

## **Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority Board Meeting**

April 26, 2017

LRTA Board Minutes

Location: Palmetto Breeze

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 2:50 PM.

Also in Attendance: Paula Tilley, Mary Lou Franzoni, Laura Atkinson, Tyrone Drayton and Mark Stanley of Palmetto Breeze; Charlie Rutkowski of CTAA, and Jim Frierson of SCDOT.

### **Approval of Minutes – February 22, 2017**

**Motion to approve, Susan Zellman; second, Rick Hamilton. Motion carried.**

#### **Action Items:**

Ms. Tilley and Ms. Franzoni discussed the budget for fiscal year 2017-2018 for both the rural and small urban programs. The proposed budget includes a \$1.00 increase for all drivers and mechanics. The budget includes two new employees, a Safety Supervisor and an Administrative person who will do compliance and marketing among other things. Ms. Franzoni discussed increasing the number of sick days from six (6) per year to ten (10) per year. Ms. Franzoni did an analysis of other local agencies and government employees and determined that increasing our sick days from six to ten would be more in line with what the other agencies provide. If this change is approved, the personnel policy will be changed to reflect this.

**Motion to approve budget, Rick Hamilton; Second, Jake Rawls. Motion carried.**

Chair Blauch stated last meeting we put off the nomination of Vice Chair for the Board. Rick Hamilton was nominated, he accepted, and will start immediately.

**Motion to approve, Rick Hamilton; Second, Jake Rawls. Motion carried.**

Ms. Franzoni stated she has a contract for Allendale COA for the current year. They are a sub-recipient for our 5311 funding for their transportation. Ms. Franzoni presented a contract for Circle K for advertising on 3 of our buses for a total income of \$3600.

**Motion to approve two contracts, Jake Rawl; Second, Chris Bickley. Motion carried.**

**Motion to approve personnel policy revisions, Barbara Childs; Second, Susan Zellman. Motion carried.**

Ms. Franzoni presented a contract for Global Education for J1 student transportation. This contract is for fewer students and less trips per day than previous years. It will run from May through August. Mr. Bickley stated we had an issue a while back with students not paying, have you addressed that. Ms. Franzoni replied yes, all transportation must be paid for in advance.

**Motion to approve, Rick Hamilton; Second, Jake Rawls. Motion carried.**

**Director's Report:**

Ms. Franzoni stated she met with the planning department of Hilton Head and with their Finance Director. She also met with Mike Thomas, a developer who is building housing for H2B workers and is interested in transportation from the housing to the job sites. He anticipates that this will start in January and they are willing to pay for the entire cost of the transportation. This could serve Palmetto Breeze as a backbone of a permanent route as there would be guaranteed passengers. She provided them with preliminary schedules.

Chair Blauch asked if Palmetto Breeze participated in the March of Dimes walk. Ms. Franzoni stated yes, and \$75,000 was raised as of Saturday.

Ms. Franzoni stated Colin Kenton called in February for us to meet with Beaufort County. The County was interested in a pilot program for bus service from Bluffton to Hilton Head to help alleviate the congestion on the bridges. We are in the process of buying 6 new cutaways in the urban grant for this pilot. Mr. Bickley stated this would basically be a shuttle. Ms. Franzoni stated yes it would but the challenge is in figuring out how to serve the destinations on Hilton Head in an efficient manner. We are thinking of ride share solution for the first and last mile but the details will have to be worked out.

We met with Motorola about regarding purchasing 2 way radios for the vehicles. We plan on meeting with the Palmetto 800 provider as Savannah Motorola doesn't have coverage to Allendale or Walterboro. The Push to Talk phones we currently use has limitations and we would like to get away from using them. If we can get on the Palmetto 800 frequency through the county, without a user fee that would be ideal.

Ms. Franzoni stated she wanted to recognize everyone at Palmetto Breeze for a job well done as we received the Public Transit Provider of the Year award at the State TASC conference in March. They recognized the work we have accomplished plus the work we did during the hurricane. Maintenance also received third place in the maintenance competition at the Rodeo, working hard to break the ranks as they have never placed before. It was a big victory for us.

**Finance Director's Report:**

Ms. Tilley reviewed the financial statement and stated that all was running close to budget and we have been running very tight. Mr. Bickley asked if Ms. Tilley knows where we will be financially at the end of the year. She replied she couldn't say off the top of her head. Chair Blauch stated he would love to be able to put some money back into our reserves. Ms. Tilley stated she will send something out stating what the position is.

**Chairperson's Report:**

Chair Blauch stated he spend a lot of time closing out the First Transit contract. As of Mid-April, we have severed all ties with First Transit. The transition was more challenging than what we expected back in October based on the advice we received from the attorney. For everyone's information, he signed the 5311 rural SCDOT grant before this meeting. Chair Blauch asked Ms. Franzoni to be sure all policies and procedures do not reference First Transit. Ms. Franzoni agreed to double check and ensure that First Transit's name and logos were removed.

**Committee Reports**Operations

Mr. Hamilton and discussed the Operations review for December through March. There was one preventable accident and three non-preventable accidents. There was one complaint lodged. Mr. Hamilton asked Chair Blauch if they can enter into a brief executive session to discuss an inactive employee and a letter that was received.

#### Maintenance

Dave Blauch reported the PM rate is 100% for the year. There were no major equipment failures and they outsourced a transmission that was covered under warranty. Mark Stanley hired a new mechanic this week. He also hired a new utility worker but he has resigned already. Road calls are down, but they were mostly big buses and there is a lot of brake work being done right now. Overall no issues.

#### Finance

Barbara Childs reported four months were reviewed and there were no issues or problems.

#### Marine Division

Ms. Tilley discussed parking issues at the new location and the Daufuskie Ferry status.

#### Old Business

Chair Blauch stated if you have not completed your conflict of interest forms, please get them to Ms. Franzoni.

Charlie Rutkowski from CTAA stated that he attended the Access Health meeting yesterday. Mr. Rutkowski reminded the Board that we did a visionary exercise to see what the other services Palmetto Breeze could provide at the strategic planning session held previously. One option was adding in transportation for the second shift employment. Also, providing a local circulator in Beaufort, and one in Bluffton and Hilton Head, which would depend on whether we could find funding to support the routes. In Beaufort, it would be geared to Military Families. He stated that he would calculate what it will cost to run these services and compare that to peer systems.

Mr. Rutkowski stated that he would do some modeling to see what the demand is. The perception that Palmetto Breeze services isn't for the general public but for the workers on Hilton Head is a common theme. The CTAA can send you a marketing person to help you with changing the perception. Getting out and meeting people one on one is always good for that. Marketing is educating people on what you offer.

Ms. Kozak discussed LATS and stated Senator Davis has been coming to all the meetings. She stated nothing is new but the grants are finally moving through SCDOT, which includes the small urban and the two contracts with Beaufort DSN have been approved. Chair Blauch asked what is the T.I.P. amendment to the urban grant. Ms. Kozak stated it's the Transportation Improvement plan which then goes to the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) and the funding cannot be drawn down without the changes. Ms. Franzoni stated the amendment was done because it had more than a \$500,000 change when it was put on the STIP because we combined grants. Jim Frierson stated it was approved and now we are waiting for FTA and FWHA approval which could take 2-3 weeks. Ms. Franzoni asked can I apply for the grant in the meanwhile? Mr. Frierson replied yes, you cannot draw it down but you can apply.

#### New Business

Ms. Franzoni asked about Board preference for their contact information on the website and needs some updated information from some of the Board members. Chair Blauch stated he does not want his

personal email on the website. Everyone is in agreement that there should be one email on the website that everyone can access from their home. Ms. Tilley will have it set up and send it to everyone. Mr. Bickley agreed to check it on a regular basis and inform everyone if something comes in. Ms. Pinkney stated she wants her personal email on the website.

Ms. Kozak discussed the Workforce development grant from Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW). They will give 6 grants of \$100,000 each to provide additional transportation. The service must be open to the public and use the local transportation provider. Ms. Franzoni stated it must transport people to a job or education and Colleton County was the only one who came to the meeting who had all the correct players. Mr. Bickley stated this is a great opportunity to show Colleton County that it does get something out of Palmetto Breeze services. Ms. Franzoni agreed and stated it meets all the parameters that this grant requires. Chair Blauch stated that is what Colleton County issue is as far as contributing to the system. They are interested in transportation to jobs in Colleton County and not so much for the service to Hilton Head.

Ms. Franzoni handed out a list of all Board Members and stated Louise Pinkney's term is up and she has to be reappointed.

### **Announcements**

The next Board meeting is June 28<sup>th</sup> at LCOG in Yemassee.

**Executive session** entered at 3:50 p.m. and ended at 4:05 p.m.

Mr. Bickley stated an anonymous email from a supposed employee was received about a grievance. The Board would like to see the HR staff person contact the employee and ask them if they would like to file a grievance as stated in our Personnel Policy. Chair Blauch stated let's not make an assumption that they are an employee. We do have the contact information of the person. Please email that person and ask them to call to discuss their issues. Kerry Guzman, the new HR and Payroll Administrator is brought in and introduced and asked to reach out to "Angie Stone".

### **Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn at 4:15 PM Louise Pinkney, Second, Barbara Childs, Motion carried.**