



# Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority

**MINUTES OF THE  
CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
February 27, 2020  
Mr. Chris Coudriet, Chairman, Presiding**

## **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Chris Coudriet, Chairman, New Hanover County Manager  
Mr. Sterling Cheatham, Vice Chairman, Wilmington City Manager  
Mr. Kemp Burpeau, Deputy Attorney, New Hanover County  
Mr. John D. Joye, Wilmington City Attorney  
Mr. Paul Lawler, Wilmington City Council Appointee  
Ms. Abby Lorenzo, WMPO Designee  
Ms. Laura Mortell, Budget and Research Director, City of Wilmington  
Mr. Woody White, New Hanover County Board of Commissioners Appointee  
Ms. Lisa Wurtzbacher, Chief Finance Officer, New Hanover County

## **MEMBERS ABSENT**

None

## **STAFF PRESENT**

Mr. Albert Eby, Executive Director  
Mr. Joe Mininni, Director of Finance & Administration  
Mr. Cliff Rode, Paratransit Manager  
Ms. Kathy Williams, Customer Service Supervisor  
Mr. Cliff Rode, Paratransit Manager

## **CONTRACT MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT**

Ms. Noel Fox, Craige and Fox PLLC, Attorney  
Mr. Bill Harned, Area Vice President, First Transit  
Ms. Dianne Jensen, Contractor General Manager, First Transit  
Mr. Jeremy Smith, Contractor Assistant General Manager, First Transit  
Mr. Matthew Daniels, Contractor Maintenance Manager, First Transit

## **GUESTS PRESENT**

Ms. Tracie Barnhill, Citizen  
Mr. Ehren T. Bingaman, TransPro  
Mr. Sidney Bouchelle, Citizen  
Mr. Kristopher Browning, TransPro  
Mr. DeAndre' Corniffe, Citizen  
Mr. Bryon Dorey, Deputy Finance Director, City of Wilmington  
Ms. Meredith Everhart, Deputy Attorney, City of Wilmington  
Ms. Emily Featherston, WECT  
Mr. Kwame Johnson, Citizen  
Ms. Jessica Loeper, Chief Communications Officer, NHC  
Ms. Sherita McCullers, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) 1328  
Mr. Ricky Meeks, Citizen  
Mr. Andrew Noeth, Citizen  
Mr. Tom Pacelli, NHC Senior Resource Center  
Hon. Harper Peterson, NC Senate  
Mr. David Rhew, NC Public Transportation Association

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Secretary - Wave Transit

Ms. Anne K. Ryan, Citizen  
Ms. Lyndsey Scofield, TransPro  
Ms. Neal Shulman, Citizen  
Mr. Michael Smith, Citizen  
Ms. Monroe Watson, Citizen  
Ms. Martha Wayne, Deputy Finance Officer, New Hanover County  
Ms. Laura Padgett, Citizen

### **CALL TO ORDER**

- Mr. Coudriet called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm
- The meeting began with a moment of silence followed by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

- Mr. Coudriet opened the public comment period
- Mr. Meeks stated he has been using public transportation his entire life and expressed great support for Wave Transit
- He said many riders are negatively impacted by the recent reduction in service hours and many drivers are concerned about their jobs
- Ms. Barnhill stated the reason Wave Transit is in the financial situation they are in is because of a lack of financial support from the County
- She said the County has shunned Wave Transit and denied their request a vehicle registration fee
- Ms. Barnhill expressed support for Wave Transit and would like to see an expansion in public transportation services
- Mr. Shuelman stated public transportation in our community is necessary but should be operated correctly
- He expressed opposition to the current business model and subsidization of UNCW transportation service
- Mr. Shuelman stated UNCW is costing the City of Wilmington money with no contribution to the community
- Mr. Corniffe thanked the board for the opportunity to provide comment
- He stated he is grateful that the County Commissioners have brought themselves to the table for change to the Wave Transit board and provided additional funding to keep Wave operational
- Mr. Corniffe said Wave Transit was solvent five years ago and has gradually become insolvent due to decisions made on behalf of the previous board
- He stated bus service was expanded outside of the City of Wilmington without additional funding from the surrounding counties
- Ms. McCullers spoke to improvements by First Transit in recent years which can be attributed to a change in leadership and management
- She stated management conducts monthly safety meeting with operations staff, provides training, and offers a wellness program for employees
- Ms. McCullers said a reduction in daily overtime has eliminated forced overtime, a major concern for the union
- She said she hopes the decisions made by the board will have a positive impact on the riding public as well as Transit Management and Authority employees

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- Mr. Coudriet presented the February 2020 consent agenda for approval
- Mr. Lawler requested an amendment to the February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes to reflect that Mr. Coudriet had an opportunity to speak with *most* board members and not *each* board member
- Ms. Lorenzo stated the minutes should be revised to notate she was not in attendance as stated

- Mr. Cheatham made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the meeting minutes amended as stated
- Mr. Lawler seconded the motion and the motion carried

### **FEDERAL TRANSIT PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Mr. Eby to provide an overview of the federal transit program
- Mr. Eby discussed the history of the federal transit program
- Mr. Eby provided an overview of the history of transit in the region
- He outlined competing federal and state statutes regarding collective bargaining with unions
- To ensure compliance with federal and state regulations, the Authority contracts with an independent management contractor
- He confirmed that the Authority contracts with First Transit to act as the employer of record for fixed route employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement
- Mr. Eby confirmed the Authority is the designated recipient of Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) funds in the region
- He spoke to the process regarding the allocation of transit dollars and programming of projects to the urbanized area (UZA)
- Public transportation projects are programmed in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) by the WMPO
- MTIP projects are programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) by the NCDOT Board of Transportation
- Mr. Eby confirmed the UZA was recognized as a Transportation Management Area (TMA) by the Department of Transportation following the 2010 census when the population exceeded 200,000
- He recognized Commissioner White as the public transportation representative on the WMPO board
- Mr. Eby said the WMPO and the Authority share Section 5303 metropolitan transportation planning duties and funding and confirmed this year's appropriation from the WMPO in planning funds as approximately \$56,000
- He explained the NCDOT State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP)
- Mr. Eby said SMAP funding is performance based formula using cost per trip less fares
- Mr. Eby provided an overview of the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities grant program
- In 2016, the Authority was recognized by FTA as the designated recipient for Section 5310 formula funds
- He stated this funding is used to support the operations of Route 205 Long Leaf Park, which carries a high number of elders and individuals with disabilities, aid in outreach and travel training efforts, and for purchased transportation services for New Hanover and Brunswick County Senior Resource Centers
- He stated the Authority receives a formula allocation for capital under the Section 5339(a) Bus and Bus Facilities program
- Mr. Eby confirmed grant funds under this program can only be used on items considered capital including, but not limited to, vehicles and vehicle equipment, facilities and facilities maintenance and passenger amenities
- Mr. Eby stated that two years of Section 5339(a) funding is available; however, the Authority has not identified a local funding source to utilize the funds
- He confirmed that the funds are available during the year of apportionment plus two additional years
- Apportionments not applied for are subject to forfeiture
- Mr. Eby spoke to a lack of dedicated funding available to use as matching funds to federal awards
- Mr. Eby spoke to the federal reporting requirements to the National Transit Database

- He confirmed the data provided is normalized between small and large transit agencies and provides a great resource for data analysis

### **MANAGEMENT RFP CONTRACT 20-01**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Mr. Eby to give the Management Request for Proposals (RFP) 20-01 presentation
- Mr. Eby stated that current management contract with First Transit was for four years with an additional three two year extensions available
- The ten year maximum period for the contract is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2020
- Mr. Eby stated that the contract was not eligible for additional extensions
- Following discussion by the board, staff was directed to issue the RFP s drafted

### **FINANCE REPORT**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Ms. Wayne to present an update of the FY2020 budget
- Ms. Wayne stated she has been working in conjunction with Mr. Dorey and Mr. Mininni on a revised budget for FY2020
- She confirmed a budget deficit of \$491,000 was anticipated by the end of the fiscal year
- Ms. Wayne confirmed additional adjustments led to a projected deficit of approximately \$528,397
- Ms. Wayne stated that a budget violation occurred in the FY 2020 Budget Ordinance when the projected fund balance line item exceeded available fund balance
- She stated that the violation would be listed as corrected in the audit after a budget amendment is approved
- Mr. Coudriet recognized Mr. Mininni to present the financial report
- Mr. Mininni provided a report of the Authority's January financial statement
- He spoke to the fragility of the Authority's financial structure by highlighting the budgetary impact of unscheduled events such as a natural disaster or a government shutdown
- Mr. Coudriet suggested staff work closely with TransPro Consulting to identify methods to improve available operating revenues and reductions in expenses

### **CONTRACTOR REPORT**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized First Transit representative, Mr. Bill Harned, to present the report
- Mr. Harned thanked Ms. McCullers and the ATU for the supportive comments
- He said leadership has been working diligently in building morale and establishing a good working relationship with union and non-union personnel
- Mr. Harned confirmed the contract with the union expired on June 30, 2019 and both sides have begun negotiations regarding a new collective bargaining agreement
- Mr. Coudriet inquired as to why the union contract has not yet been renewed
- Mr. Harned attributed the delay to scheduling and available financial resources
- He confirmed that additional wages and benefits would expedite the process and simplify negotiations
- Mr. Eby said funding has always been the biggest challenge in labor negotiations
- Ms. Fox stated that she would advise the board to enter into closed session when discussing matters pertaining to negotiations and/or contracts
- She said that the board may want to better understand Wave Transit's finances before providing guidance
- Ms. Fox recommended the upcoming work session as an opportunity for further discussion
- Ms. Jensen presented the contractor's report
- She reported that operator overtime has trended in a positive direction and is currently at 2.25%
- Ms. Jensen attributed the significant decrease in overtime to the success of recruitment and retention of new trainees

- She confirmed management is actively seeking training opportunities for employees
- Mr. Coudriet requested Mr. Eby schedule a date for work session
- Mr. Eby stated he would seek availability of board members, TransPro and First Transit and schedule the work session

**NEW BUSINESS**

- None

**OLD BUSINESS**

- None

**ADJOURN**

- Mr. Joye made a motion to adjourn the March 2020 meeting
- Mr. Burpeau seconded the motion and the motion carried

**SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

- The next board meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2020 at 12:30 pm in the Forden Station Board Room.

Respectfully Submitted,



Albert Eby  
Executive Director  
/kw/mm