

CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 12, 2024

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 12, 2024.

MEMBERSHIP: Brad Belt; MaryBeth Berry; Joe Boykin; Mike Brown; Daniel Brownstein; Reggie Burgess; William Cogswell; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Brandon Hudson; James Lewis; Pat O’Neil; Christie Rainwater; Herb Sass; Michael Seekings; Ed Sutton; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

MEMBERS PRESENT: MaryBeth Berry; Joe Boykin; Daniel Brownstein; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Brandon Hudson; James Lewis; Pat O’Neil; Michael Seekings; Ed Sutton; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

PROXIES: Craig Harris for Brad Belt; Ron Brinson for Reggie Burgess; Robert Somerville for William Cogswell; Lt. Gebhardt for Christie Rainwater; Jerry Lahm for Herb Sass

OTHERS PRESENT: Milbrey Heard (Nelson/Nygaard); Sam Wright (Nelson/Nygaard); Daniel Monroe (BGRM); Mila Buzhinskaya (HNTB); Daniel Brock (HNTB); Stuart Day (Stantec); Abraham Champagne (WSP); Patrice Miller (WeDriveU); Karen Campbell (WeDriveU); Denis Komachek (WeDriveU); Tiffany Hopkins (WeDriveU); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Rose Pletzt (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Representatives of the Exchange Club of Charleston: Carl Schultz; Frank Shorter; Duncan Townsend; Gary Leonard; Buzz Buske; Ronald Meek; Tim Smith; Jeremy Pitts; Buddy Wallace; News Media Personnel; Additional Interested Parties

STAFF PRESENT: Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Jeff Burns; Sharon Hollis; Megan Ross; Michelle Emerson; Noelle Traynham (Marketing Intern); 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: May 15, 2024 Meeting

Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the May 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes as presented.

Mr. Wehrman 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, 2024. She noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$2,439,141 at 58% complete for the year. Ms. Mitchum provided information on the following activities for FY24 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.
- Federal Revenue includes operating for the year-to-date. Federal Revenue is recorded as eligible expenditures are incurred.
- State Mass Transit Funds are operating funds available as match to Federal 5307 operating funds.
- Insurance proceeds are a result of accidents.
- Sale of Assets are the proceeds from the sale of four MV-1s, four Amerivans and a 1996 New Flyer.

Expenditures:

- Retiree Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office, facility maintenance and rebranding supplies.
- Printing includes costs of printing route brochures, passes and labels.
- Automotive is the cost to service the 2018 Ford F-150.
- Postage is shipping fees.
- 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 property taxes on the equipment rental.
- Office Equipment Maintenance (OEM) includes GMV Sycromatics, GMV Digital Signage, Genfare Support, Swiftly real time passenger predictions, Swiftly GPS Playback, Swiftly on-time performance, Swiftly run-times, RCN NetCloud Essentials and NetCloud Advanced for mobile routers and other 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 FY23 GASB 75 Actuary and Audit.
- Custodial Services are the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride location.
- Pilot Ride Program (CARTA OnDemand) is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include the bus wash inspection services and Electric Bus Master Plan services.
- 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 National Express Shuttle and Transit.
- Money Transport is the cost of the armored guard service to transport cash deposits to the bank.
- Security Services are contracted security service provided at the SuperStop by the City of North Charleston Police Department.
- 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 and vehicle title and registration fees.
- Insurance includes the cost of liability insurance provided by the Insurance Reserve Fund. The insurance policy renews on January 1st and this is the majority of the expenditure for FY24.
- Paratransit is the cost of paratransit transportation provided by National Express Shuttle and Transit.
- Interest is the interest on the Melnick Park & Ride loan.

Capital Expenditures:

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of ten 2023 Voyager Vans.
- Bus Facilities/Charging Stations is the Leeds Avenue charging infrastructure.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench Install is the installation of shelters and benches.
- Security/Cameras & Equipment is the purchase of cameras, access control equipment and AVL equipment.
- Facilities Construction is the Leeds Avenue parking lot repairs and Shipwatch Square engineering.
- Capital (IT, Facility Repairs, Maint.) is Genfare equipment and driver shields.

Ms. Mitchum reviewed the activity of the OnDemand Program as of April 30, 2024. She noted that the FY24 total cost is at \$144,479 at 67% complete. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report as information.

4. Downtown Transit Study – Presentation – Milbrey Heard, Nelson/Nygaard

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, introduced Milbrey Heard and Sam Wright with Nelson/Nygaard. Ms. Heard and Mr. Wright delivered a presentation on the Downtown Transit Study. They discussed the proposed downtown network concepts and discussed the transit supportive infrastructure which includes the downtown transit center, the first/last mile transit access and the BRT running ways feasibility. They presented the study timeline, the proposed route span and frequencies, change in operating costs and discussed the next steps. Ms. Heard and Mr. Wright addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Downtown Transit Study presentation as information.

5. FY24 Proposed Budget Revision – Request for Approval – Robin Mitchum

Ms. Mitchum presented the FY24 Proposed Budget Revision. She reviewed the line-item revisions in detail and stated that the budget will continue to be monitored to ensure revenues and expenditures remain aligned. Ms. Mitchum stated that staff will make recommended revisions as necessary.

Mr. Boykin made a motion to approve the FY24 Proposed Budget Revision as presented.

Mr. Sutton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. FY25 Proposed Budget – Request for Approval – Robin Mitchum

Ms. Mitchum presented the FY25 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 revenue 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. Chairman Seekings explained the budget process to the newer Board Members and commended Ms. Mitchum and the Finance staff for their tremendous work on the budget.

Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the FY25 Proposed Budget as presented.

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

7. Title VI Plan Update – Request for Approval – Jeff Burns

Jeff Burns, Grants and Contracts Compliance Administrator, presented the Title VI Plan update. He explained that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, sex or national origin. As a public transit provider, it is required that CARTA ensure that all levels of transit service are compliant with this federal mandate and that equitable protections are applied in the service provided. Specifically, Title VI provides that, “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance.” Mr. Burns noted that CARTA is required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to update its Title VI Program every three years, which includes a public participation plan that identifies and outlines engagement and outreach efforts. The only changes from the previous version are updated demographic information for the region and changes to the system details. As the public transit provider for the Charleston Urbanized Area, CARTA is committed to making Title VI of the Civil Rights Act a part of the daily operations, integrating it in all programs and plans. The responsibility for daily operations and compliance, including the investigation of Title VI complaints, is assigned to our Title VI compliance officer. However, all CARTA staff share in this collective responsibility for implementing and adhering to this program. The joint participation agreement with the FTA also contains assurances that the recipient, CARTA, shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin. Mr. Burns stated that staff recommends approval of the Title VI Plan.

Mr. Green made a motion to approve the Title VI Plan Update as presented.

Mr. Sutton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Project Updates – Ron Mitchum/Staff

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, delivered a detailed report regarding the following Project Updates: Service Planning Initiatives; Downtown Route Study; US 52 BRT Study; CARTA OnDemand (noting that staff will propose recommended adjustments to the program at a future Board Meeting in order to control costs); Shelter Improvement Program; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; Transit Oriented Development Study (noting that the Phase 2 deliverable

is expected at the end of July and that the BCDCOG received a discretionary, competitive grant of \$1.2 million for a Phase 3 planning effort to continue the development of affordable housing and neighborhood plans to be initiated later in the calendar year); LCRT (noting that 60% design review is underway); Mt. Pleasant Street Park & Ride (noting that the consultant has responded to the 80 comments received from the City's TRC process and that the consultant has initiated the review and approval process with the SCDOT); Fairgrounds Park & Ride; O&M Facility; and Mobile Ticketing Sales and Use. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates Report as information.

9. Ridership Report – Megan Ross

Ms. Ross presented the May 2024 Ridership Trends noting that passenger trips totaled 195,827 and there were 11.1 customers per service hour (11.7 last month). She stated that overall ridership comparing May 2024 to April 2024 decreased by 5.8%. Ms. Ross noted that the slight decrease is a normal trend this time of year due to students being on summer break. Overall ridership comparing May 2024 to May 2023 increased by 3.4%. Overall ridership comparing 2024 YTD to 2023 YTD increased 7%. She noted that Tel-A-Ride ridership for the month of May was 5,037 which was a decrease of 2.2% when comparing 2023 YTD to 2024 YTD. Ms. Ross discussed the OnDemand ridership for May 2024 noting that there were 2,966 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. Trip cost averaged at \$11.92, which was lower than April's average of \$13.03. 40% of the overall rides were from Tel-A-Ride passengers. Ms. Ross addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

10. Executive Director's Report – Ron Mitchum

Mr. Mitchum had no further business to discuss.

11. Other Business, If Any

There was no further business to discuss.

12. Public Comments, If Any

There were 4 Public Comments that were recorded and noted for the record.

- Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit Representatives, William Hamilton and Rose Peltz:
 - Mr. Hamilton congratulated the Board of Directors and staff on the Beach Reach shuttle ridership and expressed his concerns regarding the DASH route and the parcel of land at the Fairgrounds that CARTA plans to utilize. He also expressed his concerns regarding the LCRT not serving the Summerville area.
 - Ms. Peltz expressed her concerns regarding no bus or LCRT service being extended to the Summerville area.
- Exchange Club of Charleston Representatives, Carl Schultz and Duncan Townsend:
 - Mr. Schultz discussed the map of the Fairgrounds property and expressed his concerns regarding the parcel of land that CARTA plans to utilize.
 - Mr. Townsend expressed his concerns regarding the Fairgrounds property and the parcel of land that CARTA plans to utilize as well as the parcel of land the Fairgrounds has offered to CARTA.

13. Executive Session, If Necessary

There was no Executive Session held.

14. Board Comments, If Any

There was no further business to discuss.

15. Adjourn

Chairman Seekings thanked the Board of Directors for their continued dedicated service to the Board and the communities they serve. He noted that the next Board of Directors meeting will be held on August 21st. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Coleman