

**THE COAST RTA-WACCAMAW RTA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
DECEMBER 2, 2015
9:30 AM**

Board Present: Joseph Lazzara, Chair
Robert Sheehan
Bernard Silverman
Katharine D'Angelo
Lillie Jean Johnson
Chuck Ottwell
Ivory Wilson
Darrell Eickhoff
Marvin Keene

Staff Present: Brian Piascik, General Manager/CEO
Lynette Nobles, Executive Assistant/Board Liaison
Ron Prater, CFO
Michelle Cantey, Public Affairs Communication

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the 2015 meeting schedule was provided to the press at the beginning of the 2015 calendar year, stating the date, time and location. In addition, notice of this meeting was provided to the press, stating the date, time, and place on Monday, November 30, 2015.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Lazzara called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM and welcomed everyone.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Dr. Keene gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

SWEARING IN OF NEW BOARD MEMBER: Ms. Nobles administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Darrell Eickhoff, appointed by Horry County Legislative Delegation to fill their vacant position on our Board of Directors.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM/ROLL CALL: Roll call was taken. A quorum was present.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS: No visitors present

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEW BOARD MEMBER COMMENT: Mr. Eickhoff said that it's good to be sitting at the table instead of the visitors' gallery and that he hopes to make some contribution in the next three (3) years;

and, he feels he has a lot to learn.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: There was a motion and a second to approve the minutes from the October board meeting. A voice vote was taken, with no nays being heard, the minutes were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE: Mr. Ottwell began by saying that the committee met via teleconference and reviewed a lot of information. He said that he feels we are doing fine; however, he wants Mr. Piascik to have Mr. Prater review what we are doing and give a fresh perspective. Mr. Piascik said that Mr. Prater is already doing that and has made an impact on the accounting side. For instance, the draw will be part of the close process, with us having an internal invoice in lieu of an accrual. This will have a positive impact on our cash flow. Mr. Piascik added that he and Mr. Prater have been looking at the paratransit numbers and feel that part of the problem with the numbers being out of alignment may be how we are allocating our costs. There's no real mistake in the spreadsheet so we've left it as is. We have to look at how we're allocating admin across the modes. Even though we have a simple operation, the funding is quite complex. We're doing allocations urban/rural, fixed route/paratransit; the way we're allocating the funding is complicated and we need to simplify that process. Mr. Prater explained the reasoning for the multiple journal entries (expenses and/or revenue allocated in the wrong time period). Mr. Silverman asked if any of these could result in a finding. Mr. Prater replied that the auditor has not indicated any finding(s). Mr. Ottwell stated that he had spoken with Brian about giving the board a snapshot of the grants (is already done on a page in the financial report). Dr. Sheehan called attention to the paratransit data on page 10 in the finance report, saying that he does not believe that the ridership increased 33% over the previous months. Secondly, revenue hours went up and Operating Expense per Revenue Hour went down to \$41.39. Why would Passengers-Per-Revenue Hour continue to be at 0.77? Mr. Piascik said that he believes the ridership number, in part due to (1) the changes in how we do ADA paratransit which have been in place for only about 8 – 10 months and people are figuring out how to use our service, and (2) the route changes on Route 7 (avoiding 501) brought in quite a few new areas of population where we now have new folks that are now able to use our paratransit service. Mr. Silverman added that to qualify for paratransit, you have to be within three-quarters (3/4) of a mile of a fixed route; and when we come down Myrtle Ridge Road, Gardner-Lacy, and Postal Way, that put a lot more people within that three-quarters of a mile.

Mr. Piascik gave an audit update, saying that he expects a final report sometime next week and we'll have a presentation for the next Finance Committee meeting. Actually, when we receive the final report, Mr. Piascik will send it out to the board to review, ask any questions (he will answer) and once he receives the board's blessing, he will send the audit report to Horry County. Mr. Silverman asked about the FMO. Mr. Piascik shared that he will be meeting with FTA (Dr. Yvette Taylor) in Atlanta on December 17, 2015. He stated that the outstanding items from the Triennial have all been submitted, NTD reporting is up to date, as well as OPSTATS. Regarding FMO, to our knowledge FTA has not selected their FY16 consultants that conduct the FMO reviews. Mr. Silverman then asked about Mike Levitan. Mr. Piascik replied that assisting us through the FMO will be the remainder of Mr. Levitan's work with us. Regarding Internal

Controls, we've contacted the sole bidder on our RFP and expressed our sticker shock and they agreed. They "highballed" it because they weren't sure what they were getting into. We're going to negotiate, define and refine the scope, and bring the cost down. We want a review on cash handling, have them review all of our internal control procedures and give us any recommendations to improve our procedures and help us get set up for FMO. We're meeting with them on December 15th. Their bid is \$22,000. Dr. Sheehan asked, with Mr. Prater's appointment, have we solved the signatory and separation of duties issues that we had. Mr. Piascik replied that the separation of duties was resolved prior to his coming, and that the CFO has no signatory authority.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Piascik began his report by letting the board know that on December 8th, we have our third Defensive Driving training, OSHA training, and he will be speaking with the drivers, when they come in, about any issues they might have. We will be having a State of the Coast in January.

Technology update – we are continuing our conversations with HTC about making improvements in the way we use technology. We will be switching over to HTC for our internet service, which will save us about \$200/month. We'll have better and faster service. We're also talking with them about helping us with the mobile app and the AVL system that we're planning. They may be augmenting our current phone system to give us conference-call capability with call-in number in the conference room, in lieu of using Go to Meeting. We are in the process of writing the RFP for the AVL system and, hopefully, put it out on the street before Christmas; get bids in January, and roll it out along with our service improvements April 1, 2016. Dr. Sheehan added that at the same time, we offer our passengers the opportunity to get on an emergency text messaging notification list and it would make more sense to roll it all out at the same time.

Grants update: Our existing 5307 grant was amended to get us through March, when we will input a new 5307 grant in the TrAMS system. The amendment was approved last week to the tune of \$2.7 million. There's an issue with the ECHO draw system right now that we are trying to resolve. Also, we are presenting a resolution to the board today authorizing me (Mr. Piascik) to sign an augmented contract from SCDOT. They put only two-thirds (2/3) of the funding in for the FY16 contract because of continuing resolutions on the federal level. Rather than the \$830,000 that's in our budget, the actual amount is \$950,000. We will have to find the local dollars for match.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS:

Ms. Nobles read the following resolution into the record:

WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY RESOLUTION NO. DEC2015-35

AUTHORIZATION FOR THE GENERAL MANAGER TO SIGN AMENDED STATE CONTRACT FOR ADDITIONAL 5311 FUNDS

There was a motion and a second. There being no discussion, a voice vote was taken; no nays being heard, the motion passed.

Mr. Piascik reported that SCDOT got an edict from FTA that they have to spend down their unobligated balance of 5311 (rural funds) and 5339 (bus and bus facilities) funds. With that, they sent out notification to all the transit authorities and are offering grants. Ours is \$905,000 State match, with which we can purchase two (2) big buses and two (2) more cutaways. That grant is in the same purgatory (between TEAM and TrAMS) as our 5307 grant. It should happen in the early part of 2016. They offered us facility money, but Mr. Piascik said that he would rather ask them for a grant for our bus sign project.

Mr. Piascik reported that he is still working on updating the 2010 Transit Development Plan and gave a brief slide presentation to show the board the direction in which he is taking the updated plan. He went on to say there are a lot of recommendations included in the 2010 TDP that have not been implemented which will be included in the revised TDP.

Mr. Piascik said that he will be asking the Myrtle Beach Area Hospitality Association for about \$20,000 funding to assist with the Entertainment Express next summer, which will be a prepaid fare. It could/should be marketed, "Your fare has been paid by the MBAHA". Brad Dean is on board with doing this.

One of the things that will be discussed with the drivers in January is consistency in how drivers deliver service. Dr. Sheehan asked that the board be invited to the meeting.

Mr. Silverman stressed the importance of getting shelters installed in Georgetown, as our riders are waiting in the rain. Ms. Johnson suggested that the members of our board contact the mayor and each member of city council. Ms. Nobles was asked to send the contact information to the board members.

Mr. Piascik moved on to Service Improvements, the plan (2010 TDP) calls for 30-minute frequency on all routes, which he feels is far-fetched for a 5-year plan. There was discussion regarding van pools. The rural/urban mix of our system is about 2/3 urban and 1/3 rural; the way our funding is working, we're over matching operations in the urban side and leaving money on the table on the rural side. If we can get to a 60/40 split in urban/rural services, we're going to optimize our funding. Service improvements which will roll out April 1, 2016 will be to add a bus to Route 16 and call it all rural, which will get us to that 60% rural operation. We'll also extend 15N up to Tanger; City of Myrtle Beach has some neighborhoods they want us to serve and we'll try to combine those with some Route 10 improvements. Altogether, it's about \$300,000 - \$400,000 increase in operations that we can do for about \$60,000 in additional local revenue. We want this to be a full-scale rollout with the web site updated in advance, hold public meetings in areas that are affected, have a marketing plan; and people will be well-informed as to how the system is going to change on April 1st.

There was a discussion regarding board committee meetings. Mr. Piascik expressed that he would like for the Service and PAC committees to meet on the second Wednesday of each month, as scheduled. Finance Committee should probably meet on the third Wednesday. Fund Development Committee will be put on hold for the present. Fund Development Committee could meet at 9:00 AM on board meeting day and have the board meeting begin at 10:00 AM.

Dr. Sheehan asked that there be a plan for gathering the pictures and stories (paratransit) presented at the January board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: Mr. Silverman asked if we normally close on Thanksgiving Day. He also mentioned that we had not been having employee recognition.

NEW BUSINESS:

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None this month

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Ms. Nobles invited the board members to attend the Coast RTA Christmas Party on Saturday, December 5, 2015.

ADJOURNMENT: It was properly moved and seconded that the Board adjourn. A voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM.