

**THE COAST-WACCAMAW RTA
BOARD MEETING
March 25, 2010
12:00 p.m.**

Board Present:

Thomas Drayton, Vice Chair
Ivory Wilson
Bernard Silverman
Joseph Lazzara
Steven Neeves
Gregg Smith
Wilbert James

Staff present:

Myers Rollins, General Manager
Joey McKelvey, Director of Operations
Pat Webster, Budget & Finance Director
Felicia Beaty, Executive Assistant
George Osborne, Planner Specialist
Yvette Jefferson, Marketing &
Community Relations

Others Present:

Bo Ives, Citizens Advisory Committee
Dean Richardson, CPA
Claudia Lauer, The Sun News

The Media was notified of the March Board of Directors Meeting on Monday, March 22, 2010.

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chairman Drayton called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mr. Wilson gave the invocation and led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM – ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken. A quorum was present.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VISITORS:

Vice Chairman Drayton welcomed visitors.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Neeves pointed out a typographical error on page 7, improperly indicating that March's meeting would be held on February 22nd. It was properly moved and seconded that the minutes from the previous meeting be approved with the correction. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Bo Ives, Secretary of the Citizens Advisory Committee, reported that the Board had received a copy of the minutes from the past meeting. The meeting included preparation for the presentation for County Council. He offered to answer any questions.

Vice Chairman Drayton stated the Board appreciated the work done by the Citizens Advisory Committee, providing information both on what Coast RTA was doing correctly and incorrectly.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS:

Felicia Beaty read the following resolutions into the record:

RESOLUTION NO. MAR2010-12: ACCEPTANCE OF INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009 -- A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority accepting an independent audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009 performed by McGregor and Company LLP, Certified Public Accountants.

Mr. Rollins said he was excited to present the resolution, as the Finance Committee Meeting included Mr. Dean Richardson from McGregor and Company, who presented a draft audit with an unqualified opinion. He asked that the audit report for FY 2009 be approved and adopted by the Board.

RESOLUTION NO. MAR2010-13: LETTER TO THE CITY OF GEORGETOWN REQUESTING FISCAL YEAR 2011 FUNDING -- A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority authorizing the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer to submit a letter to the City of Georgetown requesting funding to provide public transportation services for fiscal year 2011 and to execute and deliver the agreement in the event that the letter yields positive results.

Mr. Rollins said mass public transportation services were offered and increased throughout the City of Georgetown, and the resolution seeks funding support from city administration.

RESOLUTION NO. MAR2010-14: LETTER TO THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE BEACH REQUESTING FISCAL YEAR 2011 FUNDING -- A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority authorizing the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer to submit a letter to the Town of Surfside Beach

requesting funding to provide public transportation services for fiscal year 2011 and to execute and deliver the agreement in the event that the letter yields positive results.

Mr. Rollins indicated the purpose of the resolution was to seek support for the amount and quality of public transportation that services the city.

It was properly moved and seconded that each resolution be adopted. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken for each resolution. No nays being heard, each resolution passed.

PRESENTATIONS

A. 2009 Calendar Year Ridership

Mr. Rollins mentioned that the presentation to Horry County Council included information about the unprecedented growth of ridership. He wanted to provide similar information to the Board.

Mr. McKelvey stated ridership was up in 2009 and 2010. He gave a presentation of the highlights of the ridership status and opportunities.

In FY 2009, there were 425,982 passengers system-wide, an increase of 36% compared to FY 2008, which comprised of 115,000 tourists and 310,966 locals. Fixed route ridership is up 35%, but paratransit numbers declined by 37%. Fixed route ridership is 389,461, and Paratransit ridership is 36,521.

The increase is attributed to:

1. An emphasis placed on quality customer service. For the past few years, Coast RTA has been trying to improve upon existing contracts, trying to gain new customers, with the objective of providing customers quality service every day.
2. The spike in fuel costs, which has driven transit ridership nationwide.
3. A route restructuring which realigned several routes to improve efficiency.
4. The addition of service in Georgetown, which was tremendously well received.
5. A shift in the overall economy.

A portion of the paratransit decrease is attributed to the Medicaid brokerage company, Logisticare, which came to the area in 2007. Prior to that, Coast realized about \$1.1 million from the service as the number one contractor in Horry County to provide Title 19 non-emergency medical transportation. Competition has increased, and the contract rests with Logisticare, who farms out jobs to various transportation providers, resulting in a decrease in trips.

As of March 23, Coast RTA has carried 446,551 passengers, already surpassing last year's system-wide total, an increase of 35% compared to the same date in

FY 2009.

Mr. McKelvey then presented a snapshot comparing the past seven years. In 2003 Coast realized 450,000 passenger boarding's total. In 2005, the state fleet vehicles were surrendered back to the state, contributing to three years of declining ridership. Coast RTA is trending back up, and will finish the fiscal year at roughly 590,000 passenger boarding's.

Mr. Silverman stated that the ridership decline in 2005 was largely due to budget constraints, decreasing availability of buses. It is his opinion that we cannot emphasize enough how important reliability of the bus service is, as it affects customer service and ridership. He indicated Coast has trouble with frequency in some coverage areas of the county, though he said it has improved with the new schedule. He said Mr. McKelvey and the staff should be proud of the improvements to reliability.

Vice Chairman Drayton asked if the Georgetown Route had ever experienced a full summer. Mr. McKelvey said the route ran the entire previous summer.

Vice Chairman Drayton said he felt the coming summer would be larger, and Mr. McKelvey agreed, saying the residents are already indicating that 3 buses wouldn't be sufficient. Mr. McKelvey said that in Georgetown Express ranked Number 2 in the system for performance.

Mr. Rollins added the spike number of 700,000 rides included the period during which Coast had dedicated lanes on Ocean Boulevard; 250,000 boarding's on Ocean Boulevard. The subsequent year, based on requests from merchants, Myrtle Beach eliminated the dedicated lanes, which greatly restricted the ability to navigate the corridor and impacted the ridership on the route.

Mr. James asked if feedback had been received from North Myrtle Beach regarding continuing that route. Mr. McKelvey said that residents in Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach had been giving feedback since October of 2007, since the termination of that service, and have continued since then. He said he felt the climate was right to try to get back to North Myrtle Beach.

B. 2007-2010 Man Power

Ms. Garcia gave a presentation on Manpower (2007 to 2010). She displayed an Organizational Chart that included the positions filled in the company, indicating that the .5 represents part time positions. She noted the chart was provided to the Board at the October Board Retreat.

From 2007 to 2010, the total manpower fluctuates from 69 in 2007, to 74 for 2010. She stated the following are the number of employees, per department:

- Executive staff for each year had 2 employees.
- Finance currently reflects 4.5 employees, which includes a part-time person who is shared between two departments.
- Grant specialist, 1.
- Human resources, which includes Ms. Garcia and an intern.
- There were no marketing positions until 2008.

Ms. Garcia stated the following departments fall under the director of operations:

- Fixed route operators have been consistent, including full and part time.
- Street supervisors, 2.
- The number of paratransit operators dropped through attrition, as the service dropped.
- Paratransit clerks, 2.
- The maintenance, 9.5, which includes a part time position.
- Dispatchers, 3, which have been fairly steady, though more are needed.

Vice Chairman Drayton thanked Mr. McKelvey and Ms. Garcia for their informative presentations.

C. Committee & Goal Accomplishments

Tabled due to time constraints

MONTHLY REPORTS:

Finance and Procurement Committee:

Ms. Webster indicated finance and procurement information had been reviewed in the Finance Committee Meeting, and the good news on the FY 2009 audit was received. There were no questions from the Board.

Mr. Lazzara said the Finance Committee had met that morning, with Mr. Richardson, Ms. Webster, and staff. He said resources and tighter controls are in place, compared to prior years. He commended Ms. Webster, her staff, and Mr. Richardson. Vice Chairman Drayton complimented the hard work of Ms. Webster and her staff as well.

Planning and Operations Committee:

George Osborne said information had been presented in committee. There were no questions from the Board.

Mr. James commended them on the good work, and encouraged pursuing a route to North Myrtle Beach. Vice Chairman Drayton expressed optimism about North Myrtle Beach.

Marketing Committee:

Ms. Jefferson said the information had been provided in the committee. There

were no questions from the Board.

By-Laws Committee:

Mr. Wilson said there was no report.

Local Funding Ad-Hoc Committee:

Mr. Smith stated there was no report.

Operations:

Mr. McKelvey said the committee reviewed the operations report and a brief presentation of FY09/10 ridership. He offered again that the RTA had already exceeded FY 2009 total ridership, and are 53,000 boarding's from reaching 500,000 passengers. The summer service roll-out was also discussed, and he announced that Coast RTA would be re-entering North Myrtle Beach this summer with Route 8 North 11.

Mr. Neeves said he was glad that Coast RTA was still working in Georgetown County to help the residents of Sandy Island.

General Manager:

Mr. Rollins thanked his staff, who despite the loss of \$200,000 in funding, managed to maintain the same level of service delivery and increase ridership. He said he'd indicated at County Council, the economic conditions affect everyone, and he was pleased that service could be continued. He said he appreciated Ms. Webster and her staff to consistently perform at a high quality level and position the RTA to receive an unqualified opinion, as opposed to five years prior when their audit was rejected by the FTA. He said this was the third unqualified opinion in a row, and said it was a good sign. He commended Mr. McKelvey for his efforts to find a way to provide service in North Myrtle Beach, consistent with the mission of providing quality service to every customer every day by creating a world-class mass transit system.

Mr. Rollins also reiterated the excitement regarding developments with respect to Sandy Island. He said a survey was given to 100 residents to ask what they needed, based on a request from Georgetown County for Coast to play a lead role in identifying a transportation solution for the residents of Sandy Island. A vessel was identified in Etowah County, Alabama which may be ideal to provide that transportation service. Mr. Osborne has visited Alabama to ensure that the vessel will meet Coast's transportation needs. He said it is their hope that they will be successful in securing a \$350,000 - \$500,000 vessel at no cost by working with the Etowah County government.

Etowah County originally secured the boat, but could not generate the funds for operation, and is looking to divest themselves of the vessel. As the boat was purchased using grant funding, any shortfall in the boat sale by auction would be

owed by that county back to the DOT. However, if the vessel is transferred to another DOT-funded agency, no repayment is required.

The vessel is approximately 35 feet long, designed to accommodate either a bus or up to three cars, with a hydraulic lift which virtually eliminates site improvements at each dock. Some improvements will be made to the vessel, including housing to shelter individual riders during bad weather.

Vice Chairman Drayton thanked Mr. Rollins for his leadership.

Ms. Beaty read aloud the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. MAR2010-15: AUTHORIZATION OF INTENT TO PURSUE TRANSFER OF HOKES BLUFF FERRY FROM ETOWAH COUNTY, ALABAMA – A motion of the Board of the Waccamaw Regional Transportation Authority (Coast RTA) authorizing the General Manager/Secretary Treasurer to pursue transference with Etowah County, Alabama and The Etowah County Commission one (1) revenue water going vessel known as Hokes Bluff Ferry to add to the Coast RTA's revenue fleet.

It was properly moved and seconded that Resolution Mar2010-15 be approved. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried.

Mr. James asked if there would be costs to transport the vessel. Mr. Rollins explained that there would be costs associated with transporting the vessel, but not in assuming ownership.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Silverman mentioned a speech given by Mr. Wilson in October of 2007 at the new transfer center, saying it had been an interesting historic perspective, and suggested Coast RTA ask Mr. Wilson about the creation of a historic video regarding the start of Coast RTA. Mr. Wilson said he thought his speech had covered the main highlights. Mr. James suggesting finding a local person to help Mr. Wilson drafts his thoughts on the history of the company. Ms. Jefferson said she would be glad to assist in the effort.

BOARD MEMBER INPUT:

Mr. Neeves said he was excited about the audit results and Georgetown, and said he felt good about where the fleet was.

Mr. James said he thought the Board was on the right path, asking more questions to make sure they understood what was happening during turbulent times.

Mr. Smith said he thought the newsletter was a huge leap forward.

Mr. Wilson thanked the auditor for the work he had done, and asked for a status update on the shelters. Mr. Osborne said the project is still being pursued, with approximately five pending, and with information anticipated from Horry and Georgetown Counties. Mr. Wilson said he thought bus shelters would help ridership by clearly identifying bus stops. Mr. Wilson also said he thought Ms. Webster was doing a fantastic job, and said he appreciated the professional presentations.

Mr. Lazzara thanked Ms. Webster and her staff for doing a great job in working with the auditor and coming up with resources and tighter controls. He said a letter would be sent from the Finance Committee to the RTA's funding sources to make them aware of the audit. He thanked the Marketing Committee for the new newsletter, and thanked Mr. McKelvey for his good work, and congratulated the Human Resources personnel.

Mr. Silverman also thanked Ms. Webster and all the other staff who worked on getting the buses out on time every day. He said he also wanted to mention how well the building is kept for customers, saying the building and restrooms were clean and the building is pleasant. He particularly mentioned the plants Ms. Beaty (and Ms. Garcia) had placed in the terminal. He said it means a lot to the riders to have such a nice place to wait for buses, so he thanked those who were responsible for keeping and maintaining it.

Vice Chairman Drayton mentioned how good all the good news made everyone feel, and thanked those responsible. He said he noticed less stress on the faces of staff, saying it was a good sign of a healthy company. He also mentioned the dual responsibilities of Mr. Rollins, saying not only was he responsible for the day to day running of the company, but he had to be involved and knowledgeable about the politics of the area.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was properly moved and seconded that the Board adjourn. There being no questions, a voice vote was taken. No nays being heard, the motion carried. The Board adjourned at 1:08 p.m.