

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

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**May 17, 2023**

**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, May 17, 2023.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Mary Beth Berry; Joe Boykin; Ron Brinson; Mike Brown; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; John Iacofano; John Labriola; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Christie Rainwater; Herb Sass; Michael Seekings; Keith Summey; Ed Sutton; John Tecklenburg; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

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

**PROXIES:** Craig Harris for John Labriola; Dennis Turner for Christie Rainwater; Jerry Lahm for Herb Sass; Robert Somerville for John Tecklenburg

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Alisha Wigfall (Transdev); Rachel Angelos (BGRM); Chloe Field (BGRM); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Karen Novak Forrest (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Nicole Broach (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Megan Ross; Kim Coleman

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Seekings called the CARTA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and a quorum determination.

**2. Consideration of Board Minutes: April 19, 2023 Meeting**

*Mr. Lahm made a motion to approve the April 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented.*

*Mr. Boykin 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 April 30, 2023. She noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$1,340,062. Ms. Mitchum reviewed the following activities for FY23 thus far:

**Revenues:**

- Farebox is the fares collected on the revenue vehicles.
- Passes & Mobile Ticketing 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 are the proceeds from the sale of a 2010 New Flyer and eight 1996 New Flyers.

**Expenditures:**

- Staff Salaries & Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office and facility maintenance supplies.
- Printing includes costs of printing route brochures and labels.

- Automotive is the cost to service the 2014 Ford Explorer.
- 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 Genfare software support, GMV Sycromatics, 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 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 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 the Genfare report training, Shipwatch appraisal services, bus wash inspection services and the utility search for the Leeds Avenue infrastructure project service.
- 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 by the City of North Charleston Police Department.
- Rebranding is services provided to comprehensively review and rebrand agency logos and images.
- Vehicle Maintenance is the cost to maintain the fleet.
- Facility Repair & Maintenance is the cost to maintain facilities.
- 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 renews January 1 and this is the majority of the expenditures for FY23.
- 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 shelter trash cans and office computer equipment.

**Capital Expenditures:**

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of a New Flyer Electric Bus.
- Bus Facilities/Charging Stations are the purchase of two charging depots.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench Install is the installation of shelters and benches.
- Security/Cameras & Equipment is the purchase of cameras at the Melnick Park & Ride lot, lighting and access control systems at Leeds Avenue, bus stop solar lighting and AVL equipment.
- Capital (IT, Facility Repairs/Maint) is the purchase of a submersible pump at the Leeds Avenue Facility.

Ms. Mitchum reviewed the activity of the Pilot Ride Program. She discussed the budget and total costs for FY21-FY23 and noted the FTA 5310 funds for seniors and disabled individuals. Ms. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report as information.

**4. Downtown Charleston Transit Study – Presentation – Megan Ross**

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, presented the Downtown Charleston Transit Study. She delivered the study overview noting FTA funding for the route planning restoration program and the study's goal (which is to improve transit in Downtown Charleston). Ms. Ross noted that the needs and opportunities to improve transit service was evaluated and recommendations to refine the downtown bus network and make improvements to transit infrastructure were recommended. She stated that any adjustments made must align with the LCRT project and the Long-Range

Transportation Plan. Ms. Ross discussed the project's milestones noting that it is currently in Phase 1, which is Service Inventory & Analysis. She briefed the Board of Directors on the additional phases which are as follows: Phase 2, New System Visioning; Phase 3, New System Design; and Phase 4, Draft & Final Transit Plan. Ms. Ross discussed the market analysis, noting existing transit and the LCRT project, transit demand, existing transit service assessment and bus infrastructure assessment. She discussed the community engagement process and the timeline. Ms. Ross noted that the next steps include complete inventory and market analysis, collect and document survey findings, summarize input received during the Phase 1 outreach and develop the first milestone report. Ms. Ross addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Downtown Charleston Transit Study presentation as information.

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

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, delivered an update on the following projects, noting that progress is being made on all projects: Service Planning Initiatives; Downtown Route Study; US 52 BRT Study; CARTA OnDemand; Shelter Improvement Program; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; Vanpool Program; Transit Oriented Development Study; LCRT. He discussed the following projects in detail: LCRT continues to move forward (review of the 30% design is scheduled to be complete in June; will need to re-evaluate the environmental document for the revised Park & Ride site at the Fairgrounds); CARTA OnDemand is down from 863 to 763 and the average trip cost is down From \$14.60 to \$13.75 compared to \$31.66 for Tel-a-Ride; Transit Oriented Development Study is moving forward (kick-off meeting with stakeholders was held May 3<sup>rd</sup>; stakeholder one-on-one meetings were also held – the meetings were well received with no negative issues raised to date); Shipwatch Square Transit Center's application for discretionary funds has been submitted-anticipate funding decisions in late summer; Shelter Improvement Program continues to move forward on several shelter/bench projects; CARTA Rebranding is moving forward with scheduled launch in July. Mr. Mitchum noted that a detailed report regarding Project Updates were distributed in the Board Meeting Agenda Packet in advance of the meeting. He encouraged Board Members to contact him or the respective project manager regarding any specific concerns or questions. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates Report as information.

#### **6. Ridership Report – Megan Ross**

Ms. Ross presented the Ridership Reports as of April 2023. She discussed April 2023 Ridership Trends noting that passenger trips totaled 187,938 and there were 11.9 customers per service hour (11.5 last month). On-time, across all timepoints, was 81%. Ms. Ross stated that overall ridership comparing March 2023 to April 2023 decreased by 4.1%, overall ridership comparing April 2022 to April 2023 increased by 9.3%, and overall ridership comparing 2022 YTD to 2023 YTD increased by 9.4%. She noted that Tel-A-Ride ridership for the month was 4,863, which was a decrease of 8.1% comparing 2022 YTD to 2023 YTD. Ms. Ross discussed the missed service comparing the first five months of calendar year 2022 to the first five months of calendar year 2023. She noted that the total missed service for the month of May (as of May 7, 2023) was 187.23. Ms. Ross addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

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

Mr. Mitchum delivered updates on additional projects and noted that progress continues with the Contract Operator, the Beach Reach Service, the Fairgrounds Park & Ride and Tel-a-Ride vehicle replacement. He presented photographs of the bus parking lot at the Leeds Avenue facility. Repairs will be done to correct and improve the current conditions of the lot. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director's Report as information.

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

Andrea Kozloski, Deputy Director of Operations and Support, announced that a Press Conference for the Beach Reach Shuttle Service will be held on May 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. on the Isle of Palms. Ms. Kozloski stated that Kim Coleman will distribute details on the Press Conference to Board Members. Chloe Field, Buffalo Group/Rawle Murdy, discussed the Town Centre Give-Away. Questions and comments were addressed.

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

There were three public comments:

- Karen Novak Forrest, Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit: Would like to see additional benches, shelters and advertising (such as a QR Code) as well as a tip jar for drivers.

- William Hamilton, Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit: Expressed his concerns regarding the Lowline, the timing of the #1 Express to North Charleston and LCRT's effect on timing. He explained how Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit will assist with marketing the Beach Reach service.
- Nicole Broach, Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit: Would like to see additional amenities and transportation services for the homeless.

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

On behalf of the City of Isle of Palms, Mr. Ward commended the efforts of staff regarding the Beach Reach Shuttle service. Mr. Iacofano requested further study on possible expansion of the Beach Reach route for next year. Mr. Lewis discussed the need for additional services for seniors, a portion of the population in downtown Charleston, and those who work at The Citadel.

#### **11. Adjourn**

Chairman Seekings thanked Board Members for their service. He noted there may be a Board of Directors meeting held in July during the usual 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month, instead of in August. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman