



SUMMARY MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
OCTOBER 28, 2021

A meeting of the Cape Fear Public Board of Directors was called to order at 12:31 pm on Thursday, October 28, 2021, by Board Chairman Tony Caudle at 505 Cando St., Wilmington, North Carolina and virtually via telephone and video conference.

Board Members Present

Tony Caudle, Chairman
Chris Coudriet, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Kemp Burpeau, NHC Attorney
Hon. Deb Hays, NHC Commissioner
John Joye, City of Wilmington Attorney
Mike Kozlosky, WMPO, Executive Director
Paul Lawler, City of Wilmington Appointee
Ms. Laura Mortell, City of Wilmington Budget & Research Director
Lisa Wurtzbacher, NHC Chief Finance Officer

Staff Members Present

Marie Parker, Executive Director
Megan Matheny, Deputy Director
Joe Mininni, Director of Finance and Administration
Mary Crawford, Accounting Coordinator
Brianna D'Itri, Mobility Manager
Cliff Rode, Paratransit Manager
Kathy Williams, Customer Service Supervisor

Board Members Absent

None

Others in Attendance: Noel Fox, Harrison W. Neilly, Tom Pacelli, Yzosne Riley, and Randolph Williams

Call to Order - Chairman Caudle conducted roll call with all members confirmed as present. A moment of silence was observed followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the October 28, 2021, Board of Directors Meeting Agenda - Mr. Coudriet moved to approve the meeting agenda as presented. There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried.

Public Comment - Ms. Yzosne Riley, 1328 ATU Local Chief Shop Steward. Ms. Riley thanked management for making the time points related to on-time performance more realistic so that operators are not blamed for running behind schedule. She noted some stops and routes need to be adjusted. Ms. Riley stated Route 210 South 17th Street is too long providing little room for breaks. She recognized Mr. Williams and stated he has been working diligently to get these issues taken care of.

Approval of the October 28, 2021 Consent Agenda - Mr. Caudle entertained a motion for approval of the consent agenda. Ms. Mortell made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. There was a second by Ms. Wurtzbacher. Mr. Joye stated he has a question for the attorney that might be relevant. Ms. Fox stated the items involving New Hanover County need to be pulled from the consent agenda so that the City of Wilmington designees can be the individuals that vote on it. Mr. Coudriet requested clarification in understanding the conflict. Ms. Fox stated members of the county are approving an agreement that the county is entering into, but they are not operating in the capacity as staff or official, rather as a Board member. She stated this is what has been done with each item that has come before the Board that would be in favor of the city or the county to make certain that there was not, at least, the appearance of a conflict. Mr. Coudriet stated as a standing rule, we should be prepared as representatives of either the city or the county to abstain from any voting related to materials of this nature. Ms. Fox confirmed his statement as correct.



Mr. Caudle entertained a motion for approval of the consent agenda with the one item included, *Minutes from the September 23, 2021 Meeting*. Mr. Joye made a motion to approve the consent agenda. There was a second by Mr. Coudriet and the motion carried.

Mr. Caudle presented the New Hanover County Facility Use Agreement (FUA) Forden Station separately for approval. Mr. Lawler requested Ms. Fox speak to any changes from this contract as compared to historical contracts. Ms. Fox spoke to the longstanding agreement between the Authority and New Hanover County in need of amending and confirmed the agreement is more specific to what the duties and responsibilities are. Mr. Lawler asked if there were any material changes in the agreement presented. Mr. Joye stated this goes to the facilities, it does not go to the actual provision of the overall emergency transport services, which is still in play. Mr. Lawler stated the agreement for the buses is separate. Hearing no further questions, Mr. Caudle entertained a motion for approval of the item as presented. Mr. Lawler made a motion to approve the New Hanover County Facility Use Agreement (FUA) Forden Station. There was a second by Ms. Mortell and the motion carried. Mr. Caudle presented the New Hanover County Facility Use Agreement (FUA) Padgett Station for approval. Ms. Mortell made a motion to approve the item as presented. There was a second by Mr. Kozlosky and the motion carried.

Report by the Mobility Manager - Ms. D'Itri provided an update on marketing activities conducted and objectives achieved for first quarter under the Authority's *Outreach and Community Engagement Plan*. She confirmed creation of an Instagram account and increased interest on the Authority's existing social media platforms. She reported of positive feedback and engagement with local social media channels. Ms. D'Itri reported advertising and marketing efforts for the RideMICRO pilot project are ongoing with several identified opportunities associated with the upcoming holidays.

Report by the Director of Finance and Administration - Mr. Mininni provided an overview of the *September 2021 Operational Statistics Report* noting that while numbers remain down as compared to FY19, a slight increase in ridership, farebox recovery, and pass sales was realized. Mr. Mininni stated operator overtime for contracted operations remain elevated, but service delivery levels reflect almost 100%. Mr. Mininni stated roughly 80% of non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) trips performed under the Paratransit Department were provided under our contract with our local DSS with little activity occurring under contracts with the managed care brokers.

Mr. Mininni presented a statement of net position, confirming payables and receivables remain within adopted budget levels. He stated the Authority received preliminary feedback on the 2021 draft audit report. He said a clean audit report with no findings, disclosures, errors, or adjustments is anticipated. Mr. Robbie Bitner, partner with PBMares, will present the finalized audit report to the Board during the November meeting.

Mr. Mininni provided an overview of the statement of operating position. Mr. Mininni stated we are 25% into the fiscal year and operating revenues remain above adopted budget levels. He confirmed Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) and State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP) funding was reintroduced resulting in a positive budgetary impact of \$600,000. He stated these funds must be expended within the current fiscal year. Mr. Mininni noted positive variances across the board. He presented the local government purchased services report illustrating contributions received to date from local entities. Mr. Mininni confirmed the cash flow report reflects a positive cash balance.

Mr. Mininni presented an updated version of the active and available funding report. As requested by the Board, the revised includes an additional column illustrating the total amount, less the amount spent and the total remaining balance on federal and state funding. Mr. Mininni provided an overview of the operating results by revenue source for each mode of service delivery including, fixed-route bus and trolley, UNCW Seahawk Shuttle, ADA complementary Paratransit, contracted Paratransit and vanpooling services.



Report by the Deputy Director - Ms. Matheny presented an update on the FY23 draft service network and an overview of planned public outreach and stakeholder engagement activities. Ms. Matheny confirmed a draft recommendation of the system network redesign will be presented to the Board for review and consideration during the November meeting. She confirmed data collection and analysis efforts conducted by staff are comprehensive and ongoing. Ms. Matheny recognized the WMPO staff for their assistance with these efforts. Their responsiveness to requests and needs of the Authority is recognized and appreciated. Ms. Matheny confirmed this level of data analysis is required to design a transportation system that most effectively and efficiently meets the needs of our community under a COVID-19 environment.

Ms. Matheny confirmed public outreach and stakeholder engagement activities were established and fully vetted under the FY22 system network redesign effort. The Authority will utilize public input strategies and feedback collection methods consistent with those presented and included in the Authority's formal *Outreach and Community Engagement Plan* presented by Ms. D'Itri. She confirmed a comprehensive listing of activities and associated timeline will accompany the draft network redesign in November.

The community survey will go live early November with publication to the Authority's website. The general comment form remains unchanged from the FY22 initiative; however, a modification soliciting feedback as to impacts in travel needs resulting from the COVID-19 health crisis was realized. A social media campaign will follow suit and updates regarding the project and feedback opportunities will be presented during standing community meetings calendared for November and December. Mr. Coudriet inquired on the intent of the community survey since the vote taken many months ago was to delay implementation to tweak and improve on framework adopted. He expressed concern that we are opening the survey up with limited resources to provide service and requested further clarification.

Ms. Matheny confirmed the community survey acts as an educational opportunity and allows staff to garner any additional feedback that may have been missed under the FY22 initiative. The survey instrument was modified to include a question regarding the impact of the current health crisis on travel patterns and transportation needs. She also confirmed the intent is not to go back to the drawing board.

Mr. Kozlosky inquired if there was a significant deviation from what Transpro presented to the Board. Ms. Matheny confirmed the recommendation will be a blended model of the Transpro recommendation and staff's recommendation. Ms. Parker confirmed the draft recommendation will not be significantly different but there will be changes. Mr. Coudriet expressed concern the revised recommendation would reflect a regression from the adopted model. Ms. Matheny relayed the intent is to improve upon the adopted framework based upon data collection efforts conducted on behalf of staff.

Mr. Kozlosky questioned when the board would have an opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendation presented by staff. Ms. Matheny stated the draft timeline reflects a sixty-day period from presentation of the revised network to the opening of the ninety-day public comment period. However, the timeline is tentative and can be revised to accommodate additional time if needed.

Mr. Joye requested the board receive a refresh on the Transpro model, with the add-on options, to accompany the staff recommendation. He stated the reason for the delay was to provide the incoming Executive Director the opportunity to review and make suggestions.

Mr. Coudriet stated his intent was not to start the process over. He cast his vote to delay providing our Executive Director the time to make an evaluation on the framework that was approved, and if what is presented in November is a completely new proposal, then he would not be in support.

Mr. Lawler asked if a new route structure is presented in November, when would the board be asked to take action. Ms. Matheny confirmed the January 2022 meeting as the anticipated timeframe for adoption; however, as referenced, the timeline is subject to revision to accommodate additional time if required.



Mr. Lawler stated he was unable to recall if the vote to delay included budgetary parameters. Mr. Coudriet stated his expectation is that a network that is within the Authority's budget, less the CARES and ARP funding, and consistent with the budget associated with the adopted Transpro model would be presented. He expressed concern that anything above the budget associated with the adopted Transpro model would put the Authority in the same financial predicament as experienced previously and confirmed he would not support any recommendation to the contrary.

Ms. Parker requested further confirmation as to the expected budgetary parameters. She stated the Transpro model and associated budget, if implemented, would result in a 20% reduction in services. Ms. Parker deferred to the board for guidance on how to proceed. Mr. Coudriet reiterated that he would not support any recommendation in which the associated financials exceed that of the Transpro model as adopted.

Ms. Parker stated she was of the understanding that she was to perform a thorough evaluation of the current system network, the framework under the Transpro recommendation and come forth with a recommendation for a system network that most efficiently and effectively addresses the needs of our community.

Executive Director Briefing - Ms. Parker presented the monthly updates confirming the on-demand pilot project, RideMICRO, launched October 11th. She stated the first week brought forth a lot of inquiries, and efforts have been focused on marketing and public education surrounding the program. She said to date, the vendor has received 87 calls and performed 37 trips with demand increasing. She confirmed Zone 1 Northern Brunswick County/Downtown Wilmington and Zone 2 Pender County and Northeast New Hanover County contain approximately 203 virtual stops with expansion of hours and stops scheduled for January 2022. She stated that 80-90% of the trips performed have originated from or occurred within Brunswick County. Ms. Parker confirmed Zone 3 Carolina Beach/Southern New Hanover County will launch December 2021 and the fourth and final zone servicing Northern New Hanover County will launch Spring 2022.

Ms. Parker provided an update on the Healthy Opportunities Pilot program confirming the initiative involves direct collaboration with the Cape Fear Collective and Community Care of the Lower Cape Fear. She reported the application was submitted to the Cape Fear Collective and delivery of transportation services on behalf of the Authority is scheduled to begin February 2022. Ms. Parker said the Authority is prepared to provide service through all transportation modes for any of the eligible participants in New Hanover County for this service. She said that it is a 100% reimbursable program. Ms. Parker said that staff submitted a request for capacity building in the amount of around \$144,000 for additional personnel of two (2) part time drivers and two (2) support staff, should additional support be needed. Ms. Parker said a decision should be rendered in early November.

Ms. Parker said the Automated Passenger Counter (APC) project is underway with proposals in response to the formal solicitation due October 15, 2021. She confirmed will be conducting interviews with the selected vendors will occur early November with a recommendation as to a selected vendor presented during the November Board meeting. Ms. Parker stated the Authority is drafting and Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) policy. Ms. Parker confirmed the need for a DEI plan is recognized and consultation with peer agencies with an adopted policy is underway.

Ms. Parker stated consultants from the Leath Group, the agency performing the organizational analysis, have been interviewing current staff to confirm their job duties align with their current job descriptions. She said the report should be concluded by the close of December. Ms. Parker confirmed a press release notifying the public of the free fare day on November 2, 2021, Election Day, was issued. Ms. Parker revealed a twelve-month review of the system's on-time performance has been conducted. The system has an on-time performance rate of 84%. This marks an 11% increase since the first month of monitoring.



Ms. Parker spoke to the significance of an increase of this magnitude before recognizing staff for hard work in achieving such an increase.

New Business and Comments from the Board - Ms. Parker stated the WMPO voted to approve the Authority's grant request amount of \$273,343 for passenger amenities. She stated the funding will support the securement and installation of nine (9) benches and ten (10) covered shelters within the service network.

Mr. Joye requested meeting dates for the remainder of the current fiscal year be presented for approval at the next meeting.

Next Meeting - The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on Thursday, November 18, 2021, at 12:30 pm in the Forden Station boardroom located at 505 Cando St.

Adjournment - Mr. Joye made a motion to adjourn the October 28, 2021 meeting. There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried.

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Secretary - Wave Transit