

CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 15, 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, May 15, 2024.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: MaryBeth Berry; Dwayne Green; Brandon Hudson; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Michael Seekings; Ed Sutton; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

PROXIES: Gary Ponder for Daniel Brownstein; Ron Brinson for Reggie Burgess; Robert Somerville for William Cogswell; Brad Morrison for Will Haynie; Lt. Gebhardt for Christie Rainwater; Jerry Lahm for Herb Sass

OTHERS PRESENT: Daniel Monroe (BGRM); Daniel Brock (HNTB); David Bonner (National Express Transit); Josh Steele (National Express Transit); Denis Komachek (National Express Transit); Mary Catoe (City of Folly Beach Resident); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Bo Rupert (Town of Summerville Resident); Pastor Thomas Dixon (City of North Charleston Resident); Carl McGartlin (CAM Properties, LLC); Terry Snow (STV Inc.); Morven MacLean (WSP); Charles Sellers (Red Bird Foundation); Representatives of the Exchange Club of Charleston: Legare Clement; Carl Schultz; Mike Jernigan; Ken Battle; John Osborne; Michael Kearney; Roy Deloney; Allen Puckhaber; S. Bergmann; Frank Shorter; Sam Litchfield; Jack Becknell; Duncan Townsend; Art Beane; Gary Catterton; Gary Leonard; News Media Personnel for Channels 2 & 5; Additional Interested Parties

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

1. Call to Order

Chairman Seekings called the CARTA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and a quorum determination.

2. Consideration of Board Minutes: April 10, 2024 Meeting

Mr. Green made a motion to approve the April 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes as presented.

Mr. Lewis 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 March 31, 2024. She noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$2,058,383 at 50% complete for the year. 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 1st 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. She noted that the FY24 total cost is at \$108,415 at 58% complete. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report as information.

4. Design Services: Public Transit & Workforce Development Center – Request for Approval – Ron Mitchum

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the Design Services: Public Transit & Workforce Development Center RFQ. He noted that in March of 2024, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation to negotiate a scope and fee with HDR Engineering for the Design Services: Public Transit & Workforce Development Center RFQ. With the environmental process underway, staff is ready to move forward as quickly as possible to replace the SuperStop with the new facility. Staff is now requesting approval to award a contract to HDR Engineering for a cost not to exceed \$854,731.55. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the Design Services: Public Transit & Workforce Development Center as presented. Mr. Wehrman seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Project Updates – Ron Mitchum/Staff

Mr. Mitchum delivered a detailed report regarding the following Project Updates: Service Planning Initiatives; Downtown Route Study; US 52 BRT Study; CARTA OnDemand; Shelter Improvement Program; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; Transit Oriented Development Study; LCRT; Mt. Pleasant Street Park & Ride; Fairgrounds Park & Ride; O&M Facility; Mobile Ticketing Sales and Use. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates Report as information.

6. Ridership Report – Megan Ross

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, presented the Ridership Report. She discussed the April 2024 Ridership Trends noting that passenger trips totaled 207,882 and there were 11.7 customers per service hour (11.3 last month). On-time, across all timepoints, was 72%. Ms. Ross stated that overall ridership comparing April 2024 to March 2024 increased by 4.1%. Overall ridership comparing April 2024 to April 2023 increased by 10.6%. Overall ridership comparing 2024 YTD to 2023 YTD increased 8.0%. She noted that Tel-A-Ride ridership for the month of April was 4,953 which was a decrease of .48% when comparing 2023 YTD to 2024 YTD. It was noted that the total missed service for the month of April was 153.08. Ms. Ross discussed the OnDemand ridership for April 2024 noting that there were 2,767 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. Ms. Ross addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

7. Executive Director’s Report – Ron Mitchum

Mr. Mitchum noted that the quarterly meeting with National Express Transit regarding performance was held; it was emphasized that the need to become fully staffed and eliminate missed service is imperative. David Bonner, Southeast Area General Manager with National Express Transit, introduced Josh Steele, Recruiter with National Express Transit. Mr. Steele is focused on recruiting and hiring to fill the vacancies. Mr. Mitchum noted that 60% design walk-throughs with the City of Charleston and the City of North Charleston were held earlier in the week and, as a result, staff will receive feedback which will influence any changes in design. He noted that staff may need to look into leasing vehicles in order to provide coverage while continuing to work through the process of obtaining parts for the Proterra buses. Mr. Mitchum announced that The Town of Mt. Pleasant was the recipient of a Federal “Safe Routes for All” grant and the grant includes some funding for transit shelter installations. CARTA is planning to provide matching funds as in the past. Additional information will be forthcoming regarding the number of shelters and their locations. Mr. Mitchum noted that the TriCounty Link system study scope is in the process of being finalized. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director’s Report as information.

8. Other Business, If Any

There was no further business to discuss.

9. Public Comments, If Any

There were 10 Public Comments that were recorded and noted for the record.

- Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit representative, William Hamilton, congratulated the Board of Directors on increased ridership and expressed his concerns regarding the DASH route and the parcel of land at the Fairgrounds that CARTA plans to utilize. He also distributed a letter from the Transit Equity Network.
- The following representatives of the Exchange Club of Charleston spoke publicly expressing their concerns regarding the Fairgrounds and the parcel of land that CARTA plans to utilize and the parcel of land the

Fairgrounds has offered to CARTA as well as the charitable donations that the Exchange Club has made to various non-profit organizations: Carl Schultz, Duncan Townsend; Ken Battle; Legare Clement; Frank Shorter; Mike Jernigan. A map depicting the Ladson Road property and a listing of 2023 Community Service Grant Recipients were distributed.

- City of Folly Beach resident, Mary Catoe, expressed her concerns regarding OnDemand service being extended to Folly Beach.
- Town of Summerville resident, Bo Rupert, expressed his concerns regarding the Fairgrounds property and public transportation needs for Dorchester and Berkeley Counties.
- City of North Charleston resident, Pastor Thomas Dixon, expressed his concerns regarding the Fairgrounds property.

10. Executive Session, If Necessary

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

Mr. Sutton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

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

Mr. Brinson made a motion to reconvene the Board of Directors meeting.

Mr. Wehrman 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.

11. Board Comments, If Any

There was no further business to discuss.

12. 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 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Coleman