

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)**  
**VIRTUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**February 17, 2021**  
**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, February 17, 2021.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Mary Beth Berry; Ron Brinson; Mike Brown; Brenda Corley; Dwayne Green; Alfred Harrison; Will Haynie; John Labriola; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Teddie Pryor; Christie Rainwater; Dickie Schweers; Michael Seekings; Keith Summey; John Tecklenburg; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

**MEMBERSHIP PRESENT:** Mary Beth Berry; Ron Brinson; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Pat O'Neil; Dickie Schweers; Michael Seekings; John Tecklenburg; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

**PROXIES:** Dennis Turner for Christie Rainwater; Ray Anderson for Keith Summey; Lynn Christian for Alfred Harrison; Jerry Lahm for Teddie Pryor

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** David Bonner (Transdev); Dianne Jensen (TriCounty Link); Jeff Webster (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Robert Flagler (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Rachel Angelos (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Daniel Monroe (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Scott Donahue (SDCOT); Charles Drayton (City of North Charleston); Desiree Fragoso (City of Isle of Palms); Richard Hathaway (City of Isle of Palms Fire & Rescue); Michelle Mikell (Hubner Manufacturing); Megan Mills (Charleston Parks Conservancy); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Marsha Johnson (Marsha Johnson for Women); 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 1:03 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and quorum determination.

**2. Consideration of Board Minutes: January 20, 2021 Meeting**

***Mr. Green made a motion to approve the January 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes as presented.***

***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 January 31, 2021. Ms. Mitchum noted that the agency ended the month with an excess of revenues of \$532,229. She reviewed the following activities for FY21 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.
- Armad Hoffer Properties is a contract service for additional HOP route access for their residents.
- Local contributions are funds received from local organizations for shelter construction.
- The Federal revenue includes operating 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 is the proceeds from the sale of two NABI buses and two 1996 New Flyer buses.

#### **Expenditures:**

- Staff Salaries & Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office and facility maintenance supplies.
- Printing includes cost of printing route maps, brochures and passes.
- Postage is postage meter refills used to mail passes.
- 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 FY21 portion of the Swiftly Transit Time & Insights (through 6/28/2021), the FY21 portion of the Cradlepoint NetCloud Essentials for mobile routers and Zscaler internet security renewal (through 2/6/2021), 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 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.
- Custodial Services is the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride location and the SuperStop bus depot.
- Other Professional Services include pest control services, SuperStop security service and UST inspection 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 to maintain the SuperStop facility.
- Operating Fees & Licenses include credit card transaction fees, storm water fees, solid waste user fees and vehicle title and registration fees.
- Insurance includes the cost of liability insurance provided by the Insurance Reserve Fund. This includes the FY21 portion of the 2021 renewal. The amount will increase and decrease as we add and remove items from the policy throughout the fiscal year but this is the bulk of the insurance expenditure for FY21.
- Interest is the interest accrued on the Melnick Park & Ride Loan.
- Non-Capitalized Assets include the purchase of additional driver and side shields on the buses, radio equipment and security equipment.

#### **Capital Expenditures:**

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of two Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 buses.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench Installation is the purchase of two shelters.
- Capital includes the purchase of a fork lift.
- ITS System is the purchase of the Syncromatics system.

Ms. Mitchum reviewed the HOP expenditures. As of January 31, 2021, total expenditures for the HOP program for FY21 is \$134,431. She addressed questions and comments. The Board received the Financial Status Report as information.

**4. Electric Bus Master Plan RFQ – Request for Approval – Ron Mitchum**

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, presented the Electric Bus Master Plan RFQ. He noted that the Electric Bus Master Plan Selection Committee met on February 9, 2021 and reviewed seven qualification proposals for the Electric Bus Master Plan. Proposals were received from Atkins Global, Center for Technology and the Environment (CTE), HDR Engineering, IBI Group, Stantec Consulting Services, TranSystems Corporation and Wendel Companies. The Selection Committee recommends that CARTA negotiate a contract with Stantec Consulting Services based on the overall score sheet rankings. If a mutual Agreement cannot be reached, CARTA is also requesting approval to negotiate with the second highest firm, which is HDR Engineering. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the Electric Bus Master Plan RFQ as presented.  
Mayor Tecklenburg seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

**5. Isle of Palms Beach Reach Shuttle Service – Request for Approval – Ron Mitchum**

Mr. Mitchum noted that, in response to public request for beach service to the Isle of Palms, CARTA is proposing a seasonal weekend shuttle between the Town of Mt. Pleasant and the City of the Isle of Palms with one stop at either end. He explained that summer holidays would also be served (including Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Labor Day) at an estimated cost of \$26,500. The two stops would be at the Mt. Pleasant DMV and at Ocean Boulevard at 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Mr. Mitchum stated that service would run hourly with the first trip departing the Mt. Pleasant DMV at 9:00 a.m. and the last departure at 5:00 p.m. The last return trip would have riders arriving back to the DMV by 6:00 p.m. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Ward made a motion to approve the Isle of Palms Beach Reach Shuttle Service as presented.  
Mayor O'Neil seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

**6. Lowcountry Rapid Transit Project Update – Sharon Hollis**

Sharon Hollis, Principal Planner, presented an update on the Lowcountry Rapid Transit (LCRT) as of January 28, 2021. She discussed key highlights from 2020 and upcoming priorities for 2021. Ms. Hollis reviewed the scope and schedule noting that the LCRT is competitive for Federal funding and that the number one goal today is to deliver a competitive project and secure Federal funding. Ms. Hollis addressed questions and comments. The Board received the LCRT update as information.

**7. Route 204 Service – Request for Approval – Jon Dodson**

Due to Jon Dodson, Planner II, experiencing technical difficulties, Ms. Hollis discussed the Route 204 Service. She stated that Route 204 operates Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., providing connections between the Charleston Visitors' Center, MUSC, Calhoun Street, Canterbury House and the Charleston City Market. Ms. Hollis noted that staff recommends the elimination of Route 204 which suffers from the lowest productivity in the system. Resources from the elimination of that service would be reallocated to support the Transportation Network Company (TNC) pilot. She explained that Route 204 has the highest cost per rider as well as the lowest number of riders per hour. In the latter half of 2020, Route 204 served nearly one customer per hour with the system average being nine customers per hour. Ms. Hollis also explained that the average cost per rider was approximately \$72 compared to the system average of \$6. Prior to COVID-19, Route 204 served two customers per hour while Route 204's cost per passenger was \$54. Also, prior to COVID-19, the system average was 16 customers per hour with the average cost per rider being \$3.50. Ms. Hollis noted that the implementation date would be March 1, 2021 and that this proposal would provide an annual cost savings of approximately \$120,000 per calendar year. She stated that currently, one vehicle is used for Route 204 and that Public Meetings and a Public Hearing have been held for public outreach. Ms. Hollis addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Green made a motion to approve the Route 204 Service as presented.  
Mr. Brinson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

**8. Route 211 & HOP Service – Request for Approval – Jon Dodson**

Ms. Hollis presented the Route 211 and HOP Service. She explained that staff has identified an operating scenario that would modify the services of the DASH Route 211 to incorporate some of the routing for the HOP Route 7 to serve the primary riders on both of these routes. Both the HOP Route 7 and the DASH 211 are fare-free. Ms. Hollis noted that the 211 would provide service between student housing along Meeting Street and the College of Charleston. Frequency would also be changed for Route 211 to better meet the existing HOP span, with earlier morning trips and later evening trips. The Route 211 pattern would be maintained but the turn at Spring Street would be removed. The route would extend along both Meeting Street and King Street, using a northern turnaround of Huger Street instead of Spring Street. Ms. Hollis addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Lahm made a motion to approve the Route 211 & HOP Service as presented.  
Mr. Green seconded the motion. The motion was approved with one Nay vote.***

**9. Ridership Report – Jon Dodson**

Ms. Hollis presented the Ridership Report. She stated that ridership on a month-to-month comparison from January 2020 to January 2021 is down 48%. DASH & HOP shuttles have seen the biggest drop in ridership in January 2020 and January 2021, followed by Express routes with greater than a 60% decline. The HOP is down 80% in the same period. Ms. Hollis noted that 11-Dorchester/Airport, 31-Folly Road, 32-Northbridge, 203-Medical shuttle had the lowest decline (40% or less) between January 2020 and January 2021. The MUSC shuttle is back to pre-COVID ridership with a small 3% decrease between January 2020 and January 2021. Route 203 had 30 riders per hour which is the highest in the system. Additionally, Routes 10-Rivers Avenue (13), 11-Dorchester Airport (10), 20-King Street/Citadel (12), 32-Northbridge (12) and DASH 213 (10) had the highest riders per hour across the system. Ms. Hollis addressed questions and comments. The Board received the Ridership Report as information.

**10. Executive Director's Report – Ron Mitchum**

Mr. Mitchum noted that Transit Planning Updates were included in the agenda packet that was sent to the Board of Directors in advance of the meeting. He reviewed the Shelter Improvement Program (SIP), stating that staff is working to continuously improve the bus stops by providing the best amenities for riders as they board and depart the bus. Mr. Mitchum discussed the stops that are under review, the stops that are awaiting construction, recently built shelters, panel replacements and planned bus stop improvements for 2021. Mr. Mitchum reviewed the Solar Lighting Project stating that solar lighting systems provide security and illumination in needed areas when grid power is unattainable or costly to bring to the site. CARTA has invested \$178,180 into solar lights for the region. Mr. Mitchum reviewed the Digital Signage Project. He explained that strategically located displays enable the transit signage system to inform the public, minimize wait times and enhance the overall traveler's experience. Mr. Mitchum stated that the methodology used were selected based on ridership, quantity of connecting routes, existing shelters and stop closures due to flooding. Mr. Mitchum reviewed the Transit Design Guidelines noting that staff contracted Nelson/Nygaard to develop Transit and Bus Stop Guidelines in the Fall of 2020. He stated that the consultant has produced several memos to assist in the development of the Guidelines which provide background on the existing regulations as well as current practices. In late January, staff held the first Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting which includes partners from the municipalities within the service area as well as key stakeholders, including MUSC, College of Charleston, Charleston Moves and the Urban Land Institute, among others. TAC meetings will be held bi-monthly with the anticipated delivery of a final document in the Summer of 2021. Mr. Mitchum also reviewed the TNC Pilot Program noting that staff contracted with UZURV and Uber to provide subsidized transportation in the Fall of 2020. The pilot, CARTA OnDemand, launched on February 1<sup>st</sup>. The pilot offers door-to-door subsidized services for Seniors (55+) and

Tel-A-Ride customers and covers a designated area with one end of the trip connecting to or from the Charleston Medical District on the Peninsula, Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Mr. Mitchum then addressed questions and comments. The Board received the Executive Director's Report as information.

**11. Other Business, If Any**

There was no other business to discuss.

**12. Public Comments, If Any**

There was one public comment:

- William Hamilton, Executive Director of Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit, thanked CARTA for recognizing Rosa Parks Day. He stated he is pleased about the Isle of Palms shuttle services and expressed his concerns regarding the LCRT not extending service to Summerville/Lincolnville and with the Lowline plans.

**13. Board Comments, If Any**

There was no other business to discuss. Chairman Seekings thanked the newest and some existing Board Members for attending the Board Orientation. He also thanked everyone for their participation in the virtual Board Meeting and commended the staff for their hard work. He thanked Board Members for their service to the agency and the community.

**14. Adjourn**

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman