



*The COMET Board Meeting minutes are prepared and presented in summary form, audio recordings of the meetings are on file at The COMET and are part of the approved minutes. If you would like to hear the recording from the meeting, please contact Paige Jernigan at [COMETadmin@catchtheCOMET.org](mailto:COMETadmin@catchtheCOMET.org).*

*Per SC Code of Laws, Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 30-4-80 - All public bodies shall notify persons or organizations, local news media, or such other news media as may request notification of the times, dates, places, and agenda of all public meetings, whether scheduled, rescheduled, or called, and the efforts made to comply with this requirement must be noted in the minutes of the meetings. The COMET complied with the notification of this meeting on Friday, April 5, 2019.*

**Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority Service Committee  
Wednesday April 10, 2019 -12:00 P.M.  
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 – Conference Room A**

**Members Present:**

Ron Anderson  
Lill Mood  
Colonel (R) Roger Leaks, Jr., Chair  
John V. Furgess, Sr.  
Carolyn Gleaton  
Derrick Huggins\*

**Guests Present:**

Alan Bristol, Transdev General Manager  
Jackie Bowers, Operations Manager, Transdev  
Roderick Cockerham, Manager, Transport Care Service  
Zane McGhee, Engineer, Davis & Floyd  
Rick Silver, Public Relations, Chernoff Newman  
Bill Sprawl, Regional Vice President, Transdev  
Todd Warren, Associate, Davis & Floyd

**Absent Committee Members:**

None

*\*Indicates participation by phone.*

**COMET Staff Present**

John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO  
LeRoy DesChamps, Director of Administration & Operations/COO  
Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Col. Leaks called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM.



A quorum was present at the opening of the meeting.

Request was made by Col. Leaks to amend the Service Committee Agenda to add:  
**CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Furgess to add **CALL TO THE PUBLIC** to the agenda.

**Approve:** Anderson, Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Col. Leaks, Mood

**Absent:** None

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Furgess to adopt the agenda.

**Approve:** Anderson, Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Col. Leaks, Mood

**Absent:** None

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**3. MIDLANDS TRANSIT RIDERS ASSOCIATION UPDATE (Verbal)**

No representation.

**4. MINUTES FROM MARCH 13, 2019 MEETING**

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Ms. Gleaton to approve minutes from March 13, 2019.

**Approve:** Anderson, Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Col. Leaks, Mood

**Absent:** None

**Motion passed unanimously.**



## 5. MINUTES FROM AUGUST 1, 2018 WORKSHOP MEETING

Mr. Andoh stated that since we have been reporting our minutes to the proper agencies to remain in compliance, we realized that the August 1, 2018 Workshop Meeting Minutes were not formerly adopted by the Service Committee.

Ms. Mood asked if this was the meeting in which they went over each route. Mr. Andoh confirmed.

### **Motion:**

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Anderson to approve minutes from August 1, 2018 Workshop.

**Approve:** Anderson, Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Col. Leaks, Mood

**Absent:** None

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Col. Leaks welcomed everyone and happily stated that this was his first Service Committee Meeting serving as the Chair. He mentioned the importance of the Service Committee. Ms. Mood expressed the absence of the community involvement from the transit riders in these meeting. She noted that there are active participants of the Riders Association on their website and Facebook. She asked if Mr. Andoh could check with them.

Mr. Andoh explained that even though they are considered a 501(c)(3), they have been unable to have a quorum to adopt Directors to lead the Association. Mr. Andoh stated that Mr. Gossett, who has a full-time day job has recommended the group use Facebook as their platform until governance issues are addressed.

Mr. Furgess suggested that we rotate our Service Committee Meeting to a night time meeting occasionally would draw more participation from this group and the community. Mr. Andoh agreed. Col. Leaks stated he had requested this years ago and he still thinks it would be a great way to get more participation. Mr. Andoh mentioned we would continue to have dialogue in hopes of more participation in future meetings.

Mr. Anderson recommended that The COMET report to Service Committee a summary of Facebook and online discussions and concerns. Col. Leaks asked if we have current problems that could be addressed at this time. Mr. Andoh mentioned: janitorial issues,



on time performance, discourteous bus operators, buses passing by passengers, drivers taking different routes, TransLoc, etc.

Mr. Anderson asked if these complaints get logged into the Listen database. Mr. Andoh and Mr. Bristol confirmed. Mr. Anderson stated that this could be used in place of the separate report he mentioned earlier.

Mr. Furgess questioned the issue of the drivers taking alternate routes and if this could put The COMET in legal jeopardy. Mr. Bristol stated according to Transdev policy that if an accident occurred off route, this would be considered a terminable offense. He confirmed off route travel would only be acceptable if the route is physically barricaded or if safety was compromised.

Mr. Furgess stated that the drivers he has experienced have not been courteous. Mr. Bristol mentioned that they are doing a Customer Service Training in May that will improve this issue. Mr. Bristol likes the fact that the video component on the buses now can be pulled to verify disrespected behavior. Ms. Bowers added that she does do an individual training on customer service as a part of the orientation process.

## **6. MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS (John Andoh)**

### **A. DISCUSS PREVIOUS MOTIONS FROM 2017 TO PRESENT.**

Mr. Andoh discussed the items remaining that were referred by the Board of Directors. Review of the previous motions and status updates from 2017 to present were discussed in detail on Page 8.

Mr. Furgess expressed concern of the size of the font in the documentation presented to the Committee and to the Board. Mr. Andoh agreed that a conversion to legal size paper, landscape positioning and larger font will be corrected.

Mr. Furgess mentioned the bus shelters outside the Transit Center should be of major concern. Mr. Huggins chimed in and said this would be a topic of discussion in the Intermodal Meeting occurring later that day.

## **7. TRANSDEV OPERATIONS REPORT (Alan Bristol)**

Mr. Bristol gave out a separate handout for March. He reported two preventable accidents. He updated us on Transdev activities for the month. Transdev incorporated a



“Make A Perfect Day Plan” Campaign. The Safety Department updated training files for an upcoming audit. Transdev provided paratransit software training. The service of the St.

Patty’s Day event and the NCAA event proved to be successful. Transdev, will be installing automatic lights for upstairs to save some money when the rooms are not being used. He also stated that he had the bus washer serviced and corrected some items discovered during a monthly walk through.

Mr. Bristol explained there were five (5) safety complaints for the month, thirty-six (36) reliability complaints, eleven (11) friendliness complaints, two (2) cleanliness and comfort complaints and two (2) planning and service requests.

Ms. Mood had requested in the last meeting that the chart that used to be presented by Transdev to be reintroduced to the Service Committee. Mr. Bristol reviewed the reintroduced chart detailing each section. Mr. Andoh verified that all the complaints presented on this report include, comment cards, Facebook complaints, phone calls, Riders Association, etc. Mr. Bristol overall was pleased with the small amount of complaints for the month in comparison to monthly ridership.

Ms. Mood questioned what is considered a “preventable accident.” He explained it’s typically your side swipes or striking a fixed object. He noted that accidents have increased due to the increase in size of the vehicles. Mr. Anderson, Mr. Andoh and Mr. Bristol remarked that out of 202,963 Fixed Route boarding’s, we only had 14 complaints in total.

On Page 26, Col. Leaks asked about the percentage of Main Street to State showing on time 52% of the time. Mr. Bristol didn’t think this number was accurate. Mr. Andoh mentioned that Transloc and Clever communication with each other is an ongoing issue and until he is told otherwise he feels this number is accurate. He has given the responsibility of Transdev to let us know if the system is working correctly or if not. Transdev will be hiring an IT Manager and their first task will be examining where the breakdown is happening between these two programs.

Mr. Andoh mentioned significant changes to the routes and reminded the committee about the Pulse System that was discussed at last meeting. The Pulse System will have all buses arriving and departing at the same time. This would eliminate layover time, as result increasing on time performance numbers. Conversation occurred about time



versus inconvenience and stop consolidation. It's important not to compromise headway while keeping safety and accessibility in mind. Overall goal is 92% based on CEO performance measures for evaluation.

Col. Leaks asked Mr. Andoh if this system is something that The COMET can afford. Mr. Andoh confirmed and reported that 80% funded by federal funds and 20% funded by

local funds. Mr. Anderson expressed that the more data we have the more effective our system will operate. Mr. Mood asked about recycling old equipment. Mr. Andoh confirmed we do recycle, and we will continue to do so as some of our technology will be obsolete in a few years.

Col. Leaks asked Mr. Bristol about our past few events and what he thought the consensus was. Mr. Bristol stated the he feels the events went well and he received positive feedback. Col. Leaks didn't like the fact that the NCAA referred to us as the "bus system" as opposed to The COMET.

## **8. RIDERSHIP REPORT (John Andoh)**

No report.

## **9. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Soda Cap Connector Marketing Plan**

Mr. Andoh handed out the Soda Cap Connector Marketing plan, as requested at the November Board meeting. He explained that the packet is a summary of the plan to improve ridership, retrain existing and attract new riders, seek sponsorships to support the service, maintain high customer satisfaction, public awareness and public opinion.

Mr. Andoh is proposing a series of marketing strategies (Pages 9-13):

Goal 1: Attracting and maintaining existing customers

Goal 2: Increase revenue

Goal 3: Maintain a high customer satisfaction

Goal 4: Maintain high public awareness and positive opinion

This will be achieved by social media, using outlets such as the Fireflies, concierge service, Soda City Market presence, Experience SC, etc. Market outreach to students, disabled, elderly, employers, etc. We would also like to get a sponsor for the Soda Cap Connector.



Mr. Anderson suggested to reach out to the property managers, state agencies, USC and inquire about a presence in their internal newsletters.

Mr. Furgess asked about the trolley purchase and have we applied for “H” funds. Mr. Andoh confirmed and the amount of \$50k. Mr. Furgess recommended to increase what we ask for to be more competitive. Mr. Anderson urged to include Mr. Silver in this process.

Mr. Silver presented and explained the proposal of the redesign of the trolley. Mr. Anderson requested an example of a transit system that is using a trolley that is comparable to Columbia. Mr. Silver stressed the importance of using the hotels to promote the Soda Cap trolley.

*Mr. Anderson left the meeting at 1:08 p.m.  
CD change occurred.*

Mr. Andoh recommended to the committee to take the marketing plan and the illustrations of the Soda Cap Connector to the Board for approval.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Furgess and seconded by Ms. Gleaton to take marketing plan and trolley schematics to the Board for approval.

**Approve:** Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Col. Leaks, Mood

**Absent:** Anderson

**Motion passed.**

**B. Passenger Amenities Program Update**

At the request of the Board and Service Committee, Mr. Andoh explained that a monthly report has been created to track passenger amenities. He introduced Mr. Todd Warren, Associate Senior Structural Engineer at Davis & Floyd. Mr. Warren gave a summary of the Shelters, Benches, Boarding & Alighting area documented. He also reviewed the improvements that have been completed and the sites that are currently permitted awaiting the arrival of the shelters.

Mr. Andoh mentioned the new shelters that will be arriving soon on the current pads. He also noted that we have received block grants from Lexington and Richland Counties for



shelters and are currently pursuing the City of Columbia. Ms. Gleaton asked Mr. Andoh to look at the shelter at Farrow Road and Colonial Drive, in front of the Credit Union. Mr. Warren said the Credit Union has not been receptive in the past due to sign blockage but may be worth revisiting.

Col. Leaks thanked Mr. Warren and asked him to keep up the good work and keep us visible.

## **10. NEW BUSINESS (John Andoh)**

### **A. Congaree National Park Shuttle Service Request**

Mr. Andoh explained that this was a last-minute addition, but the Congaree National Park and National Park Service wants to work with The COMET to augment bus routes 46 and 47 to travel to the park to see the fireflies coming into season during 9 days in May.

Congaree National Park will reimburse The COMET the cost of \$8200 for the service. Mr. Andoh mentioned traffic is limited and they really could use our help to implement this community event.

#### **Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Furgess and seconded by Ms. Gleaton to approve this special service request.

**Approve:** Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Col. Leaks, Mood

**Absent:** Anderson

**Motion passed.**

## **11. LEGAL/CONTRACTUAL/PERSONNEL (may require executive session)**

None

## **12. ADJOURN**

#### **Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Furgess and seconded by Ms. Gleaton to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 1:26p.m.





**CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

**Adopted this \_\_\_\_\_, 2019, Agenda Item \_\_\_\_\_**

**Prepared by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist**

**Approved by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Andy Smith, Secretary**