

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**April 27, 2022**

**Meeting Notes**

A Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) Board of Directors meeting was held at the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments in the Barrett Lawrimore Conference Room located at 5790 Casper Padgett Way in North Charleston, SC at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 27, 2022.

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

**MEMBERSHIP PRESENT:** Ron Brinson; Dwayne Green; John Iacofano; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward

**PROXIES:** Jerry Lahm for Teddie Pryor; Ray Anderson for Keith Summey; Robert Sommerville for John Tecklenburg; Lynn Christian for Alfred Harrison; Carter McMillan for Jenny Costa Honeycutt; Kristen Salisbury for Robert Wehrman

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Alisha Wigfall (Transdev); Scott Donahue (SCDOT); Chloe Field (BGRM); Charles Drayton (City of North Charleston); Joe Olson (HNTB); Shawn Epps (HDR); Samantha Dubay (HDR); Pastor Thomas Dixon (North Charleston Resident); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Tara Lazowski (Northwoods Estates)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Belen Vitello; Jon Dodson; John Lambert; Courtney Cherry; Michelle Emerson; Kim Coleman

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Seekings called the CARTA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and quorum determination.

**2. Consideration of Board Minutes: March 16, 2022 Meeting**

***Mr. Lahm made a motion to approve the March 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented.***

***Mr. Anderson 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 March 31, 2022. Ms. Mitchum noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month slightly over budget with unexpended funds of \$68,638. She reviewed the following activities for FY22 thus far:

**Revenues:**

- Farebox is the fares collected on the revenue vehicles.
- Passes are bus pass fares sold to customers.
- Local contributions are funds received from local organizations for shelter and bench construction.
- The Federal revenue includes operating for the year-to-date. Federal revenue is recorded as eligible expenditures are incurred.
- Insurance proceeds are a result of accidents.
- Sale of Assets is the proceeds from the sale of a support vehicle, a 2016 Goshen, a 1996 New Flyer and shelter scrap metal.

**Expenditures:**

- Staff Salaries & Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office, facility maintenance and PPE (masks) supplies.
- Printing includes cost of printing route maps, brochures and passes.
- Automotive is the cost of maintaining the administrative staff vehicle.
- Dues/Membership is CARTA's membership with Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC).
- Office Equipment Rental includes the monthly battery lease for the electric buses and the postage meter.

- Office Equipment Maintenance (OEM) includes the FY22 portion of the Swiftly Transit Time and Insights, Cradlepoint NetCloud Essentials for mobile routers and Zscaler internet security, in addition to IT services.
- 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.
- Auditing is the cost of the actuary valuation for GASB 75 and the annual audit.
- Custodial Services is the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride location.
- Pilot Ride Program is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include appraisal fees for the Ladson property and UST compliance inspections.
- Shared Contract Services (IGA & Management) is the extensive services the BCDCOG provides to CARTA.
- Fixed-Route Service is the cost of fixed and commuter service provided by Transdev.
- 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 and the Leeds Avenue temporary bus parking lot 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 and maintenance on the fare vault.
- 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 Policy renewed January 1, 2022 and this is the majority of the expenditures for FY22.
- Paratransit is the cost of paratransit transportation provided by Transdev.
- 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.

**Capital Expenditures:**

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of 3 New Flyer buses and 19 Proterra buses.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench is the purchase of shelters.
- Security/Cameras & Equipment is the purchase of cameras at the SuperStop and the upgrading of the access control system at the Leeds Avenue facility.
- Capital includes the purchase of two diesel fuel pumps.

Ms. Mitchum stated that the amount owed to Transdev as of March 31, 2022 is \$1,463,289.23. Ms. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report as information.

**4. Fare Free May – Request for Approval**

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the “No Pay May” initiative. He noted that the purpose of initiative is to encourage new ridership and to offer fare-free rides as a “thank you” to current riders. Mr. Mitchum stated that, if approved by the Board, system-wide services would run free of charge from May 1 until May 31, 2022. The Fare Free May initiative will exclude OnDemand rides as that service is under a separate contract. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Green made a motion to approve Fare Free May as presented.  
Mr. Brinson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

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

Mr. Mitchum delivered an update on the following projects, noting that progress is being made on all projects: Stop/Shelter Design Guidelines; Service Planning Initiatives; Electric Bus Master Plan; Shelter Improvement Program; Solar Lighting; Digital Signage; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; Vanpool Program; Leeds Avenue Facility Improvements; Lowcountry Rapid Transit. Mr. Mitchum briefly discussed each project, noting that a summary was distributed in the Board Meeting Agenda Packet in advance of the meeting and encouraged Board Members to contact him or the respective project manager regarding any specific concerns or questions. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates Report as information.

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

Jon Dodson, Senior Transit Planner, presented the Ridership Report as of March 31, 2022. He noted there were 9.9 customers per hour totaling 180,613 customers in March and that the on-time across all timepoints was 85%. Mr. Dodson stated that overall ridership from February 2022 to March 2022 increased 18%. Overall ridership comparing March 2021 to March 2022 increased by 13%. Overall ridership comparing March 2020 to March 2022 decreased by 3%. Mr. Dodson discussed the riders per hour by route, noting the following: 211-Meeting/King DASH (24); 203-MUSC Shuttle (17); 213-Lockwood DASH (16); 20-King Street (15); 10-Rivers Avenue (14); and 210-Aquarium/College of Charleston (12). Mr. Dodson addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

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

Mr. Mitchum discussed the Greenridge Road area and presented videos. The videos show the layout of the area and as well as the bus traveling Greenridge Road. Mr. Mitchum discussed the challenges in the area and explained that some of the challenges are highway-department related. The close proximity of the intersection on Rivers Avenue creates challenges with drivers turning onto Greenridge Road then making U-turns, etc. Several pedestrians, who are not CARTA riders, utilize the street to go to the grocery/convenient store from the apartment complex which creates difficult situations as far as safety due to a lack of crosswalks and additional sidewalks. Mr. Mitchum noted the Express bus remains in the right lane, turns right onto Antler Drive and proceeds to the Park & Ride location. The bus stops only when a rider pulls the cord indicating the rider needs to exit the bus at that location or if someone is waiting at the bus stop to get on the bus. Mr. Mitchum explained the stop was moved from across the street at Rivers Avenue due to safety concerns, as crossing multiple lanes of traffic without crosswalks or pedestrian-crossing indicator signs creates a very dangerous situation for CARTA riders. Mr. Mitchum further explained the route of the bus being in the right hand lane and that buses are prohibited from turning right on red. Mr. Mitchum noted that, from an operational standpoint, the bus route runs smoothly. He recognizes that safety is a major concern with connectivity of pedestrians, bicyclists and bus riders to and from the neighborhood and surrounding areas. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments regarding the Greenridge Road area. Mr. Mitchum stated that, at their April 25, 2022 meeting, the BCDCOG Executive Committee approved Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc. for the Transit Planning Consultant. The Selection Committee received two proposals for the Transit Planning Consultant RFP and, based on the overall score sheet rankings, Nelson/Nygaard was selected. Nelson/Nygaard will provide transit planning consultation services on an as-needed basis. The consultants will be on-call to provide their services on a number of transit services projects. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director's Report as information.

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

There was no other business to discuss.

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

There were three public comments:

- Tara Lazowski, of Northwoods Estates, expressed her concerns regarding the addition of bus stops, the bus stopping near the intersection and traffic safety matters in Northwoods Estates and encouraged attendance at Northwoods Estates' monthly meetings.
- Pastor Thomas Dixon of Antler Drive in North Charleston stated that CARTA provides an invaluable service to the residents of Northwoods Estates and should be able to utilize the tract of land and the Park & Ride area for a safe place to wait for the bus.

- William Hamilton, Executive Director of Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit, discussed the Town of Mt. Pleasant's Hotel shuttle service to the Charleston Visitor's Center and its connections via the #40 Bus for the Reach the Beach shuttle service. He expressed his concerns regarding transit APP performance and lack of sidewalks on Meeting Street. Mr. Hamilton requested marketing material to distribute regarding the Beach Shuttle and the Fare Free May initiative.

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

- Mr. Lewis discussed the need for additional sidewalks on Meeting Street, near the Senior Citizens Center noting it is a safety hazard in that area for pedestrians and bus riders.
- Mr. Iacofano thanked Mr. Mitchum and staff for the opportunity to tour the Leeds Avenue facilities.

#### **11. Adjourn**

Chairman Seekings thanked Board Members for their service to the Board and the community. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman