

## Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority Board Meeting

February 22, 2017

LRTA Board Minutes

Location: LCOG Yemassee

Chair David Blauch called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

Barbara Childs offered the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll: David Blauch, Ginnie Kozak, Rick Hamilton, Chris Bickley, Susan Zellman, Jake Rawl, Barbara Childs, Louise Pinkney arrived 2:23 PM.

Also in Attendance: Paula Tilley and Mary Lou Franzoni of Palmetto Breeze; Lawrence Holdsworth and Sabrina Graham of LCOG and Mike Covert, Beaufort County Council member.

### **Approval of Minutes – January 4, 2017**

**Motion to approve, Rick Hamilton; second, Chris Bickley. Motion carried.**

### **Action Items:**

Mr. Hamilton, of the Nominating Committee stated that Ms. Pinkney and he discussed the matter of extending Chair Blauch's term until the end of 2017. Ms. Franzoni stated Chair Blauch's two-year term ends March of 2017 and he is allowed 2 consecutive terms.

**Motion to approve extension of Chair Blauch's position until 12/31/17, Susan Zellman; Second, Chris Bickley. Motion carried.**

Chair Blauch stated we need to nominate for the Vice Chair as well because Ms. Childs' term expires this year too. Mr. Hamilton stated we should discuss succession planning and arrange for a consensus vote by March. Chair Blauch states he can send something over. Mr. Rawls stated we should keep the Chair and Vice Chair the same and extend Ms. Childs' term until the end of 2017 as well. Chair Blauch stated unless we want to nominate a Vice Chair now and then they have 8 months to learn about the position.

### **Director's Report:**

Ms. Franzoni stated she attended planning sessions in Hilton Head and Bluffton; these are preliminary planning sessions for the Urban Area. The Island Packet ran an article on the proposed Trolley Services in December; she will send the link to everyone.

We met with Curtis Sims, who handles SCDOT training on the Rural side. They are trying to figure out what they did when they procured Route Match for the state. They initially bought Route Match for everyone in the rural transportation systems. We do have 3 seats for Dispatch that SCDOT pays the licensing, but we pay for support. Ms. Kozak, through LCOG, has paid for the licenses for the first 15

tablets in the grant that purchased the tablets. We will need to go out to bid for their services now that the contract will end with SCDOT, but SCDOT is planning to give each system additional money to cover the portion that they were paying for the licenses. Curtis did mention during the review of our use of Route Match that LRTA uses the program more robustly than any other rural agency in the State. We are the only ones using tablets in the vehicles.

Ms. Tilley, Ms. Atkinson and I attended Certified Community Transit Managers (CCTM) class. It was for 3 days and then we took the test on Friday. We learned a lot and SCDOT paid for the class and reimbursed us for our lodging and meals.

There were no preventable accidents in December and January. There were no road calls in December and 2 in January. Mr. Bickley asked with the system statistics, regarding revenue miles and hours, is there a number that we need to meet to hit our target. Ms. Franzoni stated she looks at them and what our operating expenses are and what the trend is to be sure we are operating efficiently.

#### **Finance Director's Report:**

Ms. Tilley reviewed the financial statement and presented the local match spreadsheet that shows the needs for the upcoming year for both the rural and small urban grant funds. Ms. Franzoni stated last year we only had rural grants, but this coming year we have both the rural and urban grants. We are going to require more local match from the Counties. Ms. Tilley explained the spreadsheet and the columns that show the Counties requirement, the amount they are paying now, and what those differences are. As you can see, except for Beaufort and Allendale Counties, the amount we received in the past is not enough to match the grants. In the past, Hilton Head contributed enough local match to make up the difference. We will go to all the Counties and present this spreadsheet. As Board members, representing your County, we ask that you go to your County representative and speak to them about it as well. We are requesting almost \$300,000 in matching funds from Hilton Head to match the urban grants. We also asked for \$55,000 to cover the anticipated shortfall on the rural side. This is the largest request we have made to Hilton Head and they have a tough budget year as they have to get loans to pay for the hurricane cleanup. We are anticipating an issue as we go around to all the Counties. Mr. Bickley stated he spoke to Colleton County and they will not increase their match. Ms. Franzoni replied at what point do we say if they aren't going to continue to provide funds to leverage the grant, then we can't continue to operate services in that County? What happens if we don't have enough match money is we cannot spend the grant money. Mr. Bickley asks is the percentage the same for local match on what programs you are running. Ms. Franzoni replied no, it's a different percentage. Such as if you buy vehicles, the grant covers 85% of the purchase price, the match is 50% for operations. The State portion is up to 25%, but they don't always kick in all of it, so the Local match must cover the other portion. Chair Blauch stated that Hilton Head has always recognized that they get a lot of benefit from bringing in workers from outlying Counties. Sabrina Graham stated she had a conversation with Colleton and Hampton Counties about transportation within their County and they do not think it benefits them. Ms. Tilley stated their County does benefit from their residents being transported to a job. Without it, it will tax their local social services. When Hampton County threatened cutting back their local match in the past, the riders for the bus went to the County to ask for them to support it

because they needed to get to work. Mr. Bickley stated the bottom line is it's not for free. If the County refuses, maybe give them a grace period and then cut them back. Ms. Kozak stated Charlie Rutkowski is going to do focus groups so they may see things a bit differently with some more information.

### **Chairperson's Report:**

No Report

### **Old Business**

Ms. Franzoni stated that on February 9<sup>th</sup>, we received a welcome letter from the FTA as a new grantee for the Small Urban Area. We will now get set up on their electronic systems to manage grants and the funds. We updated the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting. The next step is for the State to put our urban project into the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), and then we can write the grant. It will take 30-90 days from submission to approval by the FTA before we can draw any of the money, however, we can get reimbursed for any expenses we incurred from February 9<sup>th</sup> forward. SCDOT is the designated recipient of the FTA funds and they decide how much money each system will get. They took away our 2014 urban money since it hadn't been used, which was about \$350,000. However, they did give us \$700,000 of reallocated rural money to rebuild our MCI's and do some updates to our building and AC system.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) was completed for the MCI bus rehabs and was awarded to Coach Crafters in Florida. They were the lowest bidder and they are a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE). We wrote in an option for an additional four buses. They should all be done by the end of December. Ms. Zellman asked how many MCI's we have. Ms. Franzoni replied 11, but one is out of service and they took two to be rehabbed so we are down to 8. These rehabs will save us money in operating costs, look nicer and will have cameras installed in all of them. We had a law suit going on when I first started. We held our ground on it and haven't had any more since then. We settled it for \$10,000 even though they asked for \$200,000, the cameras helped with the suit. Ms. Zellman asked how many miles do these rehabs add to the life of the vehicle. Ms. Franzoni stated she is hoping that we will get an additional 500K.

Ms. Kozak asked Ms. Franzoni if she heard from Parks and Rec regarding transportation to and from Hunting Island State Park. She replied, yes she had an initial conversation with Phil Gaines regarding this and he is supposed to get back to me as they decide what they are going to do.

### **New Business**

Ms. Kozak stated the Policy Committee of the MPO approved the TIP. She will send it to SCDOT which will go in front of the South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission for approval in April. Ms. Tilley stated she read it was due February 28<sup>th</sup> to go in front of the SCDOT Commission March 11<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Kozak stated she will get it to them in time. LATS is revived due to the Port construction in Jasper County. This could require more public transportation. The GA and other SC ports will reach capacity by

2025 and Charleston cannot handle larger ships. An environmental impact study is being done now. Senator Tom Davis has vowed to come to every meeting.

She stated it took 4 ½ years for everyone to get on board and have the FTA approve Palmetto Breeze for the funds. Beaufort County, Hilton Head and Bluffton were questioning the ability for you to handle the service. Now that is finally going through, it says a lot about Mary Lou and Paula that they were able to get everyone to agree quite easily.

Ms. Pinkney asked if Ms. Franzoni has reviewed the routes from Allendale for the summer. They get very crowded and she wants to make sure there won't be a problem this year. Ms. Franzoni replied yes, the rehabs will give us a more reliable fleet; we had several vehicles out of service last summer. Chair Blauch stated he wants to make sure this is addressed. Ms. Franzoni stated last year we did a few contracts for J1 students and this year will be much smaller. We will make sure there are enough buses.

### **Announcements**

The Transportation Association of SC (TASC) meeting and State Roadeo will be in Myrtle Beach March 23-26. Ms. Tilley and Ms. Franzoni are attending the conference including transit asset management training. It's a FTA requirement to have a plan, which includes assessing your fleet and having a bench mark for replacement. Mr. Bickley agreed. You can buy a vehicle for 15 cents on a dollar but it may cost 50 cents on the dollar to maintain old buses. Ms. Childs asks if they still have Board training at this conference, and Ms. Franzoni said she will look into it.

Executive session entered at 3:00 p.m. and ended at 3:10 p.m. with no action items.

Ms. Tilley stated Steve Richard, the Payroll and HR Administrator is retiring this Friday.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn at 3:15 PM Susan Zellman, Second, Louise Pinkney, Motion carried.**