

Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority Board Meeting

May 29, 2013 – LRTA Board Minutes

Chairman Dick Stewart called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

Roll: Chairman Dick Stewart, Vice-Chairman David Blauch, Ginnie Kozak, Chris Hutton, Barbara Childs, Fred Harvey.

Absent: Lynette Harley, Jenny Carter, Louise Pinkney.

Also in Attendance from Palmetto Breeze: Paula Porter, Yazmin Winston—Breeze Team leader, Danielle Casey—Mobility Manager, and Rochelle Ferguson.

Ms. Ferguson states also new to our team but not present is Michael White, AGM of Operations. He replaces Kyle Hamilton who moved to Atlanta where his wife is attending law school.

Approval of Minutes – March 27, 2013

Motion to approve: Chris Hutton, second: Fred Harvey. Motion carried.

Action Items:

Ms. Ferguson states that she has the Hampton COA Purchase of Service Contract. They had rescinded their contract due to lack of funding, but we verbally reinstated it two months ago and this is the formal written contract.

Ms. Ferguson states we have revised the Substance Abuse Policy. When Kyle Hamilton left we had to change the policy to remove his name and add in Yazmin and Mike. David Blauch asks is it a government requirement to have proper names in the policy and not just position titles? Ms. Ferguson responds yes, when we had our Substance Abuse Audit about a year ago that was reaffirmed.

Motion to approve: David Blauch, second: Chris Hutton. Motion carried.

Informational Items

Director's Report:

Ms. Ferguson states we had an open house on April 5th. It was very successful. There were many different representatives of the counties here. Ms. Ginnie Kozak suggested we send out copies of the PowerPoint we showed at the open house to several of the attendees, so Ms. Ferguson has done that. Some of the county administration lobbies have space for an ongoing infomercial.

We had an evacuation exercise with Beaufort County Emergency Management Division. Ms. Ferguson hands out a newspaper clipping about it. We practiced our evacuation procedures and connecting with motor coaches in the event we were transporting people from here to the Allendale Welcome Center. From the Allendale Welcome Center they will be further evacuated by federally acquired/contracted

assets if needed. Chairman Stewart asks if we have a responsibility in Edisto. Ms. Ferguson states no, only Beaufort County. Chairman Stewart asks who does, and Ms. Ferguson states human service agencies in Colleton County. Barbara Childs states the school buses evacuate the recruits. Ms. Ferguson states we will try to obtain some school buses from Durham Transportation to transport some citizens as well.

Ms. Ferguson states another ongoing project is the Lowcountry Mobility Management project which Danielle Casey is heading up. The major initiative is the acquisition of more vehicles to meet the needs of the contracts that will be coming our way and meet the needs of the various human service agencies. I am hoping to negotiate with SCDOT for transfers of vehicles from other agencies or purchase used vehicles. We must have additional rolling stock to make the mobility management project successful and I wanted to bring it to your attention.

Ms. Ferguson says another project is the Veterans Transportation Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) project. We are actively in the planning stages of that grant now and meeting with military personnel. Yesterday we attended a Military Veterans committee meeting as part of another organizational meeting that they already were having. We plan on actively engaging that group rather than creating a whole new meeting to target the veterans and the military population.

A worker's compensation hearing that was scheduled for Summerville tomorrow afternoon has been settled so no hearing was required.

No further updates are available regarding the House S.C. House Bill 3013, Disabled Veterans Transportation bill.

On July 9th we have a Governor's Office emergency preparedness exercise. Beaufort County will have an exercise as well as other coastal counties. I believe this is the first one they've done like this.

At the last transportation coordination meeting we mentioned we did an open house and they suggested we have one for all the human services agencies. We have at least 120 agencies in Beaufort County alone. We scheduled an open house on July 25th. Thank you to Chris Hutton for the recommendation to have an open house. Chris Hutton asks if Board members need to come. Ms. Ferguson states no, but you are welcome to attend.

PASS (Passenger Service and Safety) training is schedule for 7/26 and 8/2. Participants must attend both days to be PASS certified.

Colleton County sent us a letter about their allocation. I also want to hand out the information about the allocation from Beaufort County. The letter from Colleton County states that there will be no increase in revenue for the FY14 budget and county council capped direct assistance appropriations to the amount in the FY13 budget. If the state reduces their funds then our allocation will be reduced. I wanted to point this out so the Colleton County Board Representatives can do some cheerleading for us and point out how critically important our service is. Mr. Blauch and Mr. Harvey, the two Colleton County Representatives discussed how many passengers we transport from Colleton County on a

regular basis. There is such high unemployment and poverty in those outlying counties, with not many job opportunities or economic development.

Ms. Ferguson states that at the Beaufort County Community Services Allocation draft budget will soon go to the full County Council. A number of Human Service Agencies met with Fred Leyda of the Beaufort County Human Services Alliance on how to better allocate the local funds. Beaufort County currently does it in a way that is similar to a grant process. We receive one of the largest allocations in the county. There are nine other agencies who are receiving some of these funds. Some Council members and LRTA Board members have discussed us pulling out of this funding allocation and becoming a separate line item within the Beaufort County budget. We talked with Mr. Leyda about that issue a few weeks ago. Chairman Stewart said we aren't asking them to change the budget, just to put us in a separate line item; that's the pitch. I'm going to call Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, and tell him. When we do this, what's the likelihood we can increase private sector funding if we are a separate line item budget? Ms. Ferguson states yes, it is likely. He asks Chris Hutton to call whoever he knows on the Council. Mr. Hutton agrees. He asks what precipitates that statement though. Chairman Stewart says it increases our likelihood of receiving private funding if we have less public funding. I can say to the major employers, the county has made a move to make us a separate line item and what I want those folks to do is to look at how we can help them because that will affect the county's decision when it goes to the budgeting for next year. This includes Care Core, your major hospitals, hospitality enterprises, etc. The reason we want out of that is the county realizes we are an important agency that provides not some human services but a utility of transportation like the roads do; therefore, we want those folks to participate by telling us what they need and how we are to get there. Ms. Kozak states LRTA has always been listed as a human service agency when we should be listed as a public utility. Mr. Hutton states the principal of Polaris would rather hand money over to a government agency to set up a ferry system than a private company. I said to them its 3.5 million dollars just to open the door and they said okay. Chairman Stewart asks Mr. Hutton to call Councilman Stewart Rodman of Beaufort County Council about this. Chairman Stewart said he will call Beaufort Council Chair Paul Sommerville and Gary Kubic. Mr. Hutton replies he will call him. Mr. Hutton states that now that we are an MPO it would be a good time to do this. Ms. Kozak agrees. There is money in the small urbanized area now that never was available before for new services. Chairman Stewart asks Ms. Ferguson if she will craft a letter for him to review and sign on behalf of the Board to all Beaufort County Council Members as well as the finance staff and Gary Kubic that we might be treated as a separate line item consistent with the MPO with overtures that we have private sector financing parties and-we feel we should be treated as something other than a human service agency. I'll make those calls to Gary (Kubic) and Paul (Sommerville) and see if we can get this done. Ms. Kozak states we need to change this perception that we are a human service agency. Chairman Stewart states it's a small window, make it short. Start it by saying it won't cost you anything and it is simple to do, but it may save you some money in the long term. Ms. Kozak states it may contribute to economic development. The Secretary of Transportation and the Deputy Secretary of Commerce have been working together to use transportation money to encourage economic development.

Finance Director's Report:

Ms. Paula Porter states several items are running over budget. There are some of the same items from the last report, so I will just review the new items. Maintenance overtime is over budget due to breakdowns and being short staffed. Operations Overtime is over budget by 28%. Chairman Stewart asks what was the dollar amount. Ms. Porter states \$6,000.00. Chairman Stewart says do you think it will be material by year end? Ms. Porter answers she has no idea as she doesn't handle the scheduling or have anything to do with operations; she just reports it. Overtime wages are still over budget for Demand Response. She realizes she made a mistake on the prior report when she reported Demand Response II overtime as being 49% and it should have been 71%. She realized the error when she was looking at this month and it was 101% over budget and there couldn't have been that big of a jump from the previous report. She states she does not usually report anything unless it's more than 10% over budget. Jasper DSN, route 852, wages were 18% over budget. She compared total hours worked from last year to this year, and this year we have done 100 more salary hours than the previous year. She doesn't know why that is, she just compared it so she can report it. The retirement for the same route is over budget due to under budgeting the route. Overall we are still within budget. At this time of the year we should be at 84% of our budget in expenses and we are only at 78% of the total expense budget used.

Chairman's Report:

Chairman Stewart has nothing to report.

Committee/Project Reports

Fred Harvey states The Organizational Development Committee hasn't had a meeting, though he looks forward to meeting Michael White.

Vice-Chairman David Blauch presents the Policy and Planning committee report. PMI's are 100% on time, there are no exceptions to report, and no major equipment failures. Shop equipment is in good condition except the roll up doors need repairing. Training has been done on A/C work. Vehicle #933 was involved in a deer accident but is back in service. It costs approximately \$7,000. Building inspections were done.

Barbara Childs states the Finance Committee review will be done after this meeting.

Chairman Stewart stated that there is no activity for the Marine Division.

Old Business

Ginnie Kozak states that Hilton Head has changed its resolution to allow the Chairman of LRTA to be on the Board of the MPO. She needs to urge the technical committee members to urge their respective governing bodies to do the same.

The LATS for the MPO is moving along. The Technical Committee reviewed six firms' proposals. Two firms were front runners and they were interviewed by teleconference. Kimley-Horn and Associates was awarded the contract and will work on the Long Range Transportation Plan to be completed in time for

funding in the 2015 fiscal year. Ms. Ferguson asks when the next meeting is and Ms. Kozak states there is none scheduled.

Ms. Kozak shows the brochure where Palmetto Breeze is featured. We also received an award for Excellence in Regional Transportation award for our coordination efforts from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO). We are also moving ahead with the Veterans initiative. We met with the Marine Corps Air Station's new Director of Planning, Jason Mann. He is very interested in transportation and the good thing is he is in the Commanders' Office. Unfortunately, a representative from Parris Island couldn't make it. Things are really coming together now.

New Business

Ms. Ferguson shows the Government Finance Officers Associations Excellence in Finance Reporting award that we received.

Announcements

None

Adjournment

Adjournment at 2:52 PM.