion:** A motion by Dr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Wallace to approve the COVID Policy as written, was approved unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS:** The Board discussed the establishment an Ad Hoc Committee to review and discuss potential revenue sources and potential referendum. Mr. Piascik urged the Board to establish the Committee. Dr. Keene asked Mr. Wallace, Ms. Johnson (who was not present at the meeting), and Darrell Eickhoff.

**Motion:** A motion by Mr. Wallace, seconded by Mr. Eickhoff to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to address the need for a referendum, was approved unanimously.

Mr. Eickhoff asked that the March meeting, that Mr. Piascik provide a slide presentation on CARES Act, CRSSA, ARPA and Infrastructure Bill impacts on Coast RTA funding.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:** Mr. Piascik informed the Board that he was serving on the SCDOT Complete Streets Advisory Board. He made a point about how ADA guidelines being incorporated into street designs. The Authority had been involved corridor based safety audits and the MPO has been really good at involving us in any corridor studies that have transit service.

Mr. Piascik informed the Board about a training session at the TASC Annual Conference March 3-4<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Keene, Mr. Wallace and Ms. D'Angelo all asked to be signed up.

Dr. Sheehan let the Board know that he does not support a referendum and that he would not take over as Chair if the Authority decides to pursue a referendum. Mr. Eickhoff responded that the Ad Hoc Committee would come back with a fully vetted plan for moving forward.

Mr. Silverman ask about which department at SCDOT was in charge of complete streets and why were they suddenly interested in the topic. Mr. Piascik responded that South Carolina was fourth in the nation in pedestrian fatalities and this is part of SCDOT's effort to reduced them.

**Resolution – JAN2022-01 Approval of Updated Procurement Manual –** The Board discussed the need for an updated Procurement Manual in response to triennial findings.

**Motion:** A motion by Mr. Eickhoff, seconded by Dr. Sheehan to approve the updated Procurement Manual, was approved unanimously.

**Motion:** A motion by Mr. Silverman, seconded by Mr. Eickhoff to allow the Chairman to sign on the Board's behalf, was approved unanimously.

**For the Good of the Order:** The Board discussed some needed updates to the Board bios on the Website. Ms. Morris let the Board know that she was available to make any updates. Dr. Keene asked if staff needed content for the newsletter. Dr. Keene asked that Mr. James be highlighted in the next newsletter.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mr. Pawlowski spoke to the Board about the need for service to Charleston and Wilmington. That 2022 was a new year and looking forward to what Coast RTA will do in the year to come.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There was a motion by Dr. Sheehan and a second by Ms. D'Angelo to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM.