SUMMARY MINUTES

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

JANUARY 27, 2022

A meeting of the Cape Fear Public Board of Directors was called to order at 12:34 pm on Thursday, January 27, 2022 by Board Vice-Chairman, Chris Coudriet, at 1480 Castle Hayne Rd., 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 Office

Staff Members Present

Marie Parker, Executive Director
Megan Matheny, Deputy Director
Joe Mininni, Director of Finance and Administration
Sylvia Armstrong, Human Resources Coordinator
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, Bijan Salehi, Alex Sands and Martha Wayne

Call to Order - Vice Chairman Coudriet called the meeting to order in the absence of the Chairman. Chairman Caudle arrived and conducted virtual 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 January 27, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting Agenda - Mr. Coudriet moved to approve the meeting agenda as presented. There was a second by Ms. Mortell and the motion carried by roll call vote.

Annual Rotation of Officers - As per the Interlocal Agreement Amendment (#2) between the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County, the Authority composition requires an annual rotation of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman seats based on calender year. As stated, the New Hanover County Manager, Mr. Coudriet shall serve as the Chairman with the Wilmington City Manager, Mr. Caudle serving as Vice-Chairman during even-numbered calender years. There is a motion from Mr. Joye to effect the transition of leadership as previously described. There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried by roll call vote.

Public Comment - Mr. Coudriet opened the public comment period recognizing Mr. Bijan Salehi for comment. Mr. Salehi provided an introduction and stated that for the past 12-13 years there has been no transportation in the Masonboro suburban area. He is unable to drive and advocated for bus service to his area stating he would prefer a fixed route bus to the Microtransit service option.

Ms. Yzosne Riley, 1328 ATU Local Chief Shop Steward. Ms. Riley stated COVID is impacting the drivers hard, and they are being asked to return to work while still sick. She stated passengers are not

wanting to protect themselves. Ms. Riley said a stop in service should have been in place out of respect for drivers and their health. She confirmed the union is against the proposed service cuts under the *System Network Redesign*. She stated the community is growing and more buses are needed throughout the city for the people. Ms. Riley said they only hear about cuts to and not expansion of the service; a voice is needed to represent the working people unable to attend and speak in opposition of the service cuts. Ms. Riley reported the maintenance department is not receiving money to secure parts required to repair buses, and noted sludge has been found in the maintenance department pit. She said that she may need to get the EPA involved because it is a health problem.

Approval of the January 27, 2022 Consent Agenda - Mr. Coudriet entertained a motion for approval of the consent agenda. Ms. Parker requested the PO for passenger amenities be removed from the consent agenda. Mr. Lawler stated suggestions communicated by him during the meeting are not reflected in the minutes and wanted to know why. Mr. Lawler stated all suggested changes need to be included or all need not be included. Ms Fox stated the minutes either need to be ammdended to include Mr. Lawler's comments or presented as they are. Mr. Lawler recommended amendment to the December minutes to reflect his comments. Mr. Coudriet stated they will consider the amended minutes for December the 16th at the next regularly scheduled meeting. After removal of the two items there was nothing further on the consent agenda to approve.

Public Hearing on North Carolina Department of Transportation FY2022 Urban Advanced Technology Grant Application - Mr. Coudriet made a motion to open the public hearing on the North Carolina Department of Transportation FY22 Urban Advanced Technology Grant Application. Mr. Caudle moved to open the public hearing as stated. There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried through roll call vote. Hearing no comments regarding the grant application, Mr. Coudriet closed the public comment period. There was a second by Mr. Joye and the motion carried by roll call vote. Ms. Hays made a motion to proceed with submission of the grant. There was a second by Ms. Mortell and the motion carried by roll call vote.

Report by the Mobility Manager - Ms. D'Itri provided an update on outreach and marketing activites conducted under the second quarter of the fiscal year. She said efforts have been tailored on building upon the existing transit training infrastructure and bringing transit closer to home. She confirmed a map and listing of the major multi-unit housing complexes within the city has been created. Outreach efforts to reach the above referenced and their residents is underway. Ms. D'Itri gave a brief update on the customer service program, offering support and feedback to the frontline staff. She spoke to expansion in outreach through social media platforms and creation of new professional relationships to garner greater influence in our community. Ms. D'Itri concluded by stating she really enjoys managing outreach.

Report by the Director of Finance and Administration - Mr. Mininni provided an overview of the *December 2021 Operational Statistics Report*. He said that ridership numbers are up, overtime for fixed-route operations remains high, and preventative maintenance (PM) compliance for rolling stock is at 100%. Mr. Mininni stated ADA paratransit ridership figures are up and non-ADA passenger trips are less than anticipated. However, the department is in good standing. Mr. Mininni reported the December ridership for the RideMICRO Program as 143 trips.

Mr. Minini said operating revenues are exceeding adopted budget levels. He reported the negative variance under *Paratransit* is due to the lack of trips we are not realizing but expected from managed care. He reported a significant positive variance under federal monies. *Operating Subsidies* shows the biggest positive variance because they have received subsidies of SMAP and ROAP monies which are offsetting the drawing down some of those federal funds. In the operating expenses he said that year-to-date, they have a $600,000 variance to the positive.

Mr. Mininni presented a draft budget amendment for FY2022 to be considered at the next meeting. The change is reflective of the inclusion of the SMAP and ROAP funding totalling an additional $698,000.

Mr. Mininni presented a slide presentation highlighting the additional funding coming to transit under the Build Back Better bill. Mr. Mininni said that additional funding will positively impact the annual formula funding programs. The additional funding equates to a 30% increase, or approximately $700,000, to the annual Section 5307 funds and will be available starting FY2023. He confirmed the funds equal about 8,000 to 10,000 revenue hours or about two routes, and a local match is required. Mr. Mininni stated there was an ask for additional funding of 6% from the city and the county for FY2023. Mr. Lawler asked if a local match has been identified and what does this do to the pressure to adjust the route structure or framework going forward. Mr. Mininni said it depends on the decisions of the board as there is only a 5-6 year period on the funding. He said the question is do we continue to maintain service levels of 72,000 for several more years or do we continue to ramp down service and consesrve resources long term. Mr. Mininni said at this time there is not enough knowledge to make revisions or service reductions. Mr. Lawler asked the board if this money changes the finances driving that decision, and stated they do not want to cut routes if they do not have to. Ms. Parker said staff has prepared an overview of a secondary option for review in light of the additional funding to present to the board. Mr. Caudle asked if the funds must be used for operations or can they be used for other purposes. Mr. Mininni confirmed the ARP funds and Section 5307 funds can only be used for operations and maintenance.

Report by the Deputy Director - Ms. Matheny presented the final draft on the *FY23 Service Network Redesign*. The proposal reflects the operation of nine (9) bus and trolley routes, as opposed to the current network's 14 routes, and a Microtransit service delivery alternative in Northern and Southern New Hanover County and Pleasure Island. She confirmed the proposal reflects increased frequency on Routes 108 and 201 and an hourly increase on Route 107 with the elimination of Route 301. Ms. Parker stated the network revision proposed by the consultant was done under the restrictions of budget expectations and, as a result, they had to reduce service, which is not the preference of staff . She confirmed the preference is to keep as much service as possible, as efficiently as possible. If there is money to support this, then that is the direction they would like to go. Ms. Parker said they wanted to put something on the table that felt a little more responsible. Mr. Coudriet stated they need to scale to what is affordable and predictable revenue that iscurrently available. Mr. Coudriet said the charge to staff was to scale the routes to available revenue. Ms. Parker said the plan to meet the budget has not changed. Ms. Hays asked if the current routes can be improved to 30 minutes, with the influx of federal funding, to make the system the very best it can be. Ms. Parker said they can invest the monies they are getting to increase service frequency on the highest performing routes. She proceeded stating that if service frequency was increased in years 1-3, then cuts are going to be more dramatic in years 4-5. Mr. Coudriet stated that maybe the County Commission, in the future, can get energized about funding more if there were increased headways, 15 or 30 minutes, and not one hour. Ms. Hays stated if we really make transit the best, they can probably market that and hopefully people will use it, appreciate it and help grow it. If there is a potential bond out there the public may be more receptive to support a funding source. Mr. Lawler said we should use this time to really make a much better system that attracts more riders to grow the system. Mr. Joye said that he would recommend that Ms. Parker report back to the board with the best most efficient use of this federal money. Mr. Caudle was concerned about the possible changing of the timeline. Ms. Matheny said they we are at a critical point as the public comment period opened January 13th and is slated to close April 13th. Ms. Hays inquired as to why the 90 day public comment period opened on January 13th if a draft was not adopted. She said if the timeline presented is such, then we are not prepared to make any decisions today. She confirmed she is not confortable making a decision today. Mr. Coudriet stated the board needs to be very clear instructionally on what they will build and the enhancements will be that is asked of Ms. Parker and her staff.

Mr. Coudriet stated the board is going to have to have a very dedicated work session on what it is that they want out of the transportation system on February 8, 2022.

Executive Director Briefing - Ms. Parker presented a monthly update on the RideMICRO Program confirming the app was launched to the public last Monday and discussion on extention of service hours

are underway. Ms. Parker offered an update on the Healthy Opportunities Pilot program communicating a delay in the start time date from March to May. She stated the OTP for January was steller at 85% and recognized the operations team for their hard work. Ms. Parker confirmed consultants from the Leath Group completed the organizational and wage analysis to ensure current job duties aligned with the current job descriptions and compensation is adequate for each employee, under each job category. She said the report was written well and noted personnel shortages by five positions. Ms. Parker confirmed an employee informational portal is in the works and a *State of the Authority* address, led by her, will be held for staff in the coming weeks.

New Business and Comments from the Board - Mr. Coudriet entertained a motion to recess the January 27, 2022 board meeting until February 8, 2022. Mr. Caudle made a motion to recess the January 27, 2022 board meeting until February 8, 2022 at 8:30 am. There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried by roll call vote.

Next Meeting - The January 27, 2022 meeting has been recessed to 8:30 am on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at the same location.

Adjournment - Mr. Caudle made a motion to recess the January 27th meeting until February 8th at 8:30 am. There was a second by Mr. Lawler and the motion carried by roll call vote.

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Mari Parker Secretary - Wave Transit