

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

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**June 14, 2023**

**Meeting Notes**

A Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) Board of Directors meeting was held at the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) in the Barrett Lawrimore Conference Room located at 5790 Casper Padgett Way in North Charleston, SC at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 14, 2023.

**MEMBERSHIP:** MaryBeth 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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joe Boykin; Ron Brinson; Dwayne Green; James Lewis; Michael Seekings; Ed Sutton; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

**PROXIES:** Mike Seekings for MaryBeth Berry; Craig Harris for John Labriola; Robert Somerville for John Tecklenburg

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jeff Webster (BGRM); Chloe Field (BGRM); Scott Donahue (SCDOT); Shannon Meder (HNTB); Shawn Epps (HDR); Kenny Grace (MUSC Business Operations); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Renee Orth (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 1:10 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and a quorum determination.

**2. Consideration of Board Minutes: May 17, 2023 Meeting**

*Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the May 17, 2023 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 May 31, 2023. She noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$1,866,462. 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 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 ten 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 2018 Ford F-150.

- Dues/Membership is CARTA's membership with Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC) and the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce.
- 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 Dominion 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.
- Electric Bus Master Plan is to transition CARTA's diesel bus fleet to all-electric buses.
- Other Professional Services include the Genfare report training, 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 to 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 available for spending for seniors and disabled individuals total \$55 thousand. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report as information.

#### **4. FY24 Proposed Budget – Request for Approval – Robin Mitchum**

Ms. Mitchum presented the FY24 Proposed Budget. She reviewed, in detail, the proposed line-item changes in revenue, expenditures and capital expenditures. Ms. Mitchum stated that the budget will continue to be monitored to ensure revenues and expenditures remain aligned and that revisions will be recommended as necessary. She noted that the proposed budget will be presented to member governments for their approval and will be presented to the CARTA Board of Directors for final approval. Ms. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Green made a motion to approve the FY24 Proposed Budget as presented.  
Mr. Brinson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

**5. Digital Signage – Request for Approval**

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the Digital Signage contract. He noted that staff is requesting approval to amend the GMV Syncromatics Digital Signage contract for an additional year pursuant to the renewal terms outlined in the contract. Mr. Mitchum stated that the contract was awarded on June 5, 2020 as a two-year contract with three options to renew annually. If approved, the amendment will extend the contract through June 4, 2024.

***Mr. Green made a motion to approve the Digital Signage Contract as presented.  
Mr. Wehrman seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

**6. Real Time Location Services – Request for Approval**

Mr. Mitchum presented the Real Time Location Services contract. He noted that staff is requesting approval to amend the Swiftly, Inc.-Real Time Location Services contract for an additional year pursuant to the renewal terms outlined in the contract. Mr. Mitchum stated the contract was awarded on July 1, 2022 as a one-year contract with four options to renew annually. If approved, the amendment will extend the contract from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

***Mr. Ward made a motion to approve the Real Time Location Services Contract as presented.  
Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

**7. Project Updates – Ron Mitchum/Staff**

Mr. Mitchum 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: Downtown Route Study- the first Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting was held on May 11<sup>th</sup>/staff has been working on multiple ways to promote the survey for the study and continues to participate in public engagement/the survey closes on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and, to date, 861 responses have been received/bi-weekly meetings continue with Nelson/Nygaard as the study progresses; CARTA OnDemand- there are 107 active seniors on the OnDemand roster and 69 active Tel-A-Ride customers using the OnDemand service. OnDemand provided a total of 882 trips with 70% of the trips being taken by paratransit customers and 30% being taken by senior customers. The cost per trip was \$10.97 which was down from April's cost of \$13.75. Mr. Mitchum noted that a detailed report regarding Project Updates was 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. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates Report as information.

**8. Ridership Report – Megan Ross**

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, presented the Ridership Reports as of May 2023. She discussed May 2023 Ridership Trends noting that passenger trips totaled 189,421 and there were 11.5 customers per service hour (11.9 last month). On-time, across all timepoints, was 80%. Ms. Ross stated that overall ridership comparing April 2023 to May 2023 increased by .80%, overall ridership comparing May 2022 to May 2023 decreased by 24.6%, and overall ridership comparing 2022 YTD to 2023 YTD increased by .03%. She noted that Tel-A-Ride ridership for the month was 5,517, which was a decrease of 8.2% comparing 2022 YTD to 2023 YTD. Ms. Ross discussed the missed service comparing the first six months of calendar year 2022 to the first six months of calendar year 2023. She noted that the total missed service for the month of June (as of June 5, 2023) was 205.48. Ms. Ross and Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

## **9. Executive Session – Contractual Matters**

***Mr. Sutton made a motion that the Board of Directors convene into Executive Session.***

***Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

***Non-Board Members, Guests and Non-Essential Staff Members were excused.***

***Mr. Brinson made a motion to reconvene the Board of Directors meeting.***

***Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

***Chairman Seekings reconvened the Board Meeting noting that no action was taken related to contractual matters discussed during Executive Session.***

## **10. Executive Director’s Report – Ron Mitchum**

Mr. Mitchum updated the Board of Directors on the Re-branding project noting that the new brand will be launched in July. He discussed the LCRT project noting that meetings have been held with the Fairgrounds group regarding the site and follow-up meetings are planned. The NEPA process is ongoing and no major issues are anticipated. Mr. Mitchum noted that meetings have been held with the Town of Mt. Pleasant regarding service. He also stated that the search continues for a transit planner and staff is currently soliciting additional transit planning on-call consultants. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director’s Report as information.

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

There was no further business to discuss.

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

There were two public comments:

- Renee Orth (aka Queen Ruby): Discussed how the “pirate theme” will boost excitement for riders on the Beach Reach Shuttle and she expressed her concerns regarding missed service based on her personal experience as a child.
- William Hamilton, Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit: Expressed his concerns regarding missed service. He explained how Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit will assist with marketing the Beach Reach service with the “pirate theme” and he announced July 1<sup>st</sup> as being “T-Day” (Veterans Bus to the Beach).

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

There was no further business to discuss.

## **14. Adjourn**

Chairman Seekings thanked the Board Members for their service. He recognized Chloe Field with Buffalo Group/Rawle Murdy and commended her work. Chairman Seekings noted that Ms. Field will be leaving BGRM to work with the City of Charleston and wished her well. He stated that the next CARTA Board of Directors meeting will be held on August 16, 2023. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman