



# CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

## 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

### Authority Dedicates Forden Station

After seven plus years of planning, the region's first indoor local bus transfer facility became a reality. Forden Station, a 9,000 square foot transfer and administration facility opened on April 18, 2011. The facility was named in honor of former Wilmington Transit Authority Chairman and Board Member, the late Harry Forden, and attended by members of the Forden family.

Comments from the Federal Transit Administration in Washington were delivered by FTA Deputy Administrator Therese McMillan. NCDOT Secretary of Transportation Gene Conti brought congratulatory remarks from Raleigh. Local dignitaries included New Hanover



County Commission Chairman Jonathan Barfield and Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo. Both men spoke on the commitment of the region to improved public transportation. Authority Chairman Don Betz presented a bronze plaque to the Forden family detailing Mr. Forden's dedication to public transportation in the region.

Located at 505 Cando Street in Wilmington, Forden Station replaced an on-street transfer location located on Columb Street. Over 100,000 passengers will utilize the facility annually. Customer service representatives have been hired to staff the facility to answer questions and provide information to passengers. Amenities include: real time bus arrival and departure information both inside the terminal and at the bus loading area; public restrooms; and vending machines. The facility also has a 28 foot metal sculpture by renowned local artist Dumay Gorham. A free Wi-Fi internet connection is also available for waiting passengers.



The facility also houses the Authority's administrative staff. Board meeting facilities allows the public to attend meetings and interact with members of the Authority and staff. A driver's room with restrooms offers bus operators a safe and clean break area. The facility was designed to meet Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) gold standards. Funding for the project was a joint effort of the Authority, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), the City of Wilmington, and New Hanover County.

### Authority Members

**Honorable Jonathan Barfield**  
New Hanover County Board of Commissioners

**Honorable Kevin O'Grady**  
Wilmington City Council

**Don Betz**  
Chairman

**Capt. David R. Scheu, USN (Ret.)**  
Vice-Chairman

**Andrew Koeppe**  
Secretary

**Henry "Hank" Adams**

**Euran S. Daniels**

**George Dolan**

**Julius "Chris" Hawkins**

**Linda Pearce**

**Jeffrey Petroff, PE**

### Staff

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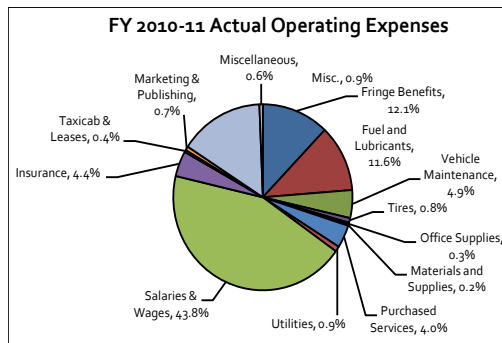
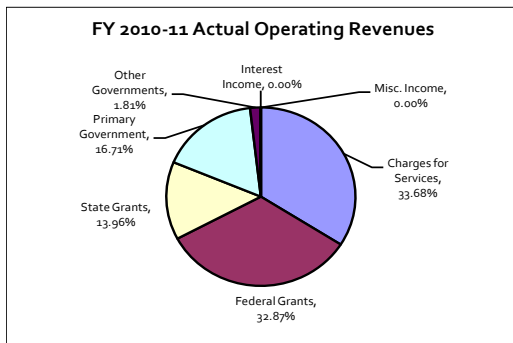
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### Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Operating Revenues & Expenses

Actual charges for transportation services represented over 1/3 of revenues. This percentage represents the highest amount of charges for services on record. Charges for services reduces the amount of subsidies required. The Authority annual audit report is now available online at [www.wavetransit.com/audit.pdf](http://www.wavetransit.com/audit.pdf).



### Authority Welcomes First Transit

On July 01, 2011 First Transit assumed control of the fixed route operations of the Authority under the name Transit Management of Wilmington. Operation of Paratransit services was no longer contracted and was assumed by the Authority.

Chris Greenman was chosen to serve as First Transit Fixed Route Operations Manager and Jeremy Miller was selected as First Transit Vehicle Maintenance Manager. The contract is for three years with two one year options.

### New Website

In the first quarter of 2011, the Authority launched a redesigned website. The website includes many technological upgrades to provide improved and increased customer service. One of the highlights of the new site is a trip planner allowing passengers to type in their destination information and receive mapped directions to help plan their trip. Other highlights include real-time bus text and web info, news and alerts, and extensive information detailing how to utilize services offered by the Authority. The site also includes an updated and extensive library of documents to increase and improve the transparency of the Authority. Visit the new site at [www.wavetransit.com](http://www.wavetransit.com).



## NC Board of Transportation

On August 10, 2011 the North Carolina Board of Transportation held their monthly meeting in Wilmington at the Port of Wilmington. A portion of the meeting time for the board was set aside to visit Forden Station. The purpose of the transit presentation was to educate board members on the role the board plays in public transportation initiatives statewide.



Board members were transported from the Port to Forden Station on one of the Authority's hybrid buses. An overview of the services offered by Wave Transit was provided by Authority Board Chairman Don Betz and Executive Director Albert Eby. North Carolina Transportation Secretary Gene Conti joined the tour and stated the importance of efforts like this are critical to the state and its efforts to improve public transportation.

## Greyhound

On September 26, 2011 Wave Transit welcomed Greyhound Intercity bus service to Forden Station. Intercity service previously originated in downtown Wilmington. The addition of Greyhound provides greater efficiency for public transportation passengers throughout the region. In addition to seamless intercity and local bus service, Greyhound passengers experience a more modern terminal with improved access to ticketing and customer service.



The one year agreement between Greyhound and the Authority is expected to generate over \$50,000 in revenue for Wave Transit. Revenue is being directed to assist with local funding for future initiatives.

## Looking Ahead 2012

### Operations Center

After a long period of land acquisition and environmental analysis, the Operations Center project is back on track and construction is scheduled to begin in 2012. The delay was necessary to mitigate the removal of several large and protected oak trees. It allowed the Authority to purchase an additional 6.5 acre parcel which may serve future expansion.

The facility will replace the current operations centers located on Castle Street and Division Drive which are both inadequate to meet the current needs of a modern fleet of buses and vans. The two facilities will be combined to provide greater efficiency and economy.

Becker Morgan Group of Wilmington has been selected to design the facility. Demolition of current structures on the site could begin in the spring of 2012 with site work and construction to follow shortly thereafter. Funding for the project has been secured from a state of good repair grant from FTA in the amount of \$6,000,000. An additional \$750,000 from NCDOT is also being sought. The facility will improve safety for Wave Transit employees and provide a modern workplace for nearly one hundred Authority and contract employees. The facility is tentatively scheduled to open in 2013.

### 2012 Legislative Priorities

Although the Authority was unsuccessful in securing a vehicle registration fee in 2011, efforts to educate local elected officials on a shifting federal transit policy toward increased local funding, especially for operating expenses, is critical. Wave Transit will continue to inform the community of the benefits of a strong public transportation system.

Continued advocacy by the Authority with elected officials in Raleigh and Washington will be a focus. The elimination of congressional earmarks will be a key talking point as the Authority continues to press for increased and improved transit offerings.

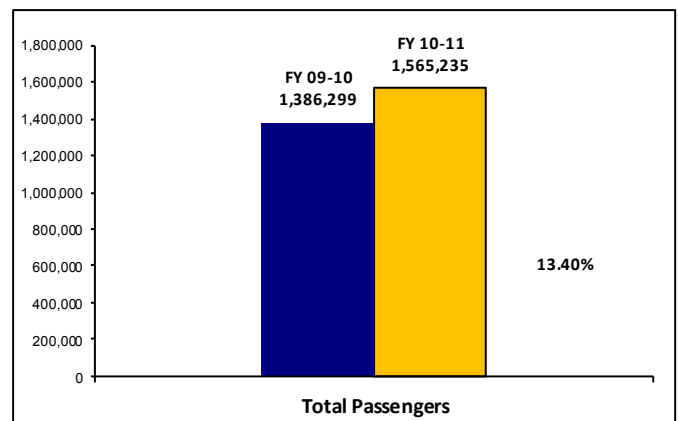
## Authority Welcomes New Staff

The Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority welcomed two new senior staff members in 2011. Megan Matheny was hired in March as Paratransit Manger. Megan had served as an apprentice to the Authority for the previous twelve months. Megan is completing her Master of Public Administration at UNCW.

Joe Mininni, was hired in October as the Director of Finance and Administration. Joe brings a wealth of experience in non-profit and governmental accounting to the Authority. Joe is a licensed CPA and holds an MBA from UNCW.

## Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Operating Statistics

Overall, ridership showed an impressive 13% increase over 2010. The 2008 route restructuring appears to be producing anticipated ridership. The majority of the increase was from the UNCW Seahawk Shuttle. Double digit increases in fixed route ridership was also experienced. Paratransit ridership increased nearly 10%.



## Challenges Ahead

Similar to the past few years, 2012 will present many challenges for the Authority. In addition to declining or stagnant state and local revenues, reauthorization of the federal transit program may challenge the Authority's ability to provide service at a continued high level. Additionally, final implementation from statistics collected during the 2010 census could jeopardize the Authority's ability to utilize federal funding for operating expenses. Should the census determine that the region meets the designation of a transportation management area (TMA) and reauthorization restricts operating funding for TMA's, the Authority could find itself in a dramatic cost cutting mode absent an increased local investment.

Additionally a short range plan currently in development by Nelson Nygaard is anticipated to demonstrate an increased need for transit services throughout the region, especially in Southern New Hanover County.

From a federal and state perspective, significant changes to Medicaid transportation could shift this service to private providers. The loss would dramatically impact the Authority's Paratransit operation and the level of service offered to Medicaid patients.

A regionalism study currently underway by NCDOT could lead to expansion of the Authority's fixed route and Paratransit programs. The regionalism study is due to the North Carolina General Assembly in the spring with a focus on eliminating duplicated transit services and increasing efficiency. While the study is not expected to force regionalism, incentives are expected for those who choose to regionalize.



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