



2008 Annual Report

Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority

December 2008

Wave Transit Implements Regional Route Configuration

On March 31, 2008, the authority followed the recommendations of the short range plan and introduced a fully restructured routing system. The new routes were based on a change in the service area from the City of Wilmington to New Hanover County. The primary transfer location will be located at the authority's new transfer and administration facility to be constructed at 517 North College Road. Temporarily, transfers are occurring on Columb Drive behind Target. The temporary site features ADA access and solar lighted shelters. In addition, new bus stop signage was added which identifies the routes that the stop serves. Times of stops will be added to the new signs in January.

Since the last restructuring in 1974, the area has grown tremendously and the old route structure concentrated public transportation services to a very compact area where many routes overlapped one another. While this configuration was convenient to the passengers who lived and traveled in this area, it failed to offer other areas of the county access to the services offered by Wave Transit. After an initial drop in passengers following the restructuring, ridership levels have rebounded to their 2007 levels.

Although the transition was initially challenging, most passengers have come to understand the new routes. New passengers have been added along Gordon Road, Forty-first St., Andrews Dr., and in Castle Hayne. In response to the initial reaction from patrons, the authority held a series of public input meetings designed to listen to passenger concerns and complaints. These sessions led to minor modifications to many of the routes, additional bus stops, improved amenities and an improved restructured routing system. The public input also prompted staff and the route committee to develop an additional route to serve New Hanover Regional Medical Center and the Longleaf Park neighborhood. Once funding can be identified, the new route will be implemented.

The authority envisions continued minor modifications to the new routes. One pattern that has emerged is passengers continued desire to utilize Downtown Wilmington for transfers, even though it is on the western edge of the service area. The future multimodal transportation center will most likely serve as a transfer location with passenger counts that are comparable to the new central transfer location.

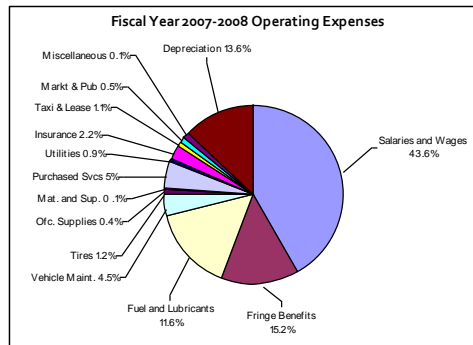
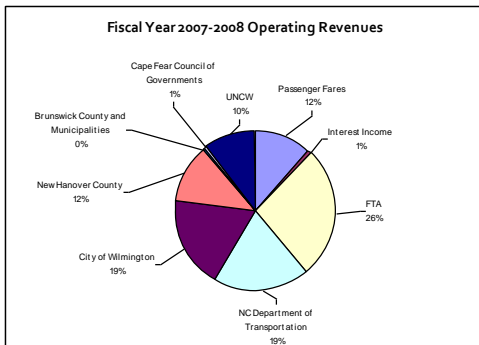
AUTHORITY MEMBERS

- Honorable Laura Padgett**
City of Wilmington
- Honorable Nancy Pritchett**
New Hanover County
- William Bryden, Chairman**
- Don Betz, Vice-Chairman**
- George Dolan, Secretary**
- Henry Adams**
- Euran S. Daniels**
- Andrew Koepfel**
- Aileen Mair**
- Christine McNamee**
- David R. Scheu**

STAFF

- Albert Eby, Director**
(910) 202-2035
aeb@wavetransit.com
- Arlanda Rouse, Assistant Director**
(910) 202-2051
arouse@wavetransit.com
- Catherine C. Beasley, CPA, Finance Director**
(910) 202-2056
ccole@wavetransit.com
- Matthew Kunic, Planner**
(910) 202-2057
mkunic@wavetransit.com
- Kathy Williams, Executive Assistant**
(910) 202-2053

Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Revenue & Expenses



Copies of the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority's Annual Audit Report are available by contacting the Authority Finance Director

Legislative Initiatives

2009 will be a very important year to the authority. In Raleigh, the North Carolina General Assembly will begin their bi-annual long session in January. Among legislation to be discussed will be the recommendations from the Twenty First Century Transportation Committee. This committee, appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the House and the Senate President Pro Tempore, undertook an examination of transportation issues facing the state. The committee was proactive in their understanding that road construction alone would not solve the congestion and environmental concerns from traffic. The authority will closely monitor two important recommendations from the committee to the legislature. The first is a one-quarter percent sales tax referendum to support public transportation. The second is a one percent sales tax referendum to support transportation. It is the hope of the authority that the one percent sales tax will include a legislated portion be dedicated to public transportation. The ability of the authority to generate a dedicated local revenue is imperative to our long term financial health.

In Washington, DC a new administration will be responsible for leading the reauthorization of SAFTEA-LU. The investment in public transportation in the six year reauthorization is seen by the transit industry as a way to minimize our country's dependence on foreign oil, reduce emissions from automobiles and minimize congestion on our overburdened roadways. Transit also provides the economic stimulus necessary to keep our country financially competitive during an economic downturn by providing jobs and transporting the masses.

The authority is working closely with the North Carolina Public Transportation Association and the American Public Transportation Association to ensure that the voice of public transportation is heard in these important discussions.



New Management Contractor

After a thorough search, the authority entered into a contract with Professional Transit Management (PTM)/Veolia Transportation to oversee the operation of Wave Transit. The four year contract has options for an additional six years. PTM introduced new General Manager Terry Thompson to the Authority on July 01. Thompson brings a great deal of knowledge and enthusiasm to Wave Transit from his previous position in Richmond, VA. In the First quarter of FY 09, PTM was able to reduce labor costs by utilizing more efficient scheduling. This change will allow the authority to save significantly on labor and fringe benefit costs. PTM also initiated an employee incentive program, dramatically improved operator training, implemented a customer service program and improved compliance with FTA regulations. The selection committee was led by Christine McNamee, Don Betz and Bill Bryden.



Triennial Review

As part of the authority's continual federal compliance oversight, the Federal Transit Administration conducted its Triennial Review in August. As the name denotes, the review occurs every three years. During the review, consultants for FTA and staff from FTA Region IV headquarters located in Atlanta review compliance in 23 areas. The review allows the authority to gauge compliance and receive feedback from FTA regarding deficiencies. The desk review and on-site visit consist of over 1,000 questions. The chairman presented the findings of the Triennial Review to the board at the August 14th meeting. Chairman Bryden reported that the Triennial Review noted five minor deficiencies. None of the deficiencies dealt in the areas of finance, legal or procurement. The Chairman reported that he had reviewed the authority's response to the review and was confident that staff had developed a responsible plan to rectify the findings.



Additional Highlights

- Ridership on the Brunswick Connector was up over 100% for the first three months of FY 08
- Due to a lack of support from Columbus County, the Columbus County Connector ended in June
- A 50% fare increase was implemented in October 2008
- A vehicle advertising agreement was entered into in November 2008
- After a series of presentations and public support for service to Wrightsville Beach, the town Aldermen voted against Wave Transit service

Looking Ahead - 2009

A Year of Promise

FY 2009 is shaping up to be year of sustained growth for the authority. As the route structuring settles in and staff can focus their attention to innovative forms of public transportation, Wave Transit will have the opportunity to prove itself as a viable option to the single car commute. The authority is currently working with a local employer to implement a pilot vanpool program. Seen by many as the future of transit in small urban areas, vanpooling offers employees the ability to minimize their commuting costs. The community benefits from less congestion and pollution and the authority benefits from a program that is financially self-supporting.

After years of planning, negotiating and revenue wrangling, the authority is poised to begin construction on a 7,500 square foot administration and transfer facility. Environmental assessment and design for a new operations and maintenance facility is also likely to begin in 2009. The facility will be constructed on a 6.5 acre tract located on Division Drive purchased by the authority in 2008. Planning for the long anticipated multimodal transportation center is nearing completion and property acquisition has begun. Once completed, these three facilities will demonstrate a commitment to public transportation that the community will be proud of.

A Safe Haven initiative is also nearing completion which will offer refuge to members of the community who are in distress. The authority will also consider an updated five year plan during 2009. The authority is continuing to work with surrounding counties to regionalize public transportation services in the region. Perhaps most importantly, 2009 will serve as a year for the authority to minimize changes in order to measure the effectiveness of the recent transformation.

Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Operating Statistics

