

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)**  
**VIRTUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**September 15, 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, September 15, 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:** Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Michael Seekings; Robert Wehrman

**PROXIES:** Lynn Christian for Alfred Harrison; Jerry Lahm for Teddie Pryor; Kristen Wurster for Dickie Schweers; Robbie Somerville for John Tecklenburg; Ray Anderson for Keith Summey; Stephanie Tillerson for John Labriola

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** David Bonner (Transdev); Jason Woznac (Transdev); Karen Campbell (Transdev); Jeff Webster (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Rachel Angelos (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Daniel Monroe (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Robert Flagler (Rawle-Murdy Associates); Scott Donahue (SDCOT); Doug Frate (SCDOT); Charles Drayton (City of North Charleston); Steve Dudash (Thomas & Hutton); Savannah Brennan (Charleston Moves); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Rose Stump (CAJM); Mary Neale Berkaw (CAJM); LuAnn Rosenzweig (CAJM); Arthur McFarland (Attorney); Anne Jonas; 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: June 16, 2021 Meeting**

*Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the June 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes as presented.  
Mr. Green 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, 2021. Ms. Mitchum noted that the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with an excess of revenues of \$112,546. 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.
- State Mass Transit Funds are the funds available and expended as match to the Federal 5307 operating funds.
- 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, five 1996 New Flyer buses and one 1997 New Flyer bus.

**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.
- Automotive costs include the maintenance on the administrative vehicles and mileage reimbursements.
- Postage is postage meter refills used to mail passes.
- Dues/Memberships is CARTA's membership with Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC).
- 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, Cradlepoint NetCloud Essentials for mobile routers and Zscaler internet security renewal, 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.
- Pilot Ride Program is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include pest control services 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.
- Security Services is contracted security service provided at the SuperStop by the City of North Charleston Police Department.
- Electric Bus Master Plan is the project to develop the necessary planning documents to transition CARTA's diesel bus fleet to all-electric buses.
- 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. 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, cameras, bike racks and security equipment.

**Capital Expenditures:**

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of two Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 buses and three Proterra Electric buses.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench is the purchase of shelters.
- Security/Cameras & Equipment is the purchase of cameras at facilities and on buses.
- Capital includes the purchase of a fork lift and digital signage for shelters and bus stops.
- ITS System is the purchase of the Syncromatics system.

Ms. Mitchum reviewed the HOP expenditures. As of August 31, 2021, total expenditures for the HOP program for FY21 is \$243,043. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report and HOP Expenditures Report as information.

#### **4. FY22 Budget – Request for Approval – Robin Mitchum**

Ms. Mitchum presented the FY22 Budget. She noted that the final adoption of the FY22 Budget was approved by all member governments. Ms. Mitchum stated that the budget will continue to be monitored to ensure that revenues and expenditures remain aligned and that revisions will be recommended as necessary. She addressed questions and comments. Chairman Seekings commended Mr. Mitchum and staff on the budget approval procedures, especially during these challenging times.

***Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the FY22 Budget as presented.  
Mr. Green seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved***

#### **5. Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure Construction RFP – Request for Approval**

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the Electrical Bus Charging Infrastructure. He noted that a Request for Proposal was issued seeking qualified and licensed design-build firms for the development of detailed plans and construction for electric bus charging infrastructure at the CARTA Operations and Maintenance facility located on Leeds Avenue. Mr. Mitchum stated that one proposal was received from Proterra for the amount of \$2,259,792. He explained that Proterra meets all of the requirements of the RFP and staff recommends that a contract be awarded to Proterra. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure Construction RFP as presented.  
Mr. Green seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

#### **6. Leeds Avenue Facility Parking Expansion RFP – Request for Approval**

Mr. Mitchum discussed the Invitation for Bid seeking qualified construction firms for the construction of a parking lot located at the CARTA Operations and Maintenance facility. He noted that one proposal was received from Gulf Stream Construction Company, Inc. The base bid amount is \$597,566 with a 10% contingency totaling \$657,322. Mr. Mitchum stated that staff recommends that a contract be awarded to Gulf Stream Construction Company, Inc. He addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the Leeds Avenue Facility Parking Expansion RFP as presented.  
Mayor Haynie seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

#### **7. Discount Fare Policy – Discussion**

Mr. Mitchum discussed the Discount Fare Policy. He explained the Bulk Pass Sales Discount Schedule. Mr. Mitchum noted that CARTA may only sell fare media defined as tickets (Low Income and Tel-A-Ride tickets) to individuals, non-profit agencies and governmental agencies. He explained that in order to purchase Low Income or Tel-A-Ride tickets, non-profit agencies will need to provide CARTA with a copy of their 501(c)3 Certification. Governmental agencies will need to provide a letter on their respective letterhead stating that they are a governmental agency. Mr. Mitchum stated that CARTA is receiving requests for discounted fares from other non-profits that are not 501(c)3 organizations (such as Churches and other agencies who provide services to the homeless and low-income individuals). As a result, staff will conduct more research in order to find out if there is a need to modify the policy in order to provide other non-profit organizations that are not 501(c)3 agencies with discounted fares. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Discount Fare Policy as information and Chairman Seekings encouraged further research.

#### **8. Route 32 Service Change – Request for Approval**

Jon Dodson, Senior Transit Planner, discussed the Route 32-Northbridge service change recommendation. He explained that this request will allow bicycles on the buses between stops on either end of the bridge at no cost. In addition, it will allow passengers to ride for free between either side of the Northbridge with or without a bicycle. Mr.

Dodson discussed the service changes in detail, stating that the proposed service changes would double the frequency on Route 32 Monday through Sunday with service occurring every 30 minutes Monday through Saturday and every hour on Sunday. He noted that staff requests Board approval of the recommended changes. Mr. Dodson addressed questions and comments. Chairman Seekings commended Mr. Mitchum and staff for making sure that public safety remains a high priority.

***Mr. Green made a motion to approve the Route 32 Service Change as presented.  
Ms. Wurster seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

#### **9. Second Chance Bike Partnership – Request for Approval**

Mr. Mitchum presented the Second Chance Bike Partnership. He explained that CARTA received a request from Second Chance Bikes to donate bicycles that have been abandoned on the bus and have expired the time limitation on the Lost & Found Policy. Mr. Mitchum noted that Second Chance Bikes is a non-profit organization that collects, repairs and distributes used bicycles to people who need affordable, reliable transportation. Their bicycles help people to obtain better employment opportunities, physical and mental health care, nutritious food and healthy recreation. In addition, Second Chance Bikes is requesting discounted bus passes to distribute to their free bike recipients so they have a way to pick up their bike. Second Chance Bikes is located in the Old Navy Base and is accessible via Route 104. Mr. Mitchum stated that staff requests approval of a partnership with Second Chance Bikes. He addressed questions and comments.

***Mayor O'Neil made a motion to approve the Second Chance Bikes Partnership as presented.  
Ms. Wurster seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

#### **10. Project Updates – Ron Mitchum/Staff**

Mr. Mitchum noted that a summary was distributed in the Board packet in advance of the meeting on the following projects: Stop/Shelter Design Guidelines; Service Planning Initiatives; Electric Bus Master Plan; CARTA OnDemand; Shelter Improvement Program; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; Solar Lighting; Digital Signage; VanPool Program; and Lowcountry Rapid Transit. He stated that if anyone has any questions regarding the project updates, to please contact him or staff members for further information. Sharon Hollis, Principal Planner, discussed the LCRT project in detail. She noted that 30% of design submittals, project scope, schedule and budget are being reviewed by the FTA Project Management Oversight Consultant (PMOC), which was assigned at the end of May. A Value Engineering Study was conducted and a risk workshop was held with the PMOC. She stated that key stakeholder coordination discussions are being finalized and monthly FTA coordination meetings are being held with the FTA PMOC. Ms. Hollis noted that the NEPA Documented Categorical Exclusion was approved by the FTA in July and a new maintenance facility/storage yard near the fairgrounds for LCRT buses has been included in the project. She updated the Board on the Transit Signal Prioritization project and the TOD Study. Ms. Hollis stated that stakeholder and neighborhood meetings are on-going and that Morgan Grimes, LCRT's Communication Specialist, has been visiting businesses along the corridor and reaching out to neighborhoods and community organizations. She has had direct communications with over 600 businesses and community members along the corridor and that number continues to grow. Ms. Grimes also held office hours throughout the month and will continue to do so this Fall. Mr. Mitchum and Ms. Hollis addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates as information.

#### **11. Ridership Report – Jon Dodson**

Mr. Dodson presented the Ridership Report as of August 2021. He stated that ridership from July 2021 to August 2021 is up 5%. Overall ridership comparing August 2020 to August 2021 increased by 31%. Overall ridership comparing August 2019 to August 2021 decreased by 41%. He noted that DASH ridership comparing August 2020 to August 2021 increased 128%. DASH ridership comparing August 2019 to August 2021 decreased 43%. Express ridership comparing August 2020 to August 2021 increased 68%. Express ridership comparing August 2019 to August 2021 decreased 52%.

Mr. Dodson noted that the Route 203-MUSC shuttle had the highest riders per hour in the system at 24. Additionally, Routes 211-Meeting/King (20), 10-Rivers (13.3), 20-King (13.2) and 32-Northbridge (12.5) had the next highest riders per hour. Mr. Dodson addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

#### **12. Executive Director's Report – Ron Mitchum**

Mr. Mitchum stated that the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Bill continues to be monitored and he noted that it will result in additional funding for transit. He stated that the execution of construction contracts to try to obtain use of the lapsing FTA funds held by the SCDOT is in development. Mr. Mitchum updated the Board on the HOP Lot/Mt. Pleasant Street parcel noting that SB Friedman is working with the City and County regarding affordable housing and the parking lot. He stated that Bosch will cover the cost of the shelter and installation at their facility located on Dorchester Road. Mr. Mitchum encouraged Board Members' input regarding holding the next Board meeting in-person. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director's Report as information.

#### **13. Other Business, If Any**

There was no other business to discuss.

#### **14. Public Comments, If Any**

There was one public comment:

- William Hamilton, Executive Director of Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit, thanked the Board for approval of the proposed service changes for Route 32. He thanked the Board for supporting the Beach Reach Shuttle and commended mask compliance. Mr. Hamilton expressed his concerns regarding the length of time it is taking to build the LCRT.

#### **15. Board Comments, If Any**

- Mr. Green commended Keith Benjamin's service to CARTA and the City of Charleston.
- James Lewis commended the bus drivers' courtesy regarding mask compliance.
- Chairman Seekings thanked the Board for their continued service.

#### **16. Adjourn**

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman