

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
(CARTA)  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
October 22, 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, October 24, 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; Craig Logan; Pat O'Neil; Christie Rainwater; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joe Boykin; Daniel Brownstein; Dwayne Green; Craig Logan; Pat O'Neil; Michael Seekings; Robert Wehrman

**PROXIES:** Craig Harris for Mayor Belt; Ron Brinson for Mayor Burgess; Robert Somerville for Mayor Cogswell; Jerry Lahm for Councilman Darby; Chief Gebhardt for Mayor Rainwater

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Marissa Cottrell (WSP); Angela Gordon (SCDOT); Rick Sanchez (WeDriveU); Richard Mitchell (RATP Dev); Steve Sherrer (RATP Dev); Ibrahima Toure (RATP Dev); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ron Mitchum; Robin Mitchum; Jason McGarry; Jeff Burns; Megan Ross; Matthew Spath; 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: September 24, 2025 Meeting**

***Mr. Logan made a motion to approve the September 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented.***

***Mr. Brinson 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 month ending August 31, 2025. Ms. Mitchum stated that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$2,902,840. She noted that the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures as well as the Balance Sheet, and information for the OnDemand Program are included in the Board Meeting Agenda Packet. Ms. Mitchum provided a brief overview of 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Miscellaneous Revenue is the sale of scrap metal.

**Expenditures:**

- Retiree Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office, facility maintenance and rebranding supplies.
- Printing includes costs of printing passes and brochures.
- Automotive is the cost to service the 2018 Ford F-150.
- Dues/Membership are the Charleston Chamber and TASC memberships.
- 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, Chargepoint for electric charges, 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 lot, 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 and the Annual Audit.
- Custodial Services are the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride lot location.
- OnDemand Program is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include bus wash inspection services, appraisal services and the fire extinguisher inspection at the SuperStop.
- 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 most 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 lot loan.

**Capital Expenditures:**

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of the Hometown Trolley Villager.
- Bus Facilities/Charging Stations are 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, a Genfare vault, Genfare controller modules and the SuperStop HVAC replacement.

Ms. Mitchum discussed the OnDemand Program Activity Report and noted that the Agency is expecting grant funding after the government shutdown. The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report and the OnDemand Program Activity Report as information.

**4. Gillig 35ft Diesel Bus – Request for Approval – Ron Mitchum**

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the Gillig 35ft Diesel Bus request. He noted that staff is requesting approval to purchase four 35ft Diesel buses utilizing the State of Washington cooperative purchasing contract with Gillig. He explained the difference between the Gillig and the New Flyer buses. Mr. Mitchum stated that the price per bus is \$701,574. Mr. Mitchum and Jason McGarry, Procurement/Contracts Administrator, addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Boykin made a motion to approve the Gillig 35ft Diesel Bus request as presented.***

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

**5. Annual Asset Management Plan Progress Report and Fiscal Year 2026 Performance Targets – Request for Approval – Jeff Burns**

Jeff Burns, Grants and Contracts Compliance Administrator, presented the Annual Asset Management Plan Progress Report and FY 2026 Performance Targets. He noted that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) established a National Transit Asset Management (TAM) System to monitor and manage public transportation capital assets to enhance safety, reduce maintenance costs, increase reliability, and improve performance. The objective is to develop a strategic and systematic process of operating, maintaining, and improving public transportation capital assets effectively through their entire life cycle. The mandate requires FTA grantees to maintain an asset management plan for their public transportation assets, including vehicles, facilities, equipment, and other infrastructure. CARTA established the goal of achieving and maintaining a state of good repair for its public transportation assets. Transit asset management is a business model that uses transit asset condition to guide the optimal prioritization of funding. The FTA has defined State of Good Repair (SGR) as the condition in which a capital asset is able to operate at a full level of performance. A capital asset is in a state of good repair when that asset: 1) is able to perform its designed function; 2) does not pose a known unacceptable safety risk, and; 3) lifecycle investments must have been met or recovered. Mr. Burns discussed, in detail, the performance measure targets as required by FTA for Fiscal Year 2026 and noted that CARTA

continues to participate in the rule's requirements for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to coordinate with transit providers, set targets and integrate those targets into their planning documents. He reviewed the process that has been established to share TAM information, including data, plans, and targets with the BCDCOG and the CHATS MPO, noting CARTA's responsibilities. Mr. Burns stated that staff recommends adoption of the TAM Plan performance targets for Fiscal Year 2026 which are consistent with last year's performance targets. Mr. Burns addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Boykin made a motion to approve the Annual Asset Management Plan Progress Report and Fiscal Year 2026 Performance Targets request as presented. Mr. Brownstein seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

## **6. Project Updates – Ron Mitchum**

Mr. Mitchum delivered a presentation regarding upcoming events and activities noting that staff attended the Latin Festival on October 5<sup>th</sup>, a Charleston Promise Resource event on October 8<sup>th</sup> and the Northwoods Estate Fall Fest on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Staff will also attend the Eastside Spirit Week Celebration at Trident Technical College on October 27<sup>th</sup> and the North Charleston Farmers Market on October 30<sup>th</sup>. He noted the following additional upcoming events and activities: Election Day (Free Rides to the Polls); Veterans' Day (Free Rides for Veterans and Active Military); the Charleston County Resilience and Sustainability Symposium, the Day of Caring and Thanks; TRAC Meetings; and Holiday Parades. Mr. Mitchum discussed the Beach Reach Shuttle Ad Hoc Committee noting that Councilman Brownstein will serve as Chairman and Jerry Lahm and Mayor O'Neil will serve on the committee as well. A few more volunteers are needed to serve on the committee. Chairman Seekings noted that the City of Isle of Palms Councilman Ward would be an asset to the committee. Mr. Mitchum discussed CARTA Amenities, noting the shelters and benches in progress and stating that 180 bus stop-mounted solar lights have been installed and 73 shelter-mounted solar lights have been installed. He noted that 66 newly branded signs have been installed. He highlighted Thaddius Butler, Maintenance Mechanic. Mr. Butler has been a mechanic supporting CARTA buses for three years. He began employment in 2009 in various other positions and returned as a maintenance mechanic because that is what brings him joy as he has worked with automobiles for most of his life. Mr. Butler greets everyone with a big smile and a positive attitude daily. He holds a Class A CDL and has also been a bus operator during his transit career. He is very proud of his daughter, who is a high school basketball player with WNBA aspirations, and he credits his parents for instilling in him that respect, integrity and being humble are the keys for a successful life. Mr. Mitchum then delivered information regarding the Transit App, noting that 1,141 new CARTA riders were welcomed aboard as they downloaded the app for the first time, which was a 14% increase in comparison to September 2024. He noted that 11,525 GO trips were started by riders to receive step-by-step navigation while helping to improve real-time vehicle locations. Mr. Mitchum stated that users purchased 5,090 tickets in September compared to 2,596 tickets in September 2024. Mr. Mitchum noted that the Project Updates report was included in the Board Meeting Agenda Packet regarding the following projects: Service Planning Initiatives (noting that staff received confirmation that the APCs are certified for NTD reporting; staff continues to work with SPARE and WeDriveU regarding software improvements; staff continues to monitor OPT to ensure it continues to improve); Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) (noting that staff and Nelson/Nygaard held the kick-off meeting and the team rode bus routes to gain a better understanding of the system prior to the start of the operational data analysis task); US 52 BRT Study; CARTA OnDemand; Shelter Improvement Program; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; LCRT (noting that the maintenance facility is at 60% design); Dorchester Transit Signal Priority (TSP) Project (noting that Phase 3 is expected to be procured during the Winter of 2025/2026, pending IGA); Mt. Pleasant Street Park & Ride (noting that work continues with the TRC on finalizing drainage issues); Fairgrounds Park & Ride; O&M Facility – LCRT (noting that the adjacent property sewer easement agreement has not been signed but is getting close and work continues on the appraisal for FTA review and approval); and Mobile Ticketing Sales and Use (noting that a credit card tap

payment option is anticipated within six months). The Board of Directors received the Project Updates and the Upcoming Activities & Events Report as information.

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

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, presented the Ridership Reports for September 2025. She noted that, for the fixed-route ridership trends, passenger trips totaled 271,639 and there were 15.4 customers per service hour (14.0 last month). Ms. Ross stated that overall ridership, when comparing September 2025 to August 2025, increased by 8.29%. She reviewed safety trends for September 2025 noting that there were 9 preventable accidents (side-swipes/fixed objects) which were on fixed-route vehicles. There were also 17 non-preventable accidents. Ms. Ross discussed complaints and commendations regarding Customer Service for the month of September noting that there were 10 complaints (unsafe driving behaviors) and there were two commendations. She reviewed On-Time Performance noting that the fixed-route on-time performance for the month of September was 73.1% and the on-time performance for paratransit was 88%. Ms. Ross noted that missed trips for September 2025 resulted in 405.13 service hours missed, which was 2.27% of total scheduled monthly revenue hours. She discussed paratransit services in detail for the month of September regarding the breakdown of total passengers, which was 4,510. There were 226 no-shows and 1,609 cancellations. The average ride length was 28.93 minutes and the average ride distance was 9.33 miles. The on-time performance was 88.1%. Ms. Ross then discussed OnDemand trips for September 2025, noting that the ridership for the month was 4,124 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. The trip cost averaged \$9.72, which was lower than August's average of \$10.13. She stated that 45% of the overall rides were from Tel-A-Ride passengers. Ms. Ross addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

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

Mr. Mitchum presented a slide depicting the Union Pier property which will be used for 200 spaces for the HOP project. If there are no objections from the Board of Directors, staff would like to move forward with preliminary engineering for approximately \$10-15 thousand. Mr. Mitchum will bring details back to the Board of Directors regarding fencing, lighting and security cameras (asphalt is already down so there will be no expense for asphalt). He announced that Ms. Ross would introduce the WSP Planner. Ms. Ross introduced Marissa Cottrell. Ms. Cottrell will provide support to the Transit Planning Department for at least one year. Mr. Mitchum stated that Warming Centers service will be ramping up. He also discussed the SC House Modernization Ad Hoc Committee meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at Trident Technical College. Public comments are encouraged during the Public Comment Period. Mr. Mitchum noted staff will work to create a travel program for paratransit customers on the use of Tel-A-Ride and OnDemand services. 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 was one Public Comment noted for the record:

- William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit): Mr. Hamilton thanked the Board of Directors for their efforts and leadership regarding public transit. He stated he is happy to see ridership numbers continuing to increase and he appreciates the opportunity to utilize public transit.

**11. Executive Session – Legal and 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.*

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

*Chief Gebhardt 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/contractual matters discussed during Executive Session.*

**12. Management, Operations and Maintenance Services: Fixed Route and Paratransit – Request for Approval – Ron Mitchum**

*Mr. Boykin made the motion for Executive Director Mitchum to award a contract to RATP Dev USA, Inc. for Management, Operations and Maintenance Services: Fixed Route and Paratransit.*

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

**13. Board Comments, If Any**

There was no further business to discuss.

**14. Adjourn**

Chairman Seekings briefed the Board of Directors regarding Leadership Charleston. He wished Mayor O’Neil Good Luck during the upcoming election. Chairman Seekings announced that the next CARTA Board of Directors meeting will be held on November 19<sup>th</sup>. He thanked Board Members for their continued dedicated service to the CARTA Board of Directors and the communities they serve. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Coleman