

CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)
VIRTUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 16, 2020
Meeting Notes

The Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) Board of Directors held a virtual Board of Directors meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 16, 2020.

MEMBERSHIP: Mary Beth Berry; Ron Brinson; Mike Brown; Brenda Corley; Dwayne Green; Alfred Harrison; Will Haynie; Anna Johnson; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Christie Rainwater; Vic Rawl; Michael Seekings; Elliott Summey; Keith Summey; John Tecklenburg; Jimmy Ward; Craig Weaver

MEMBERSHIP PRESENT: Mary Beth Berry; Will Haynie; Anna Johnson; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward

PROXIES: Dennis Turner for Christie Rainwater; Jerry Lahm for Elliott Summey; Ray Anderson for Keith Summey; Lynn Christian for Alfred Harrison; Stephanie Tillerson for Craig Weaver; Keith Benjamin for John Tecklenburg

STAFF PRESENT: Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Sharon Hollis; Jon Dodson; Michelle Emerson; Daniel Brock; Kim Coleman

OTHERS PRESENT: David Bonner (Transdev); Alisha Wigfall (Transdev); Megan Madden (Transdev); Jeff Webster (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Allison Lane (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Charles Drayton (City of North Charleston); Desiree Fragoso (City of Isle of Palms); Scott Donahue (SDCOT); Doug Frate (SCDOT); David Slade (Post & Courier); Live 5 News; WCBD News 2; William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Additional Interested Parties participated via virtual/conference call.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Seekings called the virtual CARTA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and quorum determination. He noted that the Board Members who participated in the June 17, 2020 Board of Directors meeting were inadvertently omitted from the Meeting Notes and listed the members who participated. Chairman Seekings thanked the Board Members for participating in today's virtual Board of Directors meeting and thanked them for their service to the agency and the community.

2. Consideration of Board Minutes: June 17, 2020 Meeting

Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve the June 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes as amended.

Mr. Lahm seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Financial Status Report – Robin Mitchum

Robin Mitchum, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration, presented the financial status report for the period ending August 31, 2020. Ms. Mitchum noted that the agency ended the month with an excess of revenue of \$3,105,558. She reviewed the following activities for FY20 thus far:

- **Revenues:**

- Farebox is the fares collected on the revenue vehicles.
- HOP Lot Parking Fees are the parking fees received at the HOP lot.
- City of Charleston – HOP Lot is contributions for the operations of the HOP route for 2019.
- The Federal revenue includes operating and capital for the year-to-date. Federal revenue is recorded as eligible expenditures are incurred.
- Interest is interest received from the SC Department of Revenue. CARTA submits for reimbursement of the SC Fuel Excise Tax each month. SCDOR periodically pays interest earned on the funds they have held in the reimbursement process.
- Insurance proceeds are a result of accidents.
- Sale of Assets includes the sale of three Flexible Metro vehicles, two paratransit buses and parts.
- Miscellaneous revenue is a fee received for a bus rental for filming and scrap metal.

- **Expenditures:**

- Staff Salaries & Benefits include the cost of staff time, leave, insurance, retirement and taxes.
- Supplies include office supplies, facility maintenance supplies, disinfecting supplies and signage supplies for new vehicles.
- Printing includes costs of printing route maps, brochures and passes.
- Automotive costs include the maintenance on the administrative vehicle and mileage reimbursements to employees.
- Postage is postage meter refills used to mail passes.
- Dues/Memberships is CARTA's annual membership with the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce.
- Office Equipment Rental includes the quarterly postage meter rental fee, the cost of the portable toilet rental for the HOP lot and the monthly battery lease for the electric buses.
- Office Equipment Maintenance (OEM) includes the Swiftly Transit Time & Insights Software, Cradlepoint NetCloud Essentials for mobile routers and Zscaler internet security renewal (through 9/30/2020), in addition to other IT support.
- Rent includes the Ashley Phosphate Park & Ride lot, Dorchester Village Shopping Center Park & Ride lot, Leeds Avenue lot lease from SCE&G, SC Works Trident lease space and document storage.
- Communications is the cost of phone, internet and radio services at both the facilities and on the buses.
- Utilities include electric and water at the SuperStop, Melnick Park & Ride, the Radio Shop at Leeds Avenue and the charging stations at Leeds Avenue.
- Auditing Services is the cost for CARTA's annual financial audit.
- Custodial Services is the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride location and the SuperStop bus depot.
- Other Professional Services include payroll processing system fees, new bus inspection services, UST tank inspection services and shelter repair services.
- Shared Contract Services (IGA & Management) is the extensive services BCDCOG provides to CARTA.
- Money Transport is the cost of the armored guard service, Brinks, to pick up and transport cash deposits to the bank.
- Vehicle Maintenance is the cost to maintain the fleet.
- Facility Repair & Maintenance is the cost of outside vendors to maintain facilities.
- Operating Fees & Licenses include credit card transaction fees, stormwater fees, solid waste user fees and vehicle title and registration fees.
- Insurance includes the cost of liability insurance provided by the Insurance Reserve Fund.
- Interest is the interest accrued on the Melnick Park & Ride Loan.
- Non-Capitalized Assets include the purchase of security equipment including cameras, lighting, shelter panels, radio equipment, driver and side shields on the buses and two support vehicles.

- **Capital Expenditures:**

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of three Proterra electric buses and a Ford Starcraft Allstar.
- Bus Facilities/Charging Stations is the purchase of six electric bus Charging Stations.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench Installation is the cost of four shelters.
- Security/Cameras and Equipment is the cameras on the Midi buses.

Ms. Mitchum reviewed the HOP expenditures. As of August 31, 2020, total expenditures for the HOP program for FY20 were \$568,001. She addressed questions and comments. The Board received the Financial Status Report as information.

4. Isle of Palms Beach Shuttle Service – Discussion/Request for Approval - Ron Mitchum

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the Isle of Palms Beach Shuttle Service. He stated that, if approved, the pilot program for beach shuttle service to the Isle of Palms will be free of charge and will run on Saturdays and Sundays from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. The service will begin this coming Saturday and will end on Sunday, October 18th. Over the next month, the service will be monitored closely so that a long-term strategy can be gained. Mr. Mitchum discussed the proposed route that the shuttle would take to the Isle of Palms and noted that route information and bus tracking will be available in the Transit App. He reviewed COVID-19 as well as every-day guidelines for drivers and riders to follow. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments and announced that Daniel Brock, Regional Strategist, will read statements from the City of Isle of Palms' Mayor and Council. Mr. Brock then read the following statements:

- *"The City of Isle of Palms is glad to be partnering with BCDCOG to help reduce traffic to the beaches. This is the first step of hopefully many to further reduce the number of cars on the road and to improve traffic conditions in the area."-Jimmy Carroll, Mayor*
- *"By partnering with the BCGCOG and CARTA, the City of Isle of Palms is leveraging organizations that have already begun collaborating with multiple entities to put in place a quality transportation solution in a timely manner. Our hope is to bring a solution to the Lowcountry that allows all to enjoy the beaches without creating the parking and congestion issues on the island that we have seen in the past." -Phillip Pounds, Councilman*
- *"We're looking forward to working with CARTA to ensure that everyone knows this service is available for ridership once it is put in place. We hope that the new service will reduce traffic congestion and parking challenges on the island." -Jimmy Ward, Councilman & CARTA Board Member*

Mr. Ward made a motion to approve the Isle of Palms Beach Shuttle Service on a trial basis.

Ms. Berry seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Capital Projects – Update

A) HOP Lot – Robin Mitchum: Ms. Mitchum noted that the design for the HOP lot is near completion. She also stated that work on incorporating the LCRT with the HOP lot project is moving forward. Ms. Mitchum will keep the Board updated on the project. She addressed questions and comments. The Board received the HOP Lot update as information.

B) Shipwatch Square – Sharon Hollis: Sharon Hollis, Principal Planner, and Mr. Mitchum delivered an update on the Shipwatch Square Project. Mr. Mitchum noted that coordination with Charleston County and the City of North Charleston continues regarding the Shipwatch Square Transit Center. He stated that the Transit Center will accommodate 10 bus bays that will allow convenient and safe transfers between modes and will include indoor waiting areas as well as an outdoor plaza. Mr. Mitchum also noted that plans are in place for a police precinct and library to be located in the Transit Center and discussed plans for the common area. He then addressed questions and comments, noting that site work should begin in the beginning of 2021. The Board received the Shipwatch Square update as information.

- C) Leeds Avenue Facility – Ron Mitchum:** Mr. Mitchum noted that work continues with the on-call designer regarding options in which to utilize the property - specifically for additional bus parking. He discussed the sketch that was presented to the Board, noting potential use of the additional property. Mr. Mitchum stated that discussions are taking place with Dominion Energy and site work continues with Stantec. He then questions and comments. The Board received the Leeds Avenue Facility update as information.
- D) Vehicle ITS Project – Andrea Kozloski:** Andrea Kozloski, Deputy Director of Operations and Support, noted that work is progressing with Syncromatics regarding site assessments on digital signage, AVL on service vehicles and installation of the passenger counters, fareboxes and tablets for the drivers. Ms. Kozloski noted that the project should be near completion by the end of the year. She addressed questions and comments. The Board received the Vehicle ITS Project update as information.
- E) Lowcountry Rapid Transit – Sharon Hollis:** Ms. Hollis noted that plans are at the halfway point with Project Development over the next two years. She discussed upcoming decisions in Phase 2 regarding NEPA and the FTA as well as major outreach milestones and the overall timeline. Ms. Hollis then addressed questions and comments. The Board received the LCRT update as information.

6. Executive Director’s Report – Ron Mitchum

Mr. Mitchum announced that Jon Dodson, Planner II, will present the monthly progress report. Mr. Dodson discussed ridership noting that ridership is down, primarily due to COVID-19, in comparison to the same timeframe in 2019. However, ridership has been trending up over the last couple of months. Ridership on the HOP, Express and DASH routes have been down due to COVID-19. Mr. Dodson, Ms. Hollis and Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board received the Ridership Report as information. Mr. Mitchum then stated that, prior to the Board meeting, an offer was received from Alexander Dennis for two of their demo vehicles. One is a 2019 35’ 2-door Midi with approximately 39,000 miles for \$2155,000; the other is a 2019 35’ 2-door Midi with approximately 2,000 miles for \$295,000. Mr. Mitchum noted that those prices are substantially lower than the normal cost of those vehicles and is within CARTA’s capital budget. He stated that they are not electric but clean diesel and that the vehicles are narrower than the usual buses which will allow for easier mobility on the streets of downtown Charleston. Mr. Mitchum requested Board approval of the purchase of the two vehicles discussed and addressed questions and comments.

Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve the purchase of the two vehicles from Alexander Dennis as presented. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Seekings commended Mr. Mitchum and staff on their dedicated hard work noting that the agency has come a long way in five years by not having to request funding from the County, etc. for purchases such as this to allow for the most needed improvements to the system and service. Mr. Mitchum also noted that the procurement process has begun for the replacement of the 1996 New Flyers and that installation of solar lighting at bus stops has begun.

7. Other Business, If Any

There was no other business to discuss.

8. Public Comments, If Any

There was one public comment:

- William Hamilton, Executive Director of Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit, expressed his concerns regarding safety and seating at the downtown Bus Shelter and noted that members of the public, with whom he has spoken, are concerned about the timing of the LCRT from Summerville to downtown Charleston. Mr. Hamilton also thanked the Board for their approval of the Isle of Palms Beach Shuttle Service on a trial basis.

9. Board Comments, If Any

- Mayor O'Neil requested to be informed on the processes and progress of the Beach Shuttle Service.
- Chairman Seekings thanked everyone for their participation in the virtual Board Meeting and commended the staff for their hard work. Chairman Seekings announced that the next CARTA Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 21st at 1:00 p.m.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Coleman