



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 @ 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 at 3:30 p.m.**

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

Members Present:

Jacqueline Boulware*
Joyce Dickerson*
Dr. Robert E. Morris, Chair
Andy Smith

Guests Present:

Dominik Mjartan, President & CEO, Optus Bank
Gary Bradshaw, Personal Banker, Optus Bank

Absent Committee Members:

Representative Leon Howard

*Indicates participation by phone.

COMET Staff Present

John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO
Dr. Arlene Prince, Director of Regulatory Compliance & Civil Rights Officer
Rosalyn Andrews, Finance Director/CFO
Michelle Ransom, Grants & Regional Coordination Manager
Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Dr. Morris called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.



A quorum was present at the opening of the meeting.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Dickerson to adopt the agenda.

Approve: Boulware, Dickerson, Dr. Morris and Smith

Absent: Howard

Motion passed unanimously.

3. ADOPT MINUTES FROM MARCH 13, 2019 MEETING

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Dickerson to adopt the minutes from March 13, 2019 with no corrections.

Approve: Boulware, Dickerson, Dr. Morris and Smith

Absent: Howard

Motion passed unanimously.

4. MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Andrews reviewed the current finances ending in February 2019 starting on Page 9 of the packet. She stated income for the month at a little over \$777K. YTD we are at \$446k and currently The COMET is 8/12th of the way through the budget, with 66.67% of year completed.



Ms. Andrews reviewed the expenses and explained that YTD The COMET has paid our Contract Operator \$47,331,418. She noted that January and February payments have not been made and as result, this number will increase significantly.

Ms. Andrews informed the Board that Wells Fargo has \$7.16M, OPTUS Bank Reserve Funds has \$4.9M and Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) is at \$13.71M. Total collections of the Penny Revenue since 2013 through February 1, 2019: \$94,633,216 of \$300,991,000 allocation. It was noted that a payment was received on February 1, 2019 in the amount of \$4,725,266.39.

Mr. Smith inquired about the Transdev payment and asked about Page 10, Expense Line under Contract Operator Actual YTD at \$9,485,211 and Budget YTD at \$9,847,777 proportionally seems it would exceed YTD Budget. Ms. Andrews explained that the expense is still calculated even though it has not been paid. The invoice had a discrepancy and The COMET is requesting more information.

Dr. Morris expressed concern of the size of the font in the documentation presented to the Committee and to the Board. Ms. Andrews and Mr. Andoh agreed that conversion to legal size paper, landscape positioning and larger font will be addressed.

6. DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE) UPDATE

Dr. Prince referred to page 17 of the packet as she gave her DBE update.

Dr. Prince informed the Board that the numbers have not changed since last meeting due to the hold on the Transdev payment. She will be meeting with Ms. Andrews and Transdev this week to visit the reporting period to have more consistent updates in the future.

Mr. Andoh mentioned that The COMET is having challenges with one of the DBE Firms, New Age Protection. The Security Officers are not patrolling according to the DBE contract. Transdev has issued a Cure Notice and a meeting will occur this afternoon to discuss the provisions. If performance does not improve, The COMET will formerly request Transdev to remove the service which ultimately will impact their DBE Goal.

Dr. Morris stated that this is the correct plan of action and expressed his support in handling the concern. Mr. Smith asked if Mr. Andoh knew of any viable DBE Firms that could implement the patrolling in New Age Protections place if needed. Mr. Andoh stated



that Transdev would be asked to research and provide comparable services for consideration.

Ms. Dickerson conveyed concern of the safety of the Transit Center. Mr. Andoh reminded the Board that City of Columbia Police also aide in providing security services. If a change needs to be made quickly, The COMET would ask for additional officers to ensure safety

until replacement occurs. Ms. Dickerson mentioned that safety is an issue and requests that The COMET stay on top of the issue. Mr. Andoh agreed and stated, "dually noted."

7. OLD BUSINESS

No old business to discuss.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Banking Discussion

Ms. Andrews opened by reminding the committee of the highly suggested change in our Bank Policy and the transfer of monies to one account expressed by the Board. She then introduced Mr. Dominik Mjartan, the President and CEO of South Carolina Community Bank, aka OPTUS Bank. He expressed his gratitude and gave a brief history the bank and explained the mission and the balance of the mission and margin.

Mr. Mjartan asked that the Finance Committee and the Board consider moving funds to OPTUS Bank. He mentioned that Mayor Benjamin among others personally bank with OPTUS currently. He stated that The COMET would considered the top three (3) in deposit amounts at their institution.

Dr. Morris conveyed his impression of the bank. He asked about the locations and if they are moving the downtown location. Mr. Mjartan stressed the importance of staying in the downtown location to continue to serve the community. He also mentioned that by May 10, 2019 Columbia will notice new branding as they are officially dropping South Carolina Community Bank name.

Dr. Morris mentioned an article he read in the paper, The Carolina Panorama, that showed concern over management and he wanted to get Mr. Mjartan to explain. Mr. Mjartan clarified that he has only been with the South Carolina Community Bank, dba OPTUS Bank for eighteen (18) months so he could only elude to knowledge he has



obtained in that time frame. He did state that the article was a sponsored article, meaning paid for by independent party.

Based on his knowledge and what he could share legally is that a customer defaulted on a loan and filed for bankruptcy repeatedly. This ultimately led to many cases/hearings, that have all resulted in loss for the claimant. Ms. Dickerson asked if litigation had occurred. Mr. Mjartan confirmed litigation has been ongoing for close to ten (10) years.

Ms. Boulware joined the meeting via phone at 10:33 a.m.

Mr. Smith asked if our funds on deposit are collateralized by the state treasurer and do we receive certification of that annually in the audit, Ms. Andrews stated "yes." He asked if this would protect us from any bank failure and he was reassured by Ms. Andrews and Mr. Mjartan. Mr. Mjartan explained that all funds are either collateralized or FDIC insured.

Mr. Smith asked about Page 20, 2018 highlights section about the "troubled bank list." He wanted to know whether this list is put together by the State Bank Department. Mr. Mjartan confirmed, and these results are based on bank ratings dropping below a certain level. He explained that OPTUS is now in good standing with the State Bank Department.

Mr. Smith asked about clients like us and the capability of their current software. Mr. Mjartan explained that historically that the level of client, like The COMET has not been pursued due to the capacity of the technology in the past. Most of the clients The COMET's size, keep some funds at a large bank that can withstand high level transactions.

Dr. Morris thanked Mr. Mjartan and asked Mr. Gary Bradshaw to come up and introduce himself. Mr. Mjartan mentioned the success at OPTUS now could be attributed to the young talent like Mr. Bradshaw. Mr. Bradshaw mentioned he's been with the bank for about six (6) months now. He stated he would be honored to be The COMET's personal banker. He thanked us for the opportunity and invited us to attend a networking event that evening. He did mention that The COMET would be welcomed to host an event at their office.

Mr. Andoh stated that with the proposal from OPTUS, he asked if we would like to shift additional funding from Wells Fargo or to shift all monies to one bank account. Because we use federal funds, he suggested a release of a Request for Proposals for banking services. He stated the RFP would be opened to everyone and he recommended OPTUS to submit a proposal for evaluation. Mr. Andoh reminded that our Board guidance allows



for local preference however, we need to be mindful that this cannot be applicable because of federal funds. If OPTUS is registered as a DBE, we could give preference points.

Motion:

A motion was made by Dr. Morris and seconded by Ms. Dickerson to release a Request of Proposals for banking services as a recommendation.

Approve: Boulware, Dickerson, Morris and Smith

Absent: Howard

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Smith is fully supportive of the RFP process, but he wants to make sure that all our needs are met in choosing banking services. Example given; online interface, volume transactions, etc. Mr. Andoh agreed and asked if the intent from the Finance Committee is to eventually use only one bank. Dr. Morris agreed, and Ms. Dickerson replied that she would do some research and meet with Mr. Andoh at a further date to take this proposal to the Board for approval.

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Smith to take banking services detail to the Board for further discussion.

Approve: Boulware, Dickerson, Morris and Smith

Absent: Howard

Motion passed unanimously.

B. Check Register ending March 31, 2019

Ms. Andrews stated that at the last board meeting some expenses were in question. She referenced that on Page 24, is an Expense Breakdown of vendor, description and cost. She went through each expense and explained the purpose of the expenditure.

1. KiKi's Chicken and Waffles – Driver Appreciation Luncheon (Split with Transdev)
2. Hudson's Catering – Service Change Celebration, fell on Valentine's day
3. Forest Acres Rotary Club – Sponsorship for Forest Acres Festival
4. New Modern Nails – Ten (10) year anniversary for employee Melissa Lawlor (Employer Moral)
5. Outback Steakhouse – Meeting with Auditor to pick up CAFR, Sumter location



6. Commercial Fitness – Mats for New Employee Exercise Room (Note: Geneva Capital will be the charge)

Mr. Smith asked if number one (1) luncheon and two (2) catering are typically at Mr. Andoh's discretion? Mr. Andoh explained that his goal is to engage staff and boost morale, typically once a quarter. He added that this aligns with board policy number six (6) which requires Mr. Andoh to engage The COMET staff and contractor staff.

Mr. Smith reiterated the importance of oversight and structure of these expenses. Mr. Andoh agreed.

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Smith to take these expense items to the Board for approval.

Approve: Boulware, Dickerson, Morris and Smith

Absent: Howard

Motion passed unanimously.

C. Charitable Pass Program

Ms. Andrews referred to Page 25, the Charitable Pass Program. The policies have now been put into place to limit our pass donation. Ms. Andrews reviewed that there will be a maximum that Fifty (50) passes donated with a cap of \$600. We have budgeted \$7,200 per fiscal year to support charitable donations.

Ms. Dickerson congratulated us! She suggested a budget for this expense. Ms. Andrews reminded that it is documented on Page 25 at \$7,200.

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Smith to recommend to the Board this Charitable Pass Policy.

Approve: Boulware, Dickerson, Morris and Smith



Absent: Howard

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Smith reminded us that Col. Leaks is still showing up on the Agenda. Mr. Andoh stated that this would be corrected, and Ms. Dickerson would be added.

Mr. Smith asked about our knowledge of the State Senate increase in tort claims/caps. He isn't sure if we are subject to this, but he did want to make everyone aware of the insurance premium increase, potentially doubling. Mr. Smith will send the article to Mr. Andoh for review and this could be an issue that will arise in the future. Mr. Andoh agreed to meet with our insurance person and report back by next Finance Committee Meeting.

9. LEGAL/CONTRACTUAL/PERSONNEL (May require executive session)

No Legal/Contractual/Personnel matters to discuss.

10. ADJOURN

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Dickerson and seconded by Mr. Smith to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this _____, 2019, Agenda Item _____

Prepared by:

Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andy Smith", is written over a horizontal line.

Andy Smith, Secretary

