

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**April 10, 2024**

**Meeting Notes**

A Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) Board of Directors meeting was held at the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) in the Barrett Lawrimore Conference Room located at 5790 Casper Padgett Way in North Charleston, SC at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 10, 2024.

**MEMBERSHIP:** MaryBeth Berry; Joe Boykin; Mike Brown; Daniel Brownstein; Reggie Burgess; William Cogswell; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Brandon Hudson; John Labriola; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Christie Rainwater; Herb Sass; Michael Seekings; Ed Sutton; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** MaryBeth Berry; Joe Boykin; Daniel Brownstein; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Brandon Hudson; Pat O'Neil; Herb Sass; Michael Seekings; Ed Sutton; Robert Wehrman

**PROXIES:** Ron Brinson for Reggie Burgess; Michael Mathis for William Cogswell; Craig Harris for John Labriola; Lt. Gebhardt for Christie Rainwater

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Daniel Monroe (BGRM); Jerry Lahm (Charleston County); Stewart Miller (Burr+Forman, LLP); Robert Flagler (HNTB); Mila Buzhinskaya (HNTB); Karen Campbell (Nations Express Transit); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Linda Ashley (Citizen); Representatives of the Exchange Club of Charleston: Legare Clement; Carl Schultz; Mike Jernigan; John Osborne; David Engleman; Barry Bonk; Michael Kourncy; Roy Deloney; Allen Puckhaber; Buzz Buske; James Stroy; Kyle Buck; Jerry Pitt; William Matthews; Ronald Meek; Dan Gardner; Scott Boykin; Jim Guest; Craig Lewis; Jeffrey Rosenblum; Edwin Taylor; Timothy Smith; Buddy Wallace; S. Bergmann; John Myatt; Frank Shorter; Sam Litchfield; Jack Becknell; Duncan Townsend; Steven Moskos; Kim Collins; Art Beane, III; Gary Catterson; AJ Beane, IV; Bill Antonetti; Bruce Root; Jason Smith; J. Wallace; Charlie McQuery; Andy Johnson; Chuck Christen; Ernie Sweat; Kathy Johnson; David Johnson; Pat Davis; Steve Berlin; Gary Leonard

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Megan Ross; Daniel Brock; Kim Coleman

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Seekings called the CARTA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and a quorum determination.

**2. Consideration of Board Minutes: March 20, 2024 Meeting**

*Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the March 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes as presented.*

*Mr. Green seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**3. Financial Status Report – Robin Mitchum**

Robin Mitchum, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration, presented the financial status report for the period ending February 29, 2024. She noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$1,852,824. Ms. Mitchum provided information on the following activities for FY24 thus far:

**Revenues:**

- Farebox is the fares collected on the revenue vehicles.
- Passes & Mobile Ticketing are bus pass fares sold to customers.
- Local Contributions are funds received for shelter and bench construction.
- Federal Revenue includes operating for the year-to-date. Federal Revenue is recorded as eligible expenditures are incurred.
- State Mass Transit Funds are operating funds available as match to Federal 5307 operating funds.
- Insurance proceeds are a result of accidents.
- Sale of Assets are the proceeds from the sale of an MV-1, two Amerivans and a 1996 New Flyer.

**Expenditures:**

- Retiree Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office, facility maintenance and rebranding supplies.
- Printing includes costs of printing route brochures, passes and labels.
- Automotive is the cost to service the 2018 Ford F-150.
- Postage is shipping fees.
- Dues/Membership is CARTA's membership with Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC).

- Office Equipment Rental includes the monthly battery lease for the electric buses.
- Office Equipment Maintenance (OEM) includes GMV Sycromatics, GMV Digital Signage, Genfare Support, Swiftly real time passenger predictions, Swiftly GPS Playback, Swiftly on-time performance, Swiftly run-times, RCN NetCloud Essentials and NetCloud Advanced for mobile routers and other IT services.
- Rent includes the Ashley Phosphate Park & Ride lot, Dorchester Village Shopping Center Park & Ride lot, Leeds Avenue lot lease from Dominion and document storage.
- Communications is the cost of phone, internet and radio services at the facilities and on the buses.
- Utilities include electric and water at the SuperStop, Melnick Park & Ride, the Radio Shop at Leeds Avenue and the charging stations at Leeds Avenue.
- Auditing is the cost of the FY23 GASB 75 Actuary and Audit.
- Custodial Services are the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride location.
- Pilot Ride Program (CARTA OnDemand) is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include the bus wash inspection services and Electric Bus Master Plan services.
- Shared Contract Services (IGA & Management) is the extensive services the BCDCOG provides to CARTA.
- Fixed-Route Service is the cost of fixed and commuter service provided by National Express Shuttle and Transit.
- Money Transport is the cost of the armored guard service to transport cash deposits to the bank.
- Security Services are contracted security service provided at the SuperStop by the City of North Charleston Police Department.
- Vehicle Maintenance is the cost to maintain the fleet.
- Facility Repair & Maintenance is the cost to maintain facilities.
- Operating Fees & Licenses include credit card transaction fees and vehicle title and registration fees.
- Insurance includes the cost of liability insurance provided by the Insurance Reserve Fund. The insurance policy renews on January 1<sup>st</sup> and this is the majority of the expenditure for FY24.
- Paratransit is the cost of paratransit transportation provided by National Express Shuttle and Transit.
- Interest is the interest on the Melnick Park & Ride loan.

**Capital Expenditures:**

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of ten 2023 Voyager Vans.
- Bus Facilities/Charging Stations is the Leeds Avenue charging infrastructure.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench Install is the installation of shelters and benches.
- Security/Cameras & Equipment is the purchase of cameras, access control equipment and AVL equipment.
- Facilities Construction is the Leeds Avenue parking lot repairs and Shipwatch Square engineering.
- Capital (IT, Facility Repairs, Maint.) is Genfare equipment and driver shields.

Ms. Mitchum reviewed the activity of the OnDemand Program. The OnDemand Program activity report that was distributed to the Board of Directors prior to today's meeting depicts that the FY24 total cost is at \$74,282 at 49% complete. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report as information.

**4. Project Updates – Ron Mitchum/Staff**

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, stated that, in the interest of time, a detailed report regarding Project Updates was distributed in the Board Meeting Agenda Packet in advance of the meeting. He encouraged Board Members to contact him or the respective project manager regarding any specific concerns or questions. Mr. Mitchum briefed the Board of Directors on the Downtown Route Study noting that staff with Nelson/Nygaard wrapped up the survey for the Downtown Charleston Transit Study route design concepts on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Over 500 surveys were received from riders of all the routes that are being evaluated on the Peninsula. Nelson/Nygaard is working on the survey summary, the Future Bus Lane Feasibility review and the next/final round of outreach for the study. He also briefed the Board of Directors on the OnDemand Program noting that in March, there were 1,190 total senior riders and 168 total Tel-A-Ride customers actively using OnDemand service which was a total of 1,358. Also in March, there was a total of 2,375 OnDemand trips with 43% of the trips being taken by paratransit customers and 57% being taken by senior customers.

In March, the 2,375 trips (Tel-A-Ride & Seniors) averaged \$13.65 per trip. Today, CARTA has spent a total of \$217,326 on the OnDemand program which includes trip costs and marketing expenses. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates Report as information.

**5. Ridership Report – Megan Ross**

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, presented the Ridership Report. She discussed the March 2024 Ridership Trends noting that passenger trips totaled 199,767 and there were 11.3 customers per service hour (11.1 last month). On-time, across all timepoints, was 73%. Ms. Ross stated that overall ridership comparing March 2024 to February 2024 increased by 5.9%. Overall ridership comparing March 2024 to March 2023 increased by 1.9%. Overall ridership comparing 2024 YTD to 2023 YTD increased 7.1%. She noted that Tel-A-Ride ridership for the month of March was 5,113 which was a decrease of 1.2% when comparing 2023 YTD to 2024 YTD. It was noted that the total missed service for the month of March was 186.42 as compared to 1,271.81 in February 2023. Ms. Ross discussed the OnDemand ridership for March 2024 noting that there were 2,375 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

**6. Executive Director’s Report – Ron Mitchum**

Mr. Mitchum discussed the FTA grant; he noted that obtaining mechanical parts for the buses remain a challenge; he stated that requests regarding services in surrounding areas, such as Folly Beach, Johns Island and Dorchester County are being studied and that proposals will be brought before the Board for discussion during a future meeting. Discussion was also held regarding “tap to pay” and the Beach Reach shuttle service. Mr. Mitchum thanked the Town of Mt. Pleasant and Councilman Brownstein for his assistance with the Beach Reach service and addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director’s Report as information.

**7. Other Business, If Any**

There was no further business to discuss.

**8. Public Comments, If Any**

There were five Public Comments that were recorded and noted for the record.

- The following representatives of the Exchange Club of Charleston spoke publicly expressing their concerns regarding the Fairgrounds and parcel of land that CARTA plans to utilize: Legare Clement, Carl Schultz, Mike Jernigan and John Osborne.
- Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit representative, William Hamilton, expressed his concerns regarding the parcel of land at the Fairgrounds that CARTA plans to utilize.

**9. Executive Session – Contractual Matters**

***Mr. Brinson made a motion that the Board of Directors convene into Executive Session.***

***Mr. Boykin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

***Non-Board Members, Guests and Non-Essential Staff Members were excused.***

***Mayor Haynie made a motion to reconvene the Board of Directors meeting.***

***Mayor O’Neil seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

***Chairman Seekings reconvened the Board of Directors meeting noting that no action was taken related to contractual matters discussed during Executive Session.***

**10. Board Comments, If Any**

There was no further business to discuss.

**11. Adjourn**

Chairman Seekings thanked the Board of Directors for their continued dedicated service to the Board and the communities they serve. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman