

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
(CARTA)  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
February 19, 2025  
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, February 19, 2025.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Brad Belt; MaryBeth Berry; Joe Boykin; Mike Brown; Daniel Brownstein; Reggie Burgess; William Cogswell; Henry Darby; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Brandon Hudson; James Lewis; Pat O'Neil; Christie Rainwater; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joe Boykin; Daniel Brownstein; Brandon Hudson; Pat O'Neil; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

**PROXIES:** Craig Harris for Brad Belt; Robert Somerville for William Cogswell; Jerry Lahm for Henry Darby; Chief Gebhardt for Christie Rainwater

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Elissa Smith (HDR); Robert Flagler (HNTB); Daniel Brock (HNTB); Stuart Day (Stantec); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Abraham Champagne (WSP); Tom Hiles (WSP); Sharon Mitchell (WeDriveU); Andre Taylor (WeDriveU); Sharon Broderick (WeDriveU); Kenna Coe (Post & Courier); News Media Channels 2 and 5; Susan O'Shaughnessey (Summerville Resident); Edward Mitchell (Goose Creek Resident); Wendy Temple (West Ashley Resident); Steve Latour (Daniel Island Resident); Brendan Patman (Mt. Pleasant Resident); Stephen Gottschalk (Charleston Resident); Finn Gottschalk (Goose Creek Resident); Wendy Bryar (Summerville Resident); Shea McBride (Charleston Resident); Walter Blair (West Ashley Resident); Robert Hyman (Daniel Island Resident); Other Interested Parties: Jonay Whire; Elinor Gottschalk; Pauline Rodriguez; Kathy Hovis; Jade Tuttle

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Sharon Hollis; Matthew Spath; Kareem Wilson; Kim Coleman

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Seekings called the CARTA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and a quorum determination.

**2. Consideration of Board Minutes: January 15, 2025 Meeting**

***Mr. Boykin made a motion to approve the January 15, 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented.  
Mayor O'Neil 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 December 31, 2024. She noted that, overall, the agency remains in good shape, continues to

be in line with the budget at 25% complete for the year, and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$232,396. Ms. Mitchum provided information on the following activities for FY25 thus far:

**Revenues:**

- Farebox is the fares collected on the revenue vehicles.
- Passes & Mobile Ticketing are bus pass fares sold to customers.
- Federal Revenue includes operating for the year-to-date. Federal Revenue is recorded as eligible expenditures are incurred.
- Advertising is the advertising on the buses.
- Insurance proceeds are a result of accidents.
- Sale of Assets is the proceeds from the sale of a 1986 Chevrolet truck and a 2017 van.

**Expenditures:**

- Retiree Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office, facility maintenance and rebranding supplies.
- Printing includes costs of printing passes.
- Automotive is the cost to service the 2018 Ford F-150.
- 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, Medcom Street and the charging stations at Leeds Avenue.
- Auditing is the cost of the FY24 GASB 75 Actuary.
- Custodial Services are the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride location.
- OnDemand Program is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include bus wash inspection 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 is the contracted security service provided at the SuperStop by the City of North Charleston Police Department and by Extra Duty Solutions at the Mary Street bus stop.
- 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 January 1. CARTA will add and remove items on the policy throughout the year, but this is the majority of the cost for the fiscal year.

- 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 the Hometown Trolley Villager.
- Bus Facilities/Charging Stations is the Leeds Avenue parking lot repairs and charging infrastructure.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench Install is the installation of shelters and benches.
- Security/Cameras & Equipment is the purchase of cameras, radios, access control equipment and AVL equipment.
- Facilities Construction is Shipwatch Square engineering.
- Capital (IT, Facility Repairs, Maint.) is the purchase of bike racks.

Ms. Mitchum reviewed the activity of the OnDemand Program as of December 31, 2024. She noted that the FY25 total cost is \$135,656 at 78% completion with an available balance of \$158,713. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report and the OnDemand Program Activity Report as information.

**4. Resolution to Apply for FTA Funding – Request for Approval – Ron Mitchum**

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the Resolution to Apply for FTA Funding. He noted that the FTA requires that this Resolution be approved annually. He stated that the Resolution authorizes him or his designee to execute and file applications for Federal assistance on behalf of CARTA with the FTA. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mayor O’Neil made a motion to approve the Resolution to Apply for FTA Funding as presented.***

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

**5. Project Updates – Andrea Kozloski**

Andrea Kozloski, Deputy Director of Operations and Support, discussed the Project Updates report regarding the following projects: Service Planning Initiatives; Downtown Route Study; US 52 BRT Study; CARTA OnDemand; 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 - LCRT; and Mobile Ticketing Sales and Use. She delivered a detailed report on each project and addressed questions and comments. Ms. Kozloski then delivered a report regarding upcoming events and activities noting the following dates: Seniors Ride Free Day for Senior Independence Month on February 17<sup>th</sup>; Transit Rider and Para-Transit Rider Advisory Committee meetings on February 27<sup>th</sup>; Black Expo on March 8<sup>th</sup>; Driver Appreciation Day on March 18<sup>th</sup>; and CARTA Night at the Stingrays on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. She also delivered an update on CARTA Amenities, noting the following: Greenridge Road, Azalea Drive at Meridian Road and Azalea Drive at Elegans Drive each have shelters in progress and are in the engineering phase; 30 new solar lights have been installed; and 5 bench installations are in progress. Ms. Kozloski presented a slide show depicting new bus wraps and recognizing two fixed-route operators, Jones Kinloch and Robert Smalls. Mr. Kinloch has been a dedicated member of the CARTA team for 47 years. He has been a cornerstone for our operations, excelling in his role and sharing his expertise by helping train new team members. Mr. Smalls has been a dedicated team member for 5 years and has never missed a day of work. On December 31, 2024, he received a US patent for a cleaning device on fan blades, making him the first to invent it. Mr. Smalls’ work ethic and passion are an inspiration to others. Ms. Kozloski then shared commendations made via social media regarding Mr. Kinloch and Mr. Smalls. Ms. Kozloski addressed

questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates and the Upcoming Activities & Events Report as information.

#### **6. Ridership Report – Megan Ross**

In Transit Planner Megan Ross's absence, Ms. Kozloski presented the Ridership Reports for January 2025. She noted that passenger trips totaled 145,453 and there were 9.4 customers per service hour (9.3 last month). Ms. Kozloski stated that overall ridership comparing January 2025 to December 2024 decreased by 4.5%, overall ridership comparing January 2025 to January 2024 decreased by 19.8%, and overall ridership comparing 2025 YTD to 2024 YTD increased by 19.8%. She stated that Tel-A-Ride ridership for January 2025 was 3,721 (a decrease of 28.4% when comparing 2024 YTD to 2025 YTD). Ms. Kozloski noted that the recent inclement weather was the primary reason for the decline in ridership. Ms. Kozloski discussed OnDemand trips for January 2025, noting that the ridership for the month of January was 3,755 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. The trip cost averaged \$10.56, lower than December's average of \$10.99 and that 40% of the overall rides were from Tel-A-Ride passengers. Ms. Kozloski addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

#### **7. Executive Director's Report – Ron Mitchum**

Mr. Mitchum discussed the Shipwatch Square project noting that the NEPA process has been cleared and he is expecting to receive the approval letter soon. He stated that work is ongoing to develop an acceptable plan for under-grounding electrical utilities for the HOP lot. Mr. Mitchum noted that the LCRT project continues to make progress and the 90% design reviews are underway. He stated that staff continues working with the CVB and the City of Charleston to explore how operations can be improved at the transit mall downtown. Mr. Mitchum discussed the Comprehensive Operational Analysis and noted that staff is initiating the procurement for a consultant to undertake the project. He noted that he continues to monitor the situation with Federal funding and will make necessary adjustments to address policy changes if needed. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director's Report as information.

#### **8. Other Business, If Any**

- Ms. Kozloski introduced the new BCDCOG Communications Outreach Specialist, Kareem Wilson.
- Sharon Hollis, Principal Planner, delivered a brief update regarding the timeline of the LCRT project noting that the schedule remains on track. Ms. Hollis stated that she will be available immediately following today's Board of Directors meeting to address any questions, comments or concerns regarding the LCRT project.

#### **9. Public Comments, If Any**

There were 12 Public Comments noted for the record:

- Susan O'Shaughnessey (Summerville Resident): Expressed concerns supporting public transit.
- Edward Mitchell (Goose Creek Resident): Expressed concerns regarding funding for public transit.
- Wendy Temple (West Ashley Resident): Expressed concerns regarding Federal funding cuts regarding public transit.
- Steve Latour (Daniel Island Resident): Expressed concerns regarding the need of public transit on Daniel Island.
- Brendan Patman (Mt. Pleasant Resident): Expressed concerns regarding bus service from Mt. Pleasant to North Charleston – would like direct service without stopping in the Downtown area.
- Stephen Gottschalk (Charleston Resident): Expressed concerns regarding the importance of CARTA's relationship with MUSC regarding bus service.

- Wendy Bryar (Summerville Resident): Expressed concerns regarding customer service, missed service and inaccurate information regarding the transit app.
- Shea McBride (Charleston Resident): Expressed concerns regarding traffic congestion and public transit accessibility for seniors and those with disabilities.
- Walter Blair (West Ashley Resident): Expressed concerns supporting public transit and thanked those who support CARTA and public transportation.
- William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit): Expressed concerns regarding politics in relation to supporting public transit.
- Sharon Broderick (WeDriveU Union Representative): Expressed concerns regarding employee relations at WeDriveU – would like drivers to be included in the decision-making process as it relates to service and schedule changes.
- Finn Gottschalk (Goose Creek Resident): Expressed concerns regarding uncovered benches in the Downtown area (Calhoun/Lucas Streets-needs covered shelter); expressed appreciation for employers who pay bus fares for employees.

#### **10. Executive Session – Legal Matters**

No Executive Session was needed.

#### **11. Board Comments, If Any**

Mr. Brownstein recently rode the bus to gather information from riders. He gained valuable information from the riders and discussed their feedback with Board Members regarding the following concerns:

- bike rack consistency needed on all vehicles
- #3 - missed stop at Chick-fil-A West Ashley
- #10/11 - requiring riders to exit bus at Mary Street instead of transit mall
- hospitality and late-shift Walmart employees need extended service hours

#### **12. Adjourn**

Chairman Seekings thanked the staff for their work during the recent inclement weather. He 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 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman