

CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CARTA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
August 21, 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, August 21, 2024.

MEMBERSHIP: Brad Belt; 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: Joe Boykin; Daniel Brownstein; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Brandon Hudson; James Lewis; Pat O’Neil; Herb Sass; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward

PROXIES: Craig Harris for Brad Belt; Ron Brinson for Reggie Burgess; Robert Somerville for William Cogswell; Lt. Gebhardt for Christie Rainwater; Jerry Lahm for Robert Wehrman

OTHERS PRESENT: Stephanie Maher (WeDriveU); David Bonner (WeDriveU); Patrice Miller (WeDriveU); Joanna Rustin (WeDriveU); Brandon Hunter (WeDriveU); Stewart Miller (Burr & Forman); Daniel Monroe (BGRM); Abraham Champagne (WSP); Elissa Smith (HDR); Bryan Kizer (Stantec); Daniel Brock (HNTB); Andrew Fisher (STV Inc.); Scot Sibert (STV Inc.); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Representatives of the Exchange Club of Charleston: David Kaufman; Don Michael; Sam Litchfield; Carl Schultz; Duncan Townsend; Timothy Smith; Ken Yetka; Jack Becknell; News Media Personnel; 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: June 12, 2024 Meeting

***Mr. Boykin made a motion to approve the June 12, 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 June 30, 2024. She noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$3,786,974. Ms. Mitchum stated that expenditures are under budget and capital expenditures remain balanced. 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 nine MV-1s, five 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) and the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce.
- Office Equipment Rental includes the monthly battery lease for the electric buses and property taxes on the equipment rental.
- 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.
- Advertising is Beach Reach outreach.
- 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.
- Electric Bus Master Plan is to transition CARTA's diesel bus fleet to all-electric buses.
- Other Professional Services include the bus wash inspection services and appraisal 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 as of June 30, 2024. She noted that the FY24 total cost is at \$210,806 at 84% expended. Ms. Mitchum stated that she is anticipating receiving new grant funds for the OnDemand program within the next few weeks. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report as information.

4. 2024 CARTA PTASP – Request for Approval

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, presented the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Annual Certification (PTASP). He noted that safety is a core value of CARTA and managing safety is a core business function of the agency. CARTA is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining and continuously improving processes to ensure the safety of its customers, employees and the community. The CARTA Safety Committee annually reviews the PTASP as required under the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to ensure transit safety, to remain in compliance with FTA requirements. Safety management as a systematic and comprehensive approach to identifying safety hazards and risks associated with transit system operations and related maintenance activities has been achieved. A Safety Management Systems (SMS) framework, as an explicit element of the agency's responsibility, has been adopted by establishing safety policy, procedures and quarterly Safety Committee meetings; identifying hazards and controlling risks; goal setting and measuring performance. The SMS fosters agency-wide support for transit safety by maintaining and continuously improving a culture of safety. Every employee is responsible for safety, where management is held accountable for the safety of all employees in the organization with an active role in transit safety. This plan complies with FTA regulations established by Section 5329(d) of the 2012 Moving Ahead for Progress Act and the 2021 BIL. On February 23, 2023, the FTA finalized changes to the National Transit Database (NTD) safety and security reporting requirements. The FTA has adopted two significant changes to data collected on transit worker assaults and bus impact fatalities. All assaults will be promptly reported to the NTD via the CARTA CSO to the Accountable Executive. Every employee directly responsible for safety (operators, supervisors, managers) must complete Assault Awareness and De-escalation training. The PTASP Accountable Executive, the local Union representative and the CARTA Safety Committee, in cooperation with the FTA, have reviewed the current PTASP. This is IAW 49 U.S.C. § 5329 and assures the requirements through the establishment of a comprehensive SMS framework. CARTA is compliant with 49 C.F.R. Part 673 and all applicable FTA requirements. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the 2024 CARTA PTASP – Annual Certification as presented.
Mr. Boykin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

5. On-Call Engineering Services: Bus Shelters and Amenities – Request for Approval

Mr. Mitchum discussed the On-Call Engineering Services: Bus Shelters and Amenities RFP. He noted that the Selection Committee met on August 16, 2024 and reviewed four proposals for On-Call Engineering Services: Bus Shelters and Amenities. Proposals were received from AMT Engineering, Seamon Whiteside, Stantec Consulting Services and Wildwood Contractors. The Selection Committee is requesting approval to award contracts to Wildwood Contractors and Stantec Consulting Services based upon meeting the requirements of the RFP. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

Chairman Sass made a motion to approve the On-Call Engineering Services: Bus Shelters and Amenities RFP as presented. Mr. Brownstein seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Project Updates – Ron Mitchum/Staff

Mr. Mitchum discussed the Project Updates report regarding the following Project Updates: Service Planning Initiatives; Downtown Route Study (noting that the project is wrapping up and staff received the final report and will be requesting plan approval at a future Board of Directors meeting); US 52 BRT Study (noting that the project is underway and that Focus Group meetings with staff and elected officials from Berkeley County, Moncks Corner and Goose Creek have been held as well as meetings with the stakeholder committee); CARTA OnDemand (noting that the number of users continues to increase); Shelter Improvement Program; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; Transit Oriented Development Study; LCRT; Dorchester Transit Signal Priority (TSP) Pilot Project; Mt. Pleasant Street Park & Ride; Fairgrounds Park & Ride; O&M Facility; and Mobile Ticketing Sales and Use. Mr. Mitchum also briefed the Board regarding MUSC noting that a working committee will be established to look at how additional Park & Ride lots may be created to serve MUSC employees due to the loss of approximately 3,000 leased parking spaces on the Peninsula that are used by almost 6,000 employees. They are expecting to lose those spaces within the next two years. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates Report as information.

7. Ridership Report – Megan Ross

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, presented the Ridership Reports as of July 2024. She noted that passenger trips totaled 188,552 and there were 10.6 customers per service hour. Ms. Ross stated that overall ridership comparing July 2024 to June 2024 increased by .09%, overall ridership comparing July 2024 to July 2023 increased by 8.0%, and overall ridership comparing 2024 YTD to 2023 YTD increased by 6.8%. She noted that Tel-A-Ride ridership for July 2024 was 4,856 (a decrease of 2.2% when comparing 2023 YTD to 2024 YTD). Ms. Ross discussed the OnDemand trips for July 2024, noting that the total ridership was 3,208 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. The trip cost averaged \$11.55, higher than June's average of \$10.55. 37% of the overall rides were from Tel-A-Ride passengers. Ms. Ross addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Reports as information.

8. Executive Director's Report – Ron Mitchum

Mr. Mitchum noted that the City of Charleston has been working with the State Ports Authority to identify a lot that may be used for the hospitality industry and will need staff's assistance to provide transit connectivity to the businesses. He also noted that staff is working with the Charleston Police Department to provide additional security in the transit mall area as more issues have occurred with homeless individuals interfering with operations and disturbing CARTA passengers. Mr. Mitchum updated the Board on the Tel-A-Ride vehicle replacement project and the 2 for 1 OPT funding plan. He delivered an update on the LCRT noting that 60%

design has been approved by the ELT and submitted to the FTA. Mr. Mitchum requested to be able to extend service for passengers for early voting and on Election Day. The Board of Directors approved Mr. Mitchum's request. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director's Report as information.

9. Other Business, If Any

There was no further business to discuss.

10. Public Comments, If Any

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

- Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit Representative:
 - William Hamilton expressed his concerns regarding: 1) DASH route and tourists not understanding the process; and 2) the bus stop at the International African-American Museum
- The following Exchange Club of Charleston Representatives expressed their concerns regarding the Fairgrounds property and the parcel of land that CARTA plans to utilize:
 - David Kaufman
 - Jack Becknell
 - Duncan Townsend
 - Ken Yetka
 - Carl Schultz

11. Executive Session – Legal Matters

***Mr. Brinson made a motion that the Board of Directors convene into Executive Session.
Mayor O'Neil seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
Non-Board Members, Guests and Non-Essential Staff Members were excused.
Mr. Lahm made a motion to reconvene the Board of Directors meeting.
Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
Chairman Seekings reconvened the Board of Directors meeting noting that no action was taken
related to legal matters discussed during Executive Session.***

12. Board Comments, If Any

Mr. Brownstein made a motion to approve that discussion be held regarding wage recommendations for WeDriveU personnel. Mayor Haynie seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

13. 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 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Coleman