



**WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
d/b/a THE COAST RTA
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2021
12:00 PM**

Board Present: Darrell Eickhoff
Dr. Marvin Keene
Joseph Lazzara
Bernard Silverman
Dr. Rob Sheehan
Greg James
Lille Jean Johnson

Staff Present: Brian Piascik, General Manager/CEO
Ron Prater, Chief Financial Officer
Keisha Hemingway, Board Liaison
Lauren Morris, PIO
Tom Burda, Maintenance Manger

Visitors: Eileen Soisson

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 April 26, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Eickhoff called the meeting to order at 12:01PM and welcomed everyone.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. Eickhoff gave the invocation with a prayer, 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 recorded as "Absent".

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: None

CHAIRMAN’S CORNER:

- Mr. Eickhoff announced that following a summit with the Lieutenant Governor, last year, we’re fourth in the nation in Senior Hunger, much of which is due to lack of transportation. Since then, AARP of South Carolina has paid for a study in health prosperities, assessing the health status of African Americans versus other sectors of the population. The three (3) entities that are participating in the studies were, Clemson University, Medical University of South Carolina and USC. The Study showed that the African Americans of South Carolina is at a disadvantage 12 of 14 leading causes of mortality. Also reporting that the lack of adequate public transportation is the main contributor to this issue. The Sun News also reported that most people pay at least 50% of their household income for housing.
- Marketing our new service has been added as “Item 13” on the project list. Mr. Piascik added the item to Category , and staff will provide monthly reports and updates on marketing for all routes, including North Myrtle Beach. Mr. Eickhoff reiterated that the Project List gives the Board Members their opportunity inform staff about priorities.
- Board member’s reappointments. All board members are appointed by different entities. Four (4) of the board member’s term expire this year. Three (3) from Horry County and one (1) from Georgetown County. Mr. Piascik will be sending out reappointment request letters to the sponsoring agencies.

SERVICE/PAC COMMITTEE REPORT: Mrs. Johnson expressed her excitement for the new service in Georgetown beginning May 1 serving into Andrews, Sampit and Horry Georgetown Technical

College. Following the presentation, Mrs. Johnson inquired about how we plan to publicize these services for those who are not computer savvy.

Mr. Piascik outlined the new route, stating that this would be a 90-minute route starting at 6 am, with a short midday break in service for a driver change. AM/PM patterns facilitate travel patterns to and from Andrews and HGTC. Maryville/ HGTC will be served from US 17. Also starting May 1, route 15S will be extended to Tideland's Health via SH 707 through the Socastee area. The website will be updated with this information so that provide to the public, also flyers will be posted in varies places in the new service area. Staff will present a service plan to all in the April's meeting. Per the City of North Myrtle Beach, we have been asked to delay the operation of the Entertainment Shuttle, however, they are still interested in the service.

Mr. Piascik also shared with the Board the Culture of Service, moving Coast RTA internally to have the technical capacity to become "Big Boy Transit". In doing so, Mrs. Eileen Soisson will present the methodology to make this happen.

Mrs. Eileen reviewed the process by which she plans to improve Coast RTA internally and externally through customer focus. Hoping that we create more energy and accountability, having conversations on how we need to get better, driving out the mindset of just being a department. We must understand what our customers want, why will they remember us and what service so we provide. Also not limited to helping each other in all departments, working smarter not harder. True customer service is working together, reiterating what is our purpose. Understanding the purpose of your job will help all understand their position. A six (6) phase process over the next two (2) years was shown on how we plan to get to a referendum, also setting standards for service for years to come.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Dr. Keene summarized the Audit for Coast RTA, which had no findings or comments for the fourth (4th) year in a row. The Board was very pleased with the process over the years. A budget revision with be presented in the April's meeting.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Piascik reported:

- We now know what the apportionments are for the American Rescue Plan Act. Showing the numbers for all UZAs based on 132% of the FY18 operating funds. The funds from the CARES Act should have been targeted to Coast completely because the formula was based solely on operating cost. No other entity in our region was incurs operating cost. The MPO has agreed to give us the CARES Act money that was set aside for the regional sub-allocation.
- Mr. Piascik reiterated to the Board on what can be found in the Board Drive. All the presentations presented at meetings can be reviewed if anyone would like to read over

the materials. Also, the plan the Big Boy Transit, Conditions Assessment Reports, as well as the federal apportionment tables. Informing everyone of what's happening with the facility work.

- Coast RTA is in the process of conducting a Title VI Assessment for the new O&M facility located at Fantasy Harbor. Parcel limits have not been identified at this time. The consultant advised Mr. Piascik to delay the Locally Preferred Alternative Resolution until the public involvement of the Title VI is complete, which will be April 24, 2021. The LPA will be presented in the April's meeting, so that when the time comes, we can move forward with purchasing property. The website has been updated with the plan for the new facility along with the current facility and the need for the new facility. The consultant has conducted a draft conditions assessment of the current building and out of 5 we scored 1.6 in rating. Per FTA we have scored high enough not to be shut down but low enough to show the need for a new facility. The conditions assessment is critical with moving into the grant process because it illustrates the need for a new facility. Staff will be accessing all options available to find the federal portion of funds to build. Rep Rice has been contacted to offer the project as a candidate for the Community Project Program that comes from the U.S. House of Representatives. We also will be applying for a low No-Grant for the purchases of electric buses, along with the supporting equipment for charging. Our best bet is to apply the 5339 funds for 80% of construction. Coast RTA has a shovel ready project, meaning if the parcel is purchased in the next couple of month, in the grant we can indicate that we are ready to build. The consultant will also be developing an interim operating plan to understand and estimate the expense of operating once we lose the parking lot next door. We need more information on when we will be taking possession of the new property. The best option would be to place some temporary fencing and a small office on that property. A letter will be sent to the owner to inform them we are interested in purchasing a parcel of his property. Circulation is available so that buses can safely access the new facility location. An appraisal still has to be done in seeking eleven (11) acres, granting more room for growth.
- U.S. DOT has a multimodal grant process called, The Build Program. This grant is mostly for bridges and roads, however, the new facility would qualify. The Biden administrations has released the 2 trillion job program as a part of the infrastructure piece over the next eight (8) years. Although it has to pass through Congress, it could be helpful for Coast RTA. Negotiations with the owner will begin for the new location and updates will be provide throughout the process.
- Our passenger facilities will be reopening May 1. Arrangements have been made for this transition to be as safe as possible. That date was chosen to allow time for staff to get a restart and get everything where it needs to be providing cleaning of the restrooms and other common areas.
- Triennial review is schedules for June, and it is virtual.

- Don Strickland (PDRTA) and Mr. Piascik has scheduled a meeting to discuss the vanpool. We plan to join together in this project being that most of his people will be utilizing the service. Once a selection is made more information will be provided.
- On the fleet update, two (2) more New Flyer are scheduled to arrive May 19,2021, bringing the total to 12 New Flyers. There are still five (5) Dart buses and two (2) El Dorados. The trolleys have been scheduled for disposal. Awaiting a contract from the MPO, three (3) more transit vehicles will be purchased using 5310 dollars, which will be 100% money. No local match would be needed. Replacing the minivan (non-revenue vehicles), two (2) Dodge Durango's have been ordered using a part of the 5311 funds. At this time there are no updates dealing with the fareboxes, however, this issue should be completed by the end of the calendar year. 350K has been set aside for farebox replacements.

There was no old business or new business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT:

There was a motion by Dr. Sheehan and a second by Mr. Lazzara to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken; no nays being heard the meeting was adjourned at 1:34pm.