



Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority

**MINUTES OF THE
CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING
February 25, 2021
Mr. Sterling Cheatham, Chairman, Presiding**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Sterling Cheatham, Chairman, New Hanover County Manager
Mr. Chris Coudriet, Vice Chairman, City of Wilmington Manager
Mr. Kemp Burpeau, New Hanover County, Attorney
Ms. Deb Hays, New Hanover County Appointee
Mr. John Joye, City of Wilmington, Attorney
Mr. Paul Lawler, City of Wilmington Appointee
Ms. Abigail Lorenzo, WMPO Designee
Ms. Laura Mortell, City of Wilmington, Budget and Research Director
Ms. Lisa Wurtzbacher, New Hanover County, Chief Finance Officer

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Mike Kozlosky, WMPO, Executive Director

STAFF PRESENT

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

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Matthew McBride, Contractor General Manager, First Transit
Ms. Noel Fox, Craige and Fox PLLC, Attorney
Mr. Bill Harned, Area Vice President, First Transit

GUESTS PRESENT

Mr. Terrance Dewberry, President, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) 1328
Mr. Tom Pacelli, Transportation Program Coordinator, NHC Senior Resource Center
Ms. Yzosne Riley, Citizen
Ms. Martha Wayne, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, New Hanover County

CALL TO ORDER

- Chairman Cheatham called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm
- The meeting began with a moment of silence

ROLL CALL

- Mr. Cheatham conducted virtual roll call with all members confirmed as present except for Mr. Kozlosky
- He confirmed Ms. Lorenzo, WMPO Deputy Director, as present on his behalf

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY
Secretary - Wave Transit

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

- Mr. Cheatham presented the February 25, 2021 meeting agenda
- Mr. Joye stated he believes consent agenda item 2 *Agreement with WMPO for Planning Assistance for FY21* has the same conflict present during the February meeting and recommended the item be pulled
- Mr. Cheatham requested to proceed with the agenda as presented and confirmed the modification, as requested, would be made when addressing agenda item #6
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Mr. Cheatham opened the public comment period
- Receiving no requests from members of the public to provide comment, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

CONSENT AGENDA

- Mr. Cheatham acknowledged Mr. Joye's request for item 2 be removed from the consent agenda due to an issue regarding who can vote on this item
- Mr. Cheatham entertained a motion for approval of items 1 and 3 of the consent agenda
- Mr. Lawler presented a question on the meeting minutes
- He stated under the December 2020 financial report it stated \$55,000 was collected in fares; he thought it was determined that this was a little misleading because of the reallocation or \$20,000 from another account
- Mr. Lawler stated the total fares collected is somewhere around \$34,000 to \$36,000
- Mr. Mininni confirmed Mr. Lawler's statement as true and confirmed a correction to the minutes is warranted
- Mr. Lawler made a motion to approve consent agenda items 1 and 3 with the modifications to the meeting minutes as stated
- There was a second by Ms. Mortell
- Mr. Joye noted an additional modification to item 2
- He stated he would propose for approval as a modification to item 2, the second bullet on page 5 under appointment of officers, he believes the statutory citation should read *160-A* not *168-A*
- Mr. Joye offered that as a proposed modification
- There was a second by Ms. Mortell
- Hearing no further revisions to items 1 and 3, Mr. Cheatham entertained a motion for approval of items 1 and 3 as amended
- Mr. Coudriet made a motion to approve items 1 and 3 as amended
- There was a second by Ms. Mortell and the motion carried by roll call vote
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

FUNDING MODEL UPDATE

- Mr. Cheatham recognized Ms. Mortrell to present the funding model update
- Ms. Mortell confirmed a spreadsheet was issued, with modifications, by Ms. Martha Wayne on behalf of Ms. Wurtzbacher
- She confirmed the intention was to further discuss this item when Ms. Wurtzbacher returned and after the joint meeting between the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County had occurred
- Ms. Wurtzbacher stated at the joint meeting there were several funding options noted, one of which had not been discussed previously, for consideration
- She stated staff will continue their analysis and report back to officials at the next joint meeting, scheduled for April 27th
- Ms. Mortell confirmed the options referenced by Ms. Wurtzbacher and discussed at length, were the quarter-cent sales tax, RTI revenue, and food and beverage

- Mr. Wurtzbacher confirmed Ms. Mortell's statement as correct
- Mr. Coudriet stated he will add that of the three options, it was clearly understood by the Council and Commission that the food and beverage would take some legislative action
- Ms. Mortell stated she believes RTI would also require legislative action
- Mr. Lawler stated the quarter-cent sales tax would generate significant revenue and inquired if the revenue would be earmarked for Wave Transit or if it could be used for other purposes
- Ms. Wurtzbacher stated she would need to confirm but believes funds could be used for public transportation
- Mr. Joye confirmed this statement as correct, so long as it is a transit purpose
- He stated per the statute, any city or county that operates transit, some form of public transportation, gets part of it
- Mr. Lawler inquired if transit pertains to buses, rail, etc. or could funds be used for streets or similar like projects
- Mr. Joye stated he believes streets not to be included; at least that is the interpretation
- Mr. Coudriet stated it does not allow for street maintenance, and there is some debate as to whether pedestrian trails might be fundable; however, roads are not included
- Ms. Hays brought forth as a point of awareness, that NCDOT has been through their review with Martin Marietta and may be coming forward and asking for a half-cent sales tax statewide
- She confirmed this as the number one proposal coming out of their review
- Ms. Hays posed the question to Chairman Cheatham and Vice-chairman Coudriet that if NCDOT raised the sales tax, could a portion be directed to the Authority through the county or city
- Mr. Coudriet stated we would need to advocate in the legislation that whatever share is returned to us, if any, that it would be dedicated to public transportation
- He confirmed we would need to get that spelled out
- Ms. Hays stated she wanted to make the members aware of this development and confirmed the presentation from the review she attended will be distributed to members for review
- Mr. Coudriet requested that before we leave off this topic, what seems kind of clear is that the County may not have clarity on how to proceed with dedicated transportation revenues in time for the fiscal year that is July 1st
- He stated perhaps he is incorrect, but he does not that as being likely
- This sets up how much of the CARES Act funding are we going to have to use next year to build the system that we want as we work toward identification and securement of a dedicated funding source
- Mr. Cheatham and Ms. Hays agreed with Mr. Coudriet's statements
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Cheatham requested this item be included on future meeting agendas for updates and comments, before moving on to item 6-2 *Agreement with WMPO for Planning Assistance for FY21*
- Mr. Cheatham confirmed action on this item was deferred until Ms. Hays was able to join
- He confirmed City representatives will need to recuse themselves from consideration of this item
- Ms. Fox confirmed that Mr. Lawler is able to vote on this agenda item
- Ms. Hays requested the Chairman state the members who must recuse themselves
- Mr. Cheatham confirmed the listing as himself, Mr. Joye, Ms. Mortell, and Ms. Lorenzo
- Mr. Joye made a motion that himself and the city representatives as referenced by the Chairman be recused from voting on consent agenda item #2
- There was a second by Ms. Mortell and the motion carried by roll call vote
- Mr. Coudriet made a motion to accept consent agenda item #2 *Agreement with WMPO for Planning Assistance for FY21* as presented
- There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried by roll call vote

STAFF REPORT

- Mr. Cheatham recognized Ms. Matheny to provide the staff report
- Ms. Matheny presented a formal recommendation from staff on the profiles for each fixed route bus included under the revised network, as adopted, slated for implementation August 15th
- Included in her presentation was an overview of the Authority's communications plan and activities associated within
- Ms. Matheny highlighted milestone action items and dates associated through the timeline of events
- She confirmed route modifications identified by staff and included in the recommendation are cost neutral from the adopted framework; meaning the total number of service hours included in this recommendation is congruent with that under the adopted framework
- Ms. Matheny confirmed the total service hours for the base framework under the network redesign as 42,824.
- She stated the initial date communicated for the opening of the 90-day public comment period coincided with the March 25th Board meeting; however, this date was revised to Monday, March 8th provided no revisions to the recommendation as presented
- She confirmed this will poise the Board for adoption of a final network framework on June 25th, prior to the close of the fiscal year
- Ms. Matheny's presentation and subsequent discussion can be found at time stamps 40:05 thru 1:17 of the recorded meeting found at the following link:
<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/7102bf29a4c8550b8a71df5aafb954f1e31427482843d92ed852e01f17fbf684>.
- Hearing no further comment, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

JANUARY 2021 FINANCIAL REPORT

- Mr. Cheatham recognized Mr. Mininni to provide an update on this agenda item
- Mr. Mininni stated the Operational Statistics report was revised to include trips performed to vaccination distribution sites under the collaborative grant effort with NCDOT and DHHS
- He stated the Authority received \$41,000 under this effort for transportation of community members to local vaccination sites
- Mr. Mininni confirmed 22 rides to and from vaccination sites were performed in January
- He stated operating revenues for January came in below adopted budget levels
- Mr. Mininni reported a shortfall in total operating revenues and the actual budget of \$571,000
- He stated under operating subsidies, two sources are listed under federal line item, this first is the Authority's annual formula allocation and the second is the supplemental, CARES Act funding
- Mr. Mininni stated the two variances, showing up as \$151,000 and \$106,000 and totaling \$259,000, coupled with what we are saving on our expenditure's year to date, equals about \$549,000 of that total deficit that we are seeing in the operating revenues
- He stated as we progress through the fiscal year, we anticipate that expenditures will continue to come in below adopted budget levels, at between 6% or 7% for a possible savings of \$600,000
- Mr. Mininni stated if we can work toward that number and realize better results in our operating revenues, our reliance on CARES Act funding, as compared to the budget, will not exceed an additional \$300,000
- Hearing no further comments, Mr. Coudriet moved to the next item on the agenda

LOCALLY COORDINATED PLAN UPDATE

- Mr. Cheatham recognized Ms. Lacer to give the plan update
- Ms. Lacer said that the first phase of the planning process, which is public input that began on October 1st and concluded on February 12th
- Ms. Lacer said that they engaged with around 350 older adults and people with disabilities

- She said that they are currently in the plan creation and review phase and the draft LCP will be completed this week and will be available for public comment beginning March 1st and concluding on March 30th
- Ms. Lacer said that the draft plan inconclusive of any public comments received will be presented to the WMPO and the Wave boards for review in April
- Ms. Lacer said that the plan adoption is scheduled for May by both the WMPO and Authority boards
- Hearing no questions or comments, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

CONTRACTOR REPORT

- Mr. Cheatham recognized Mr. McBride to give the report
- Mr. McBride introduced himself and provided a brief background
- He reported no accidents or injuries and a reduction in road calls of 45% for the month of January
- Mr. McBride recognized operators, maintenance, and staff for their efforts in this positive trend before entertaining questions
- Hearing no questions or comments, Mr. Cheatham moved to the next item on the agenda

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Mr. Coudriet recognized Ms. Parker to provide the Executive Director update
- Ms. Parker stated the Port City Trolley provides 4,100 hours of revenue service annually at a fully allocated cost of \$338,000
- She confirmed this amount represents 6% of the Authority's total budget, it is the eleventh out of sixteen routes with the greatest expense, and generates zero revenue
- Ms. Parker provided a reminder about the potential revenue stream from advertising that is expected to materialize now that some COVID restrictions have been lifted
- She confirmed fareboxes were installed on the trolley vehicles, providing access to hourly ridership data effective December 2020
- Ms. Parker stated the trolley is underperforming, illustrating a productivity number of 4.5 with only five half hour data points above the 4.25 productivity number
- She recommended elimination of the least productive hours on the trolley, as presented, and a service retention of 75% for Route 203 Port City Trolley effective August 15th with the implementation of the revised system network
- Ms. Parker said that the Authority can eliminate non-productive hours during the week, but will also need to simultaneously eliminate earlier hours as well
- She said that they could also accomplish some reallocation of hours to Friday and Saturday, redefining weekend service, and aligning Sunday service with weekday service hours
- Ms. Parker stated the recommendation includes a service begin time of 10:00 am and the newly defined weekend service to 9:00 pm making it more attractive to residents and visitors
- She stated if additional funds are provided to support the program, then additional service hours can be reinstated without issue
- Ms. Hayes thanked Ms. Parker on her forward thinking regarding a flexible plan for the trolley
- She stated they are working diligently to identify permanent funding to have the trolley operating at 100%
- Ms. Parker confirmed attention is focused on building a system centered around accessibility, reliability, and efficiency
- She commended staff for their efforts and due diligence in vetting the routes included under the revised framework
- Ms. Parker said they have been able to maintain service areas, accommodate and even increase frequencies on the highest performing routes in the recommendation presented by staff
- She spoke to short-term and long-term technology projects identified including, a stop level data solution, a mobile payment solution, and a planning platform solution

- Ms. Parker stated the technology solutions referenced will provide the Authority with reliable data required for making future and sound service and program decisions
- She reported efforts to address the programming issues associated with the on-time performance data continue; however, improvements have been noted
- Ms. Parker stated the Authority remains engaged with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to enter and lead a regional Microtransit initiative to transport citizens to vaccination sites
- She confirmed the Authority was nominated as the lead agency on the project and confirmed approximately \$200,000 would be allotted to each system for transportation should the project come to fruition
- Ms. Parker stated efforts with NCDOT to identify a Microtransit vendor, availability of funding, and feasibility of the project continue
- She stated interested employees will have an opportunity to receive their vaccinations in the coming weeks
- Ms. Parker stated this is yet another milestone as we move forward through the pandemic; this will create relief and comfort for many employees who receive the vaccination
- She said that 51 systems have been participating in the vaccination transportation initiative, 853 trips have been provided by public transportation agencies statewide, and the trips performed by the Authority account for 8% of the overall trips performed statewide
- Ms. Parker thanked staff for maintaining routine paratransit operations and operating the covid vaccine program
- She confirmed driver appreciation day is March 18th and encouraged all members to take the opportunity to visit the station or a bus stop to provide a quick hello and thank you to the driver(s)
- Hearing no questions or comments, Mr. Cheatham moved to the final items on the agenda

NEW BUSINESS

- None

OLD BUSINESS

- None

ADJOURNMENT

- Mr. Joye made a motion to adjourn the February 25, 2021 meeting
- There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

- The next board meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2021 at 12:30 pm
- The meeting will be held remotely

Respectfully Submitted,



Megan Matheny
Deputy Director
/Kathy Williams