



**SUMMARY MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CAPE FEAR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
November 30, 2023**

A meeting of the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 12:30pm on Thursday, November 30, 2023, by Board Vice Chairman Tony Caudle at 505 Cando St., Wilmington, North Carolina.

Board Members Present

Tony Caudle, Chairman
Chris Coudriet, Vice Chairman
Kemp Burpeau, NHC Deputy Attorney
Eric Credle, NHC Chief Financial Officer
Meredith Everhart, City of Wilmington Attorney
Mike Kozlosky, WMPO Executive Director
Paul Lawler, City of Wilmington Appointee
Laura Mortell, City of Wilmington Budget & Research Director
Dane Scalise, NHC Commissioner

Staff Members Present

Mark Hairr, Executive Director
Jonathan Dodson, Deputy Director
Brad Cannon, Transit Planner
Brianna D'Itri, Mobility Manager
Monica Hughes, Accounting Manager
Erica Walters, Director of Finance
Kathy Williams, Customer Service Supervisor

Others in Attendance: Robbie Bittner, Gwen Griffin, Adija Manley, Pamelyn U. Miller, David Rhew, Keaton Wetzel

Call to Order – Chairman Caudle opened the meeting with members confirmed as present. A moment of silence was observed followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the November 30, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting Agenda – Mr. Caudle presented the November 30, 2023, meeting agenda for approval. Lawler moved to accept the agenda, Mr. Coudriet seconded, and the motion carried.

Presentation of FY23 Financial and Compliance Reports: Robbie Bittner, III, Partner, PBMares – Mr. Bitter reported that his company rendered an unmodified opinion, which is that highest level of assurance, indicating no findings of fraud, waste, or noncompliance. Mr. Bittner explained that one Local Government Commission (LGC) performance indicator was not satisfied related to finance officer bonding. Mr. Bittner closed his remarks by assuring the Board that the report was good overall, and without much to report on. In response to questions about the issue, Mr. Bitter explained that Mr. Flint was not bonded during his time on staff and that the finance officer bond remained listed as Mr. Flint's predecessor. Mr. Bitter said no long-term impacts are anticipated and suggested the position rather than the person be bonded in the future. Mr. Bittner says that the LGC has accepted the audit as presented but the Board must respond to the LGC within 60 days of November 30. Mr. Coudriet moved to accept the audit, Mr. Lawler seconds, and the motion passed.

Wave Transit Reimagined Existing Conditions and Engagement Update: Adija Manley and Keaton Wetzel – Consultants from Nelson\Nygaard gave an update on the short-range transit plan (SRTP). Mr. Wetzel introduced the new branding of the SRTP effort which was named Reimagine Wave Transit. Mr. Wetzel summarized key findings, including the opportunity to create a transit hub in the medical district based on travel patterns. His team held 6 workshops between staff, UNCW, and community stakeholders. He said that recommendations will be refined, and the first of three service alternatives will be developed over the next 6 weeks. The first presented will be the ‘cost neutral’ option.

Mr. Wetzel reported on public engagement efforts and summarized that week’s stakeholder workshop. Stakeholder groups were tasked with creating a transit map using bendable sticks that represented 2 miles of fixed route service each. Each group was given enough sticks to equal a cost-neutral amount of service. Participants were operating within fiscal constraints and forced to make difficult tradeoffs. He said that, overall, stakeholders emphasized frequency over coverage and span of service. Mr. Wetzel reported that stakeholders shared their strong desire to partner with government and community organizations more closely to overcome shared challenges such as lack of pedestrian facilities.

Mr. Wetzel closed by stating that his team is on track to present draft service alternatives early in the new year. Mr. Credle said that he does not think ‘cost neutral’ is a viable option and that a 30% reduction was the main charge of the project. Mr. Wetzel said that controlling costs based on that predetermined alignment ensures that areas with the most need are being served before scaling back in other ways. Mr. Caudle complimented the consultants on the ingenuity of the workshop activity.

Approval of the October 26, 2023, Consent Agenda – Ms. Everhart moved to approve the November 30, 2023, consent agenda as presented. Ms. Mortell seconded, and the motion carried.

Interim Director of Finance Briefing – Ms. Hughes presented the monthly financial reports. She said that October began with \$3.25 million in cash on hand. Farebox revenue was about 24% above budget overall. Mr. Lawler asked if MEE NC grant has administrative costs included. Ms. Hughes will respond at the next meeting. Ms. Mortell confirmed compliance with SMAP funds being included in the budget through an earlier ordinance. Mr. Hairr recognizes Ms. Hughes’ effort during the transition between finance directors and said that the Authority is on excellent footing. He then introduces Ms. Erica Walters, the incoming Director of Finance. Mr. Caudles welcomes her on behalf of the Board.

Deputy Director Briefing – Mr. Dodson presented the monthly operating reports. RideMICRO ridership is up 17% from the prior year. He reports that fixed route on-time performance is at 82% for October and that a contributing factor to lower performance has since resolved with the reopening of Front St at Castle St. The Trolley was late in 25% of its October runs. Mr. Dodson reports that staff is working with dispatch to maintain and enforce timeliness. Mr. Dodson announced minor schedule changes coming in January that should mitigate timepoint issues that leave buses stuck in traffic. Mr. Caudles asked to see on-time performance reports with and without the trolley.



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Mr. Dodson presented the operational statistics. He reported that ridership is up 2.56% overall from the previous month – fixed route is up 4%, the trolley is up 34%, UNCW is down slightly, and RideMICRO is up about 20%.

Executive Director Briefing – Mr. Hairr provided an update on Greyhound’s contract, reporting that many issues have been addressed and an agreement specific to conditions of operations and security is under development. Mr. Hairr shared that customer experience training will begin with staff in the new year. He invited Board members to share SRTP survey flyers and thanked WMPO for its help in distributing the survey.

New Business – Mr. Kozlosky asked if thought has been given to service impacts during lane closures on the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. Mr. Hairr confirmed that staff have started discussions and are open to partnerships. He asked if NCDOT has projections on traffic increases. Mr. Kozlosky and Mr. Caudle report that limited information is available from NCDOT at this time.

Ms. Everhart asked about the status of the Authority’s attorney contract. Mr. Hairr confirmed that the RFP closes at 4:00pm that day and one entry was received. Mr. Hairr confirmed to Mr. Caudle that staff will draft the response letter to the LGC. Mr. Caudle notes that the December meeting has been cancelled due to holiday schedules and staff assurance of no actionable items.

Adjournment – Ms. Everhart moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lawler seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 1:40pm.

Next Meeting – The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Thursday, January 25th, 2024, at 12:30 pm in the Forden Station boardroom located at 505 Cando St. The regular December meeting has been cancelled.

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Secretary - Wave Transit