*COMET Board Meeting minutes are prepared and presented in summary form, audio recordings of the meetings are on file at the COMET.*

**COMET BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**October 29, 2014**

**Members Present: Guest Present:**

**City of Columbia**  Ron Anderson Frannie Heizer, McNair Law Firm

Brian DeQuincey Newman Dr. Miller-Bay, Citizen

Derrick Huggins Walter Durst, MTRA

Mamie Jackson, Citizen

**Forest Acres** Jake Broom Rick Silver, Chernoff Newman

Jackie Bowers, Transdev

**Lexington County** Lill Mood Larry Livingston, Transdev

Rebecca Conway, Lexington County

Sandra McKinley, Transdev

**Richland County** Mac Bennett Keith Seymour, MTRA

Jennifer Harding Heloris Woolridge, Transdev

Kelvin Washington Derrick Breun, Transdev

**Rich. Co. Leg. Dele.** John Furgess\* Chuck Statler, Derrick, Stubbs and Stith

Robert Morris David Grey, SCDOT

Jerry Bowers, Veolia Transportation

**Absent Board Members:** Darin Black, Veolia Transportation

Joe Neal Kenitha Williams, Lexington County

Skip Jenkins Daniel Flow, Transloc

Debbie Summers Betty Robinson, Veolia Transportation

David Lewis, Citizen

Dianne Wiley, Citizen

Henry McKeen, Citizen

**COMET Staff Present:**

Robert Schneider, Executive Director

\*Denotes Participation by Phone Michelle Ransom, Grants and Contracts

Missy Lawlor, Administrative Coordinator

Daphne Givens, Finance Manager

Rosalyn Andrews, Staff Accountant

Pamela Middleton

Brittany Higgins

Tiffany James

LeRoy DesChamps

Samuel Scheib

Virginia Goodson

Da’Veda Sistrunk

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Brian DeQuincey Newman called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM.

1. **DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

A quorum was present at the opening of the meeting.

1. **INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES**
2. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by Lill Mood to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.**

1. **APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2014 MEETING MINUTES**

**A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by Robert Morris to approve the September 24, 2014 meeting minutes with the amendment of the discussion of vehicles at 50:33-56:00 on the recording. Motion passed unanimously.**

1. **MIDLANDS TRANSIT RIDERS ASSOCIATION**

Walter Durst of Midlands Transit Riders Association stated that the MTRA is the voice of the riders, and that they work with The Comet as a recognized group advocating riders. Mr. Durst stated that among the direct accomplishments this past year, they have gotten Sunday service back, as well as holidays, midday route to Midlands Tech Airport, Sandhills, and soon the Crosstown bus. Mr. Durst stated that our indirect accomplishments have been in Lower Richland, ID Cards, and the 11/12 focus group.  We have been on media programs and featured in several newspapers, and that our future goals include buses to every Richland Library in the county and expanding service into Lexington County.  Mr. Durst stated that they understand that businesses work off of numbers, but numbers do not ride the bus.  People ride the bus.  It is not about race, economic background, or any other category.  It is about the people.

1. **COMMENTS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS**

Dr. Miller Bay – Dr. Miller-Bay stated that she loves the new app for the phones. Ms. Miller-Bay also stated that the stop at College and Assembly Streets attract two different cultural entities and suggests that we get rid of the bench seats. She stated that she would like to see a visual campaign on the buses for victims of abuse.

Keith Seymour – Mr. Seymour stated that we need to extend Route 601 during the week of the fair, and would like to see more people use the buses during this event.

David Lewis – Mr. Lewis thanked the staff and Board of Directors for everything that we do. Mr. Lewis would like an update on the Route 101, Sandhills and Crosstown routes. Mr. Lewis stated that the new security is doing a great job at the transit center, but they do not have any jurisdiction across the street. Mr. Lewis would also like to know when the signage at the Transit Center will be updated.

1. **MOTIONS PERIOD/NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Brian DeQuincey Newman stated that the Holiday meeting schedule will need to be set, perhaps we could meet on December 3, 2014.

A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by Brian DeQuincey Newman to restore service to the 2010 level to include the 101 stop at the transit Center and not across Sumter Street.

Brian DeQuincey Newman withdrew his second.

**A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by Brian DeQuincey Newman to establish paratransit service within 10 miles of the Fixed Route service area for Richland County only.**

Discussion:

Brian DeQuincey Newman stated that we need to do better than the ¾ mile boundary that we are currently doing.

Mac Bennett asked what the economic impact is.

Frannie Heizer stated that we need to research if we can omit same distance in Lexington County.

Lill Mood asked if the motion is to answer these questions or is it to implement.

Kelvin Washington stated that the motion is to implement.

Mac Bennett stated that it seems that we would need a plan in order to implement.

Kelvin Washington stated that staff needs to come back with a plan to implement paratransit within 10 mile radius.

**A substitute motion was made by Brian DeQuincey Newman and seconded by Kelvin Washington to direct staff to create a plan to provide paratransit service within 10 mile radius of fixed route service with no need to go to committees.**

**A motion was made by John Furgess and seconded by Kelvin Washington to implement paratransit to Sandhills immediately.**

**A substitute motion was made by Ron Anderson to run a pilot service that covers Two Notch Road from Columbia Mall to Village at Sandhills that provides paratransit to ¾ of a mile.**

**Frannie Heizer stated that staff has a recommendation today and suggest that we postpone the paratransit issue until Service Standards Report.**

**Lill Mood stated that we should move the motion period to the end of the agenda.**

**A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by John Furgess to move forward to send to Fleet and Facility Committee to purchase diesel buses in existing grant dollars. Motion passed unanimously.**

1. **REPORT FROM SERVICE STANDARDS**

Lill Mood discussed with the Board several items.

* 1. Orbit Route that stops across from Transit Center – It will come for a vote at the December meeting what to do with that stop.

Kelvin Washington stated that we need to find a way to move it.

Mac Bennett stated that the transit Center is not properly located and it will continue to be an issue until the Transit Center is moved. Mr. Bennett stated that we will soon have the pickup/drop off of the homeless there as well.

Ron Anderson stated that we need staff to come back with a temporary solution to help fix this problem.

Kelvin Washington stated that in the immediate we need to deal with it now, that to get with operations and figure it out.

* 1. Implementation of Sandhills Route - Bob Schneider stated that we need to have a Public Hearing for the Sandhills Route before we can implement. Mr. Schneider stated that the Public Hearing has been set for November 6th at the Transit Center, and also there will be one at the Richland Library. These dates and times have been posted on the vehicles.

Robert Morris asked if it will be around February before the Sandhills Route can go into effect.

Bob Schneider stated that it would be closer to February because schedules and such would need to be printed and would possibly not be ready until then.

**A motion was made by Brian DeQuincey Newman and seconded by Kelvin Washington to have a Special Call Board Meeting by phone on November 10, 2014 to vote on the Sandhills Route to begin on November 17, 2014. Motion passed unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by John Furgess to restore service levels to 2010 levels without removing new service added since that time. Motion passed unanimously.**

* 1. Overview of Service restoration – Bob Schneider reviewed with the Board the Service Restoration (please see attached handout 1)

Mr. Schneider stated that the only thing they don’t have is the Faraway Road section.

Ron Anderson stated that there is no reason that we cannot move forward after the public hearing.

Kelvin Washington stated that he would like to see what it looks like on a map compared to what we had before.

Jennifer Harding asked if there was a way to do a test of these routes.

John Furgess stated that we can approve items 1, 2, 5 and 6.

1. **REPORT FROM BUDGET COMMITTEE**

Kelvin Washington stated that we did not have a meeting.

* + - Financial Report and overview – Daphne Givens reviewed with the Board the Financial statements for September.

1. **APPROVAL OF DBE PROGRAM**

Frannie Heizer stated that the FTA has required us to update our DBE Program. Ms. Heizer stated that we need the Board to approve the program so that we may send it back to FTA.

**A motion was made by Lill Mood and seconded by John Furgess to approve the DBE Program as distributed. Motion passed unanimously.**

1. **APPROVAL OF SHELTER AND BUS STOP INSTALLATION**

**A motion was made by Jennifer Harding and seconded by Jake Broom to approve the Bus Stop Installation contract with Chairman Brian DeQuincey approving the contract and Executive Director Bob Schneider to sign. Motion passed unanimously.**

1. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT**

Bob Schneider stated that the COMET has been given an award by ABLE, SC. That award will be presented next week.

1. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS (No Discussion Unless Specifically Requested)**

* **Contract Operator’s Report**
* **Fuel Cost/Price Update**
* **News Clippings**
* **Written Comments/Recommendations**

1. **OLD BUSINESS**

Kelvin Washington asked for an update on Allen/Benedict passes.

LeRoy DesChamps stated that they all have their passes and we have some use.

1. **LEGAL/CONTRACTUAL/PERSONNEL (May Require Executive Session)**

**A motion was made by Mac Bennett and seconded by Jake Broom to enter into Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Lill Mood and seconded by Jake Broom to come out of Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by Lill Mood to accept the Title VI complaint. Motion passed unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Brian DeQuincey Newman and seconded by Jennifer Harding that the Procurement Committee is also known as the Evaluation Committee.**

**A substitute motion was made by Kelvin Washington to include their designee, meaning another Board Member. Motion passed unanimously.**

1. **ADJOURN**

**A motion was made by Kelvin Washington and seconded by Lill Mood to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Brian DeQuincey Newman adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:03 PM.