

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
(CARTA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
January 21, 2026
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, January 21, 2026.

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: Daniel Brownstein; Dwayne Green; Brandon Hudson; Craig Logan; Pat O’Neil; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

PROXIES: Craig Harris for Mayor Belt; Kristen Wurster for Joe Boykin; 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); Richard Mitchell (RATP Dev); David Ramirez, Jr. (RATP Dev); Tom Hiles (WSP); John Mitchell (STV); Elissa Smith (HDR); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit); Kenna Coe (Post & Courier); Jason Tighe (WCIV News)

STAFF PRESENT: Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Matthew Spath; Sharon Hollis; 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: November 19, 2025 Meeting

*Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the November 19, 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 month ending November 30, 2025. Ms. Mitchum stated that the agency is 17% through the year and slightly over budget. She stated that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$498,160. 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 FY26 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.
- Miscellaneous revenue is the sale of scrap metal.

Expenditures:

- Retiree Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office, facility maintenance and signage supplies.
- Printing includes costs of printing passes and map brochures.
- 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 Swiftly real time passenger predictions, Swiftly GPS Playback, Swiftly on-time performance, Swiftly run-times service, 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 lot, the Radio Shop at Leeds Avenue, Medcom Street, and the charging stations at Leeds Avenue.
- OnDemand Program is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include underground utility tank inspection.
- 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.
- Vehicle Maintenance is the cost to maintain the fleet and repair the Proterra electric fleet.
- Facility Repair & Maintenance is the cost to maintain facilities. Facility repairs include bus wash repairs.
- 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.
- 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:

- Capital (IT, Facility Repairs, Maint.) is the purchase of bike racks and shelving for inventory storage.

The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report and the OnDemand Program Activity Report as information.

4. 2026 Calendar of Events – Request for Approval

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, presented the proposed 2026 Calendar of Events. He discussed the events and days that CARTA would like to participate in throughout the calendar year. Mr. Mitchum noted that staff is requesting approval to provide free rides and/or offer promotions on the specific days proposed as well as approval to participate in the various events proposed.

- Driver Appreciation Day in March (promotions)
- Earth Day, April 22nd – Free Day
- Mobility Month in May (promotions)
- Dump the Pump, June 18th – Free Day
- Ride to the Polls, November 3rd – Free Day
- Veterans’ Day, November 11th – Veterans and Active Military Ride Free
- Christmas Free Rides, December 18th and December 25th – Free Days
- Seniors Ride Free Days: February 16th (Presidents’ Day-February is Senior Independence Month); May 27th (National Senior Health & Fitness Day-Older Americans Month); August 21st (National Senior Citizens Day); December 18th (Holiday Gift)
- Stingrays Game in March
- Black Expo in March
- MUSC Senior Fair in April
- Earth Day in April
- College of Charleston Sustainability Fair in April
- North Charleston Business Expo in May
- Riverdogs Game in August/September
- Trunk or Treat Events in October
- Bus Roadeo in October
- Turkey Giveaway in November
- Christmas Parades in December
- Bike Giveaway in December

Mr. Brownstein made a motion to approve the 2026 Calendar of Events as presented.

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

5. Project Updates – Andrea Kozloski

Andrea Kozloski, Deputy Director of Operations and Support, delivered a presentation regarding upcoming events and activities noting the following: RATP Dev Start-Up Celebration on February 1st; Seniors Ride Free Day on February 16th for Senior Independence Month. Ms. Kozloski shared slides depicting photos from the Christmas Parades that were held in the City of Charleston, the Town of Mt. Pleasant and the City of North Charleston during the month of December. She also shared slides depicting the photos taken during the Bike Giveaway Event that was held on December 17th. Ms. Kozloski stated that the Beach Reach Ad Hoc Committee will hold a meeting following today’s Board of Directors meeting. Councilman Brownstein is Chairman and Mr. Lahm, Mayor O’Neil and Councilman Ward serve on the committee. Ms. Kozloski discussed CARTA Amenities, noting the shelters and benches in progress. She stated that a total of 178 bus stop-mounted solar lights have been installed as well as a total of 75 shelter-mounted solar lights installed. There have been 186 newly branded signs installed. Ms. Kozloski shared testimonials that were shared on Social Media commending bus operator, Leroy E. regarding going above and beyond to assist a passenger as well as a commendation from a CARTA rider expressing their love and appreciation of affordable transportation and offering free-ride days. Ms. Kozloski discussed the “CARTA Now & Next” survey and encouraged participation. She highlighted bus operator, Ricky Sharpe. Mr. Sharpe has been a bus operator for seven years. He is a Chicago native who moved to Charleston to serve in the Marine Corps where he served in the infantry security division. Mr. Sharpe is a devoted family man and is also an usher at Olive Branch AME Church. Ms. Kozloski delivered information regarding the Transit App, noting that 765 new CARTA riders were welcomed aboard as they downloaded the app for the first time. A total of 7,937 riders opened the Transit App during December and an average weekday had 1,757 riders opening the Transit App during December. She noted that 10,850

GO trips were started by riders to receive step-by-step navigation while helping to improve real-time vehicle locations. Ms. Kozloski stated that users purchased 4,547 tickets during the month of December, which valued \$10,017. She noted that the installment of all on-board tablets has been completed and the bus operators are pleased with the helpfulness of the tablets. In addition to the Upcoming Events/Activities updates, also included in the Board Agenda Packet are the Project Updates. Board Members are encouraged to contact staff with questions, comments or concerns regarding the Project Updates report. The Board of Directors received the Upcoming Activities and Events Report as information.

6. Union Pier HOP Lot – Request for Approval

Mr. Mitchum discussed the Union Pier HOP Lot. He noted that staff has been working with the City of Charleston, the SC Ports Authority and Beemok Capital, LLC and has the opportunity to expand the parking capacity available along the Route 211 HOP route. Mr. Mitchum stated that improvements to the Union Pier Lot will allow for the addition of 209 parking spaces to serve the hospitality industry. The parking spaces will be secured with parameter fencing and an electronically controlled gate. Vehicular and transit bus access will be provided along Pritchard Street. Updated parking lot striping and a covered transit shelter will be installed. A short extension of the existing Route 211 will be required with no loss in the current service offered on this route. Mr. Mitchum stated that staff recommends approval to proceed in upfitting the parking lot and the expenditure of no more than \$83,000 to complete the project. He addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the Union Pier HOP Lot request as presented.
Mr. Hudson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

7. Ridership Report – Megan Ross

In Transit Planner Megan Ross's absence, Marissa Cottrell, our on-site consultant with WSP, presented the Ridership Reports for November and December 2025. For the month of November she noted that, for fixed-route ridership trends, passenger trips totaled 235,675 and there were 13.9 customers per service hour. Missed service hours totaled 250.05. Ms. Cottrell reviewed safety trends for November noting that there were 5 preventable accidents (hitting fixed objects) which were on fixed-route vehicles. There were also 13 non-preventable accidents. She discussed complaints and commendations regarding Customer Service for the month of November, noting that there were 6 complaints (rude operator and passenger pass-ups) and there were two commendations. Ms. Cottrell reviewed On-Time Performance, noting that fixed-route on-time performance for the month of November was 74.5% and on-time performance for paratransit was 95%. She discussed paratransit services in detail for the month of November regarding the breakdown of total passengers, which was 3,992. There were 261 no-shows and 1,797 cancellations. The average ride length was 27.21 minutes and the average ride distance was 8.89 miles. The on-time performance was 95.0%. She then discussed OnDemand trips for November, noting that the ridership for the month was 3,860 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. The trip cost averaged \$10.06, which was the same as October's average. Ms. Cottrell stated that 45% of the overall rides were from Tel-A-Ride passengers. She then discussed Ridership for the month of December 2025. Ms. Cottrell noted that for the fixed-route ridership trends, passenger trips totaled 215,741 and there were 12.5 customers per service hour. Missed service hours totaled 480.87. Ms. Cottrell reviewed safety trends for December noting that there was one preventable accident (hitting a fixed object) which was on a fixed-route vehicle. There were also four non-preventable accidents. She discussed complaints and commendations regarding Customer Service for the month of December noting that there were 8 complaints (rude operator and missed service) and there were two commendations. Ms. Cottrell reviewed On-Time Performance noting that the fixed-route on-time performance for the month of December was 74.7% and the on-time performance for paratransit was 94%. She discussed paratransit services in detail for the month of December regarding the breakdown of total passengers, which was 4,155. There were 296 no-shows and 2,054 cancellations. The average ride length was 28.85 minutes and the average ride distance

was 9.02 miles. The on-time performance was 92.0%. She then discussed OnDemand trips for December, noting that ridership for the month was 4,442 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. The trip cost averaged \$10.06, which was the same as November's average. Ms. Cottrell stated that 46% of the overall rides were from Tel-A-Ride passengers. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

8. Executive Session – Legal and Contractual Matters

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

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

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

Mr. Green 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 legal/contractual matters discussed during Executive Session.

9. Contract Operator Transition:

- **Fleet Maintenance Services – Request for Approval:** Mr. Mitchum discussed the Fleet Maintenance Contract Services. He noted that the transit services operating contract with RATP Dev USA will commence on February 1, 2026. Since being selected by CARTA, RATP Dev USA has been working to gain an understanding of the current state of the operations and maintenance functions to include fleet and facility conditions. Based on these activities, it was recommended that a third-party maintenance contract be procured to allow an expedited response to address these repairs and perform a full facilities condition and maintenance program assessment. Consideration and authorization to proceed is requested at an expenditure estimate of \$485,800. The proposal will create a strategic path forward that enables CARTA to achieve long-term, sustainable success in providing the transportation services that the Charleston community deserves. All staff, materials, oversight and overhead costs are included. In addition, the program assessment will establish RATP Dev USA to develop a comprehensive path forward for bringing the facilities into a state of good repair. Mr. Mitchum stated that staff recommends approval to proceed in procuring a third-party maintenance contractor and an expenditure of no more than \$485,800 to complete the project. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

Mr. Logan made a motion to approve the Fleet Maintenance Services recommendation as presented.

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

- **Rolling Stock Lease – Request for Approval:** Mr. Mitchum discussed the Lease of Transit Vehicles. He noted that the transit services operating contract with RATP Dev USA will commence on February 1, 2026. Since being selected by CARTA, RATP Dev USA has been working to gain an understanding of the current state of the operations and maintenance functions to include fleet and facility conditions. Based on these activities, it was recommended that revenue vehicles be leased to ensure service continuity while the third-party maintenance contractor completes their work. Consideration and authorization to proceed is requested at an expenditure not to exceed \$1,200,000. The leased vehicles consist of four 2005 40-foot, 2-door New Flyer transit vehicles, six 36-passenger Starcraft Allstar cutaway-style transit vehicles, and one 42-passenger Starcraft Allstar cutaway-style transit vehicle. The terms of the lease is 24 months for the New Flyer transit vehicles and 12 months for the Starcraft transit vehicles. The final quantity of vehicles leased will be determined based on the status of the fleet repairs completed by February 1, 2026. Mr. Mitchum stated that staff recommends approval to proceed in leasing transit vehicles and an expenditure of funds not to exceed \$1,200,000. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Brinson made a motion to approve the Rolling Stock Lease recommendation as presented.
Mr. Green seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.***

- **Proterra Battery Electric Bus Parts Purchase – Request for Approval:** Mr. Mitchum discussed the Proterra Battery Electric Bus Part Purchase. He noted that CARTA operates several Proterra battery electric buses. In order to maintain a safe and reliable fleet, staff is requesting approval to purchase replacement parts to support ongoing operations. Following the bankruptcy of Proterra and the subsequent purchase of Proterra bus assets by Phoenix EV, parts manufacturing and availability have become an industry-wide issue. A handful of suppliers are offering to sell re-manufactured parts that do not have a guarantee that they can be programmed to operate on Proterra buses and have long lead times. Additionally, transit agencies cannot purchase directly from the manufacturer. Power Part, LLC has signed commercial agreements with several of the manufacturers to purchase brand new OEM components with authorization to resale to customers. These parts include battery packs, gearboxes, inverters and electronics controllers. Mr. Mitchum stated that staff is requesting approval of a not-to-exceed amount of \$1,000,000 to purchase Proterra replacement parts from Power Parts, LLC. This authorization will allow CARTA to procure OEM components on an as-needed basis based on fleet condition, parts availability and operational priorities. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

***Mr. Somerville made a motion to approve the Proterra Battery Electric Bus Parts Purchase recommendation as presented. Mr. Logan seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.***

10. Executive Director’s Report – Ron Mitchum

Mr. Mitchum updated the Board of Directors regarding the Shipwatch Square Project noting that the bid for construction will be submitted in the near future and, to date, the project remains in line with the budget. He stated that work continues with the Mt. Pleasant Street Park & Ride project regarding stormwater analysis matters. Mr. Mitchum noted that the FTA will be on-site next week to conduct the periodic PMOC interviews and stated that it is anticipated to be a normal process. He briefed the Board regarding SCDOT’s Ad Hoc Modernization Committee matters. Mr. Mitchum then stated that he received notification regarding the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) noting that \$275 million for the LCRT project was on the THUD FY 2026 Appropriations Agenda and that Congress will allocate \$275 million to the LCRT project. He also noted that he will be meeting with the Town of Kiawah Island to discuss transit. Mr. Mitchum stated that he has been in contact with Christy Hall regarding details of the Charleston County TST. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director’s Update as information.

11. Other Business, If Any

There was no further business to discuss.

12. 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 that his organization is continuing plans for the Transit Equity Day to be held in conjunction with Rosa Parks’ birthday on February 4th.

13. Board Comments, If Any

Councilman Brownstein reported that he attended the Municipal Association of South Carolina's (MASC) Hometown Legislative Action Day that was held yesterday in Columbia regarding updates on current legislative matters. He stated that SCDOT Secretary of Transportation, Justin Powell, lead a session to share his perspective regarding how cities and towns can work together to strengthen the state's infrastructure. Councilman Brownstein stated that Secretary Powell commented positively regarding the LCRT noting that it will have a positive impact on the region.

14. Adjourn

Chairman Seekings thanked the Board Members for attending today's meeting as well as their continued service to the CARTA Board of Directors and the communities they serve. The next CARTA Board of Directors meeting will be held on February 18th. Chairman Seekings announced that Charleston County Legislative Delegation Board Member MaryBeth Berry would no longer serve on the Board as she is relocating to Virginia. Chairman Seekings commended Ms. Berry's dedicated service to the Board and noted that her input and guidance would be greatly missed. He shared Ms. Berry's message to the Board stating that she is grateful for the opportunity to have served for the past several years and she will miss everyone. The Board of Directors recognized Ms. Berry's instrumental service to CARTA and the community. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Coleman