



# Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority

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

## **MEMBERS PRESENT**

- Mr. Chris Coudriet, Chairman, New Hanover County Manager
- Mr. Sterling Cheatham, Vice Chairman, City of Wilmington Manager
- Mr. Kemp Burpeau, New Hanover County, Attorney
- Ms. John Joye, City of Wilmington, Attorney
- Mr. Mike Kozlosky, WMPO, Executive Director
- Mr. Paul Lawler, City of Wilmington Appointee
- Ms. Laura Mortell, City of Wilmington, Budget and Research Director
- Mr. Woody White, New Hanover County Board of Commissioners Appointee

## **MEMBERS ABSENT**

- Ms. Lisa Wurtzbacher, New Hanover County, Chief Finance Officer

## **STAFF PRESENT**

- Ms. Megan Matheny, Interim Director
- Mr. Joe Mininni, Director of Finance & Administration
- Ms. Vanessa Lacer, Mobility Manager
- Mr. Cliff Rode, Paratransit Manager
- Ms. Mary Crawford, Accounting Coordinator
- Ms. Kathy Williams, Customer Service Supervisor

## **CONTRACT MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT**

- Mr. Matt Daniels, Contractor Maintenance Manager, First Transit
- 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

## **GUESTS PRESENT**

- Ms. Tracie Barnhill, Citizen
- Mr. Ehren Bingaman, Principal, TransPro Consulting
- Mr. Kristopher Browning, Project Leader, TransPro Consulting
- Mr. Terrence Dewberry, President, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) 1328
- Mr. Bryon Dorey, Assistant Finance Director, City of Wilmington
- Ms. Emily Featherston, WECT
- Ms. Jessica Loeper, Chief Communications Officer, New Hanover County
- Ms. Sherita McCullers, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) 1328
- Ms. Sonia Nobles, Citizen
- Mr. Al Ragland, Human Resources Director, City of Wilmington
- Ms. Yozosne Riley, Citizen
- Mr. David Rhew, Executive Director, North Carolina Public Transportation Association
- Ms. Martha Wayne, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, New Hanover County

**CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY**

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Secretary - Wave Transit

## **CALL TO ORDER**

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

## **ROLL CALL**

- Mr. Coudriet conducted roll call with attendance confirmed by all members except Ms. Wurtzbacher who was not present
- All members attended in person except for Commissioner White who attended remotely

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

- Mr. Coudriet presented the August 27, 2020 meeting agenda noting removal of item #3 *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with New Hanover County for Emergency Transportation Services* at the request of Ms. Matheny and Ms. Fox
- Mr. Joy noted a correction on item #9 *Committee Reports* stating the item should read *Reports*
- Mr. Coudriet entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda as revised
- Mr. Joye moved to approve the meeting agenda as revised
- There was a second by Mr. Cheatham
- Mr. Coudriet conducted a roll call vote and the motion carried with all in favor
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet moved to the next item on the agenda

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Mr. Coudriet opened the public comment period
- He stated three members of the public are signed up to provide comment and one written public comment received will be read into the record
- Mr. Coudriet recognized Ms. Yozosne Riley
- Ms. Riley introduced herself as the Chief Shop Steward for the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1328
- She stated she is standing before the board today, as she has for the past three meetings, to address the union's request for front line hero appreciation pay
- Ms. Riley stated she has not received a response or follow-up to her request as anticipated
- She thanked the Board for providing the necessary PPE for personnel and for suspending fares for fixed route service to allow for rear door entry
- Ms. Riley stated services at the college has resumed and operators are pleased with the safety barriers installed around the driver compartment on the shuttles
- She stated the future of UNCW services is uncertain as many colleges across the state are beginning to shut down
- Ms. Riley spoke to concern of layoffs if UNCW goes all virtual
- She thanked the Board again for consideration of the union's request for hero appreciation pay
- Mr. Coudriet stated this is the third time in which the hero's pay has been addressed by Ms. Riley
- He stated he would like to understand the interest from the Board if this item should be calendared for further discussion on a future agenda
- Mr. Coudriet stated certainly no action taken at the current meeting but discussion for a future meeting to provide a resolution to Ms. Riley's request
- Mr. Kozlosky asked if the Board has seen a formal proposal from staff regarding the request
- Mr. Coudriet stated not that he is aware and deferred to Ms. Matheny for comment
- Ms. Matheny confirmed staff has received a general e-mail  request; however, a formal proposal has not been received
- Mr. Coudriet requested that Ms. Matheny work with Ms. Riley and the like to frame out a proposal

- He requested staff provide a set of options, offering no commitment, to the Board for consideration
- Ms. Fox stated union members contracted through First Transit and confirmed that First Transit would address the question with Ms. Riley, rather than Authority staff in direct communication with the union
- Mr. Coudriet thanked Ms. Fox for her comment stating her point was well made
- He recognized Mr. Dewberry for comment
- Mr. Dewberry provided his name and address for the record
- He stated as far as the hero's pay, this is a recommendation to the agency for consideration outside or independent of contract negotiations
- Mr. Dewberry stated contract negotiations are underway and we are scheduled to meet again in September; however, unfortunately we do not have a contract
- He thanked the Board for their patience and stated they are prepared to take some sort of action should an agreement not be reached
- Mr. Dewberry noted some progress and stated they are not trying to be unreasonable in their requests and are trying to hold on
- He spoke to rising health care costs and additional financial challenges in which members are faced with
- Mr. Dewberry stated we have not had a contract for over a year, and something must be done
- Mr. Coudriet recognized Ms. Barnhill to the podium
- Ms. Barnhill confirmed her name and address for the record
- She asked for a show of hands of Board members who have taken the bus
- Ms. Barnhill recognized Mr. Lawler as the only Board member present who has used Wave Transit and physically taken the bus since becoming a Board member
- She stated there has been talk about cutting routes and spoke against this action
- Ms. Barnhill stated we need to address the financial issue here and not continue to sweep it under the rug; the issue that has placed you in your position today
- She stated New Hanover County needs to pay more money into Wave; if not, we will lose our FTA funding
- Ms. Barnhill stated the service hours need to go back to where they were before cuts took place in January 2020
- She provided service recommendations, addressing each fixed route within the service network
- Mr. Lawler stated Ms. Barnhill referenced the big bus and stated we have the Gillig bus, a Ford shuttle and mid-sized trolley vehicle
- He asked if the mid-sized trolley vehicle is big enough for recommendations regarding vehicle size
- Ms. Barnhill stated the trolley might work on the routes in which a larger vehicle is needed
- She stated this vehicle type would address the ADA concerns associated with the wheelchair lift on the shuttle vehicles
- Mr. Coudriet stated he will now read into the record a comment received in written format from Ms. Sylvia Schwartz
- The written comment provided by Ms. Swartz is included as an attachment to the minutes
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet closed the public comment period and moved to the next item on the agenda

### **SERVICE REDUCTION RESOLUTION**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Ms. Matheny to introduce the resolution
- Ms. Matheny stated public transportation services to Northern Brunswick County offered by the Authority are slated to sunset at 6:00 pm on Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>
- She confirmed that absent local funds provided by the Brunswick Consortium, the Authority is unable to support the continued operation of this route

- Ms. Matheny stated outreach efforts regarding the discontinuation of service began June 2020 and were performed in accordance with the Authority's adopted *Public Comment Policy*
- Mr. Coudriet stated that rather than reading the resolution in its entirety he will read the *NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED* clause
- He stated now therefore, be it resolved the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority hereby adopts the elimination of Route 204 Brunswick Connector and complementary ADA paratransit service to Northern Brunswick County effective 6:00 pm Friday, September 4, 2020
- Mr. Coudriet recognized Mr. Lawler for question
- Mr. Lawler asked for the period of service from fiscal year beginning July 1 until September 4<sup>th</sup>, is the Brunswick Consortium paying for that or is that all on the Authority
- Ms. Matheny confirmed the Authority is covering the cost of providing services for the period of performance referenced
- Mr. Coudriet asked if there was a motion to approve the resolution so we can open the floor for discussion
- Mr. Lawler moved to approve the resolution
- There was a second by Mr. Joye
- Mr. Coudriet recognized Mr. Joye for comment
- Mr. Joye stated when we have partners withdraw support, we are forced to look at we can do and we simple do not have the finances to shoulder the cost for operations by ourselves
- He stated this is going in the opposite direction of where we should be headed with bringing more partners to the table and working with our neighbors
- Mr. Joye stated he is hopeful that a network redesign and a revised Board will provide an opportunity to reverse this very quickly
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet stated there is a motion and a second on the floor
- Mr. Coudriet solicited votes through roll call
- The motion carried unanimously

#### **UPDATE ON THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Mr. Al Ragland, City of Wilmington's HR Director to present on this item
- Mr. Ragland stated he search committee, comprised of Mr. Lawler, Ms. Wurtzbacher and Mr. Kozlosky, has been and working hard on action items to move us through the process
- He provided an update on the search process at four weeks, action items completed to date and an updated timeline for securement of Wave Transit's Executive Director
- Mr. Ragland spoke to the creation of the candidate profile and advertising efforts for the position
- He confirmed the total applications received to date as sixteen and stated majority of them have experience in public transportation at the executive level
- Included in his presentation were next steps for hiring considerations, interview travel expense, and relocation assistance
- Mr. Ragland offered a recommendation on compensation providing data from external benchmarks for public transportation agencies within North Carolina as well as director level positions at the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County to support the proposal
- He presented a salary range recommendation of \$104,000 to \$160,000 with a hiring range targeting \$120,000 to \$135,000
- Mr. Ragland requested guidance on the recommendation and direction for the committee to move forward in the hiring process
- Mr. Lawler stated we seem to have set a salary higher than Winston Salem and Raleigh which are presumably larger systems
- Mr. Ragland responded providing confirmation on how the target hiring range was established
- Mr. Coudriet asked if Mr. Ragland believes with the range outlined makes us competitive in the market
- He confirmed from a market perspective, he believes the target to be the correct range for Wilmington based upon the benchmark data

- Mr. Joye spoke in support of the recommendation adding there will be great expectations for whomever steps into this role
- Mr. Kozlosky stated that depending on the candidate, we should leave flexibility in the range to accommodate for experience and recommended reducing the floor of the hiring range to a figure less than \$120,000
- Mr. Ragland stated this is about affordability and stated minor adjustments can be made to these parameters if/as needed
- He stated he wanted to ensure the full Board was comfortable with the recommendations before proceeding forward in the hiring process
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet entertained a motion for endorsement of the set of recommendations brought forth by Mr. Ragland
- Mr. Joye moved to endorse the salary range recommendations proposed by Mr. Ragland
- There was a second by Ms. Mortell
- Mr. Coudriet conducted a roll call vote with all in favor
- The motion carried
- Mr. Ragland stated interviews are traditionally held in person with the final candidates, usually two, with associated travel expenses covered by the hiring agency
- He stated staff confirmed travel expenses of up to \$700 paid for final candidates at the manager and director level position in prior years
- Mr. Ragland presented a proposal for a travel expense budget of \$3,000 for the Executive Director candidates
- Mr. Lawler made a motion to accept the proposal for a travel expenses budget not to exceed \$3,000 for interviews for the Executive Director position
- There was a second by Mr. Cheatham
- Mr. Coudriet conducted a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously
- Mr. Ragland confirmed the committee will conduct interviews pairing down the candidates to a smaller number
- The question becomes at what point does the full Board want to be engaged in the in the selection process
- He outlined two options for involvement one including engagement by the full Board at the final stage and the second with the committee plus the Chairman and Vice-Chairman as representatives for the full Board
- Mr. Coudriet stated when we established the committee, the idea was the committee would lead the process up to the point in which we had a final candidate or two to explore so the full Board would be engaged only at the decision on the final candidate
- He stated if we move this forward as discussed, we effectively address the level of involvement on behalf of the full Board in the selection of the financial candidates and the decision surrounding the final selection
- Mr. Coudriet made a motion for the committee to do the exhaustive work then groom the full Board on the preferred candidate or candidates for a final Board interview
- There was a second by Mr. Cheatham
- Mr. Coudriet solicited votes through roll call with all in favor
- The motion carried unanimously
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet moved to the next item on the agenda

## **REPORTS**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Ms. Mortell to provide an update on the funding model
- Ms. Mortell provided an overview of current and prospective future revenues for Wave Transit providing a handout to accompany the report
- Mr. Joye confirmed no update on the governance structure at this time
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet moved to the next item on the agenda

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- Mr. Coudriet entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda as revised, removing item #3 *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with New Hanover County for emergency transportation services*
- Mr. Kozlosky moved to approve item #1, 2 and 4 of the August consent agenda
- There was a second by Mr. Cheatham
- Mr. Coudriet conducted a vote via roll call and the motion carried unanimously

## **DRAFT JULY 2020 FINANCIAL REPORT**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Mr. Mininni to provide an update on the July financials
- Mr. Mininni stated the financial report can be found on page 27 of the agenda packet
- He entertained questions regarding the update as provided in the packet
- Mr. Lawler requested that a CARES Act line item be included under
- Hearing no comments, Mr. Coudriet moved to the next item on the agenda

## **OPERATIONS UPDATE**

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Ms. Matheny to provide an update on this item
- Ms. Matheny stated the Authority entered into the final year of a three-year agreement for transportation services with UNCW
- Prior to the resumption of services on August 19<sup>th</sup>, the Authority was facing an 8% decrease in scheduled service hours under the UCNW Seahawk Shuttle Program
- She attributed the decrease to revisions in the 2020 - 2021 academic calendar resulting from the COVID-19 health crisis
- Ms. Matheny stated the scheduled service hours for the fiscal year are projected to fall below the minimum threshold of 16,000 service hours outlined in the contract
- She stated the hourly rate is based upon the number of service hours provided; the decrease in service hours has resulted in the need to increase the base rate by \$4.00
- Ms. Matheny stated an addendum addressing the revised rate for services and damages for failure to adhere to the 60-day notification requirement for cancellation of services will be provided to the Board for consideration during the September 2020 meeting
- Mr. Coudriet requested clarification as to the net financial impact should the University find the need to cancel services with and/or without a sixty-day notification
- Ms. Matheny confirmed she will follow-up with a report outlining the net financial impact for service adjustments under the scenarios provided as requested
- She reported and illustrated completion of the installation of permanent protective barriers on all revenue vehicles except for the Gillig buses
- Ms. Matheny provided a date of late September as a projected completion date for this item
- She provided follow-up on announcement of award in the amount of \$550,000 for replacement of one Gillig bus under *Phase 1* of the Volkswagen Settlement grant
- Ms. Matheny confirmed that the award is 100% grant funded and requires zero local match
- Mr. Lawler recommended consideration be granted to procurement of a revised vehicle type such as a trolley
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet requested to take a five-minute recess

## **CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) - ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGE**

- Upon return, Mr. Coudriet requested to adjust the agenda placing the closed session prior to the update from TransPro Consulting
- He stated he would like to have consensus from the Board to have a special called meeting between now and the September meeting to talk about what we are going to hear from TransPro in greater detail
- Mr. Coudriet stated if there is no objection from the Board, he would like to make a motion to move into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) attorney/client privilege

- There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried

#### **DRAFT NETWORK DESIGN REPORT**

- In the absence of Chairman Coudriet, Mr. Cheatham recognized Mr. Kristopher Browning with TransPro Consulting to present the draft network redesign report
- Mr. Browning provided an overview of the *Draft Network Design Proposal Report #2* highlighting revisions from the draft presented at the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting
- The presentation and subsequent discussion is located at time stamp 1:20 through 57:00 of the recorded meeting found at the following link:  
<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/4af400d847c65a3ba526837654f6fe6bb7d55b351d71e9911f0637557d10ceb9>.
- No action was taken on the recommendations contained within the draft network redesign proposal presented by TransPro Consulting
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

#### **CONTRACTOR REPORT**

- Mr. Cheatham recognized Ms. Jensen to provide the report
- Ms. Jensen confirmed a copy of the report can be found on page 31 of the agenda packet
- She noted a decrease in operator overtime to 4% for the month August which can be attributed to an increase in labor force in preparation for UCNW services
- Ms. Jensen confirmed the start-up of UCNW services went very well and recognized maintenance personnel for their efforts to prepare the shuttles with the proper protective equipment
- Hearing no questions or comments, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- None

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- None

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- Mr. Kozlosky made a motion to adjourn the August 27, 2020 meeting
- There was a second by Mr. Joye and the motion carried

#### **SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

- The next board meeting is scheduled for September 24, 2020 at 12:30 pm
- The meeting will be held remotely and in person at the Wave Transit Maintenance and Operations Center located at 1480 Castle Hayne Rd.

Respectfully Submitted,



Megan Matheny  
Interim Director  
/Kathy Williams

**Public Comment Form**

Date: 8/24/2020

Time: 2:07pm

Name (first and last): Sylvia Schwartz

Contact Information:

Phone Number: 910-397-0969

Physical Address: 448 Racine Dr., 28403

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Point of Contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment(s):

I'm concerned about being able to get back and forth to work. I work at the mall and I live a few blocks from the college and have been relying heavily on the 103. I understand the problems and think it's a right idea to reinvent the bus company and don't understand why we have to have the big stations, or the big expensive buses, perhaps we could sell the stations and get smaller buses. I have heard of another bus system from a friend who visited an island community where they ran smaller buses every 20 minutes, and it was a very efficient, working system. I think it's extremely important that you consider the needs of the community during this process so you avoid as much as possible cutting people out of their jobs. I want to express gratitude for having this bus all these years, I came down here in 1995 and have been using it all this time. A bus was always within walking distance from my house. Because of the neighborhood I live in, which is close to the college and a large number of apartment complexes, I'm assuming there will still be a need for bus service in my neighborhood. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my thoughts on this subject.

I do \_\_\_\_\_ do not  plan on attending the board meeting scheduled for 8/27/2020

to be held at the Wave Transit Operations Center located at 1480 Castle Hayne Rd., 28401.

ADA accommodations are \_\_\_\_\_ are not  requested.

Staff Signature: Vanessa Lacer