



*The COMET Finance Committee 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, August 9, 2019 at 3:15 p.m.*

The Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority  
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 14, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.  
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 - Conference Room A

**Members Present:**

Jaqueline Boulware\*  
Dr. Robert Morris  
Andy Smith  
Bobby Horton

**Guests Present:**

**Absent Board Members:**

Joyce Dickerson  
Representative Howard  
*\*Indicates participation by phone.*

**The COMET Staff Present**

John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO  
Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist  
Dr. Arlene Prince, Director of Regulatory Compliance & Civil Rights Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM  
Dr. Morris called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.  
A quorum was determined at 10:07 a.m.
2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA



**Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Dr. Morris to adopt the agenda.

**Approved:** Boulware, Morris, Smith

**Absent:** Dickerson, Howard

**Motion passed.**

**3. ADOPT MINUTES FROM July 10, 2019 MEETING**

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Dr. Morris to adopt the minutes from July 10, 2019.

**Approved:** Boulware, Morris, Smith

**Absent:** Dickerson, Howard

**Motion passed.**

**4. MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- **Discuss Previous Motions from 2017 to Present**

Mr. Andoh summarized the motions listed on Page 12. He explained that the Penny Model that was approved by the Board on 3/27/19 is still being finalized by Mauldin Jenkins, Mr. Chuck Statler.

He stated that all financial transactions between bank accounts must be approved by the Board Treasurer and the Board of Directors. This will be discussed in the August 2019 Board Meeting but added that the amended banking policy was approved by the Board in August 2018 and this responsibility already lies with the Board of Directors.

He stated that the removal of \$150,000 from the budget for Planning Director position is closed.

Dr. Morris asked if Transdev is doing what they should be doing as far as planning? Mr. Andoh stated that they are in the process of recruiting. He added that The COMET will pay 80% of the planning cost due to the contract using the verbiage "for a few weeks." He added this will be deleted out of the contract in the future. Mr. Smith clarified that it will be in the corrected in the interim and as well as future contracts. Mr. Andoh confirmed. Ms. Boulware asked if this person will report to Mr. Andoh. Mr. Andoh commented that this position will report to Transdev.

**5. FINANCIAL REPORT – June 2019**

Mr. Andoh presented the report in Ms. Andrews absence as she was at a procurement seminar with the FTA. He began the report by reviewing Page 13 of the packet.



**June Highlights: 100% of fiscal year completed**

- Net Income (Loss) *Month ~ \$409M YTD ~ \$3.92M*
- Total Revenue: YTD ~ \$27.28M compared 12/12th of annual budget at ~\$26.38M; total YTD collections average ~103% of annual budgeted amount *Includes accrual for penny sales tax income: ~\$1.54M*
- Total Expenses: YTD ~ \$23.35M compared to 12/12th of annual budget of \$27.66M; total YTD expenditures average ~ 84% of annual budget
- YTD paid to Contract Operator since 7/1/2015 - current month ~ \$52,722,876
- Board Expenses: \$231
- Employee Training: \$11,234
- Cash: Wells Fargo - Operating: \$11.73M
- OPTUS Bank Reserve Funds: \$4.91M
- Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP): \$13.83M
- Total collections of Penny Revenue since 2013 to present: \$99,582,063 of \$300,991,000 allocation

Mr. Andoh explained that the pages following show a detailed breakdown of what has been presented. He asked the Committee to turn to Page 14 which highlights the June financials.

Mr. Andoh added that two (2) items need to be noted.

- 1) Memo from legal regarding the storing of federal interest in the Local Investment Pool. He added that under state law this is considered legal.
- 2) Advocating with Richland County to obtain the interest revenues from the penny Funds going back to 2013. The county wanted more clarity from their legal counsel, and it was discussed at the July committee meeting. The county committee then voted not to provide the revenues to The COMET \$300k in penny revenue. Mr. Horton and Dr. Morris didn't think this was fair. Mr. Andoh agreed. He added that he will get back to the Board on any updates.

Dr. Morris asked about the collection of the penny. Mr. Andoh stated that the model is projecting we will expend all the funds by the end of 2029. Dr. Morris stressed the importance of the ballot in 2024 regarding the penny.

Mr. Smith referred to Page 14 regarding the collections. Mr. Andoh explained this is a onetime collection. He then added that the contractor is still one (1) month behind due to improper reporting. He added that the revised reports will be ready next week.



**6. DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE) UPDATE**

Dr. Prince began her invoice review of the June Compliance Invoice. She discussed that the June percentage is 26.1% and added this is due to the holding of Transdev's invoices resulting in payment not being released.

Mr. Andoh added that Julietta Landscape Management has been terminated due to performance. Dr. Prince added that Transdev has found a replacement that is DBE certified. Mr. Andoh added that the DBE goal is also being affected due to a shift in a parts clerk position from Transport Care Services to Transdev in December 20185. Dr. Morris requested that Mr. Andoh share this information with the Board.

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

No old business.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Designation of Contracting Officer with Resolution**

Mr. Andoh stated that the staff is recommending that the Finance Committee recommend to the Board the designation of the Director of Finance/CFD and Financial Accountant be added to the list as the Contracting Officers.

Per Section B of the Procurement and Contracting Policy, as amended on March 24, 2017, the Executive Director shall recommend to the Board of Directors the designation of Contracting Officers to the Board of Directors.

(1) Policies. The CMRTA Board has the authority and responsibility to promulgate policies governing the procurement, management, control, and disposal of any and all supplies, goods, services, and construction required by the CMRTA.

(2) Approve Contracting Officers. The Board shall identify and approve CMRTA employees or other designees authorized to conduct procurements and to enter into contracts on behalf of the CMRTA. These individuals, also known as Contracting Officers, shall be recommended to the Board by the Executive Director.

Original resolution was amended in June 2018 designated the following as Contracting Officer (s): Executive Director/CEO, Procurement and Grants Manager, and Procurement and Project Implementation Specialist.

Dr. Morris mentioned that if we can add more responsibilities to staff, then we weren't using them to full capacity. Ms. Boulware agreed and questioned, are we giving them to much



responsibility and are they capable of taking on more duties. Mr. Andoh discussed the new position, Accounting Clerk, to help in balancing those responsibilities in the accounting department.

Mr. Smith sees this as an opportunity of growth but is concerned that we are planning for the position and not the person. He added if someone leaves are, we able to hire a person to do crossover duties. Mr. Andoh added that procurement is usually handled by Finance and he will make sure that the position is not so specialized or broad that it cannot be rehired.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Dr. Morris to recommend to the Board adding the CFO and the Financial Accountant to the list of Contracting Officers.

**Approved:** Boulware, Morris, Smith

**Absent:** Dickerson, Howard

**Motion passed.**

**B. Authorize purchase of hydrogen bus using grant funds**

Mr. Andoh stated that the staff recommends that the Finance Committee recommend to the Board of Directors to authorize the purchase of a hydrogen bus from the City of North Augusta for \$32,000 using grant funds. The COMET has been experimenting with zero emission buses over the course of 2018. The COMET has been offered an opportunity to obtain two Hydrogen buses. One is from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority at no cost to The COMET since it is an FTA demonstration bus. The second is from the City of North Augusta that has deemed the bus surplus.

The bus from the City of North Augusta is a 2010 Van Pool A300L FC Series 40-foot Bus and still has four more years of useful life on it with very low miles. The bus is anticipated to be fueled at the City of Columbia's hydrogen station on Laurel Street or through a portable refueler. The COMET is a member of the Center for Transportation and Environment and they have agreed to provide technical support through the membership regarding the operations, maintenance and training of the bus. The COMET in 2011 participated in a hydrogen bus pilot with Proterra in partnership with CTE.

Unlike buses that run on fossil fuels, a hydrogen fuel cell electric bus is powered by two of earth's most common basic components – oxygen and hydrogen. A fuel cell combines hydrogen and oxygen to produce electricity, heat, and water. Fuel cells are like batteries. Both convert the energy produced by a chemical reaction into usable electric power. The fuel cell provides an advantage, however – it will continue to produce electricity if fuel (hydrogen) is supplied. Also, every time the coach operator steps on the brakes, it provides extra electrical power to help the bus accelerate and climb steep hills. Buses powered by fossil



fuel emit air pollutants that harm our environment by combining to produce smog and greenhouse gases. Fuel cell electric vehicles are zero emission vehicles. When a hydrogen fuel cell electric bus operates, it emits only water. This means cleaner air, less global warming, and healthier, quieter neighborhoods.

Mr. Andoh added that the cost is \$32,000 to The COMET which would be covered at 80% Federal 5307 funds and 20% local match. CTE will provide technical assistance within the existing membership that The COMET has to use this bus. This bus would not be counted towards the fleet spare ratio and would be used on an occasional basis. CTE has funding from the Federal Transportation Association's National Fuel Cell Bus Program that would help The COMET support its efforts towards zero emissions.

Dr. Morris questioned if Mr. Andoh had contacted the two cities that housed the buses previously and what were their thoughts. Mr. Andoh explained that Augusta discontinued their transit system and Massachusetts are going electric. Mr. Horton stated that he feels this is a great public relations tactic and a great idea. Mr. Andoh stated that he envisions the bus run as a regular bus but perhaps have an environmental group to help in training and marketing.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Boulware to recommend to the Board of Directors authorization to purchase a hydrogen bus from North Augusta and receive a hydrogen bus from Massachusetts at zero cost.

**Approved:** Boulware, Morris, Smith

**Absent:** Dickerson, Howard

**Motion passed.**

**C. Authorize addition of an Office Clerk Position - Grade 1 - hourly - nonexempt**

Staff is recommending addition of an Office Clerk position to assist with clerical functions and entry level functions with the accounting department. At the concern for front desk and phone coverage by board members, staff is looking to employ an additional staff member. This staff member will be employed as an Office Clerk. An office clerk is one who attends to general office tasks including but not limited to filing, record keeping, entry level accounting functions and other administrative tasks.

Currently the position of answering the phone and entry level accounting functions are handled by the Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist and Financial Accountant personnel. With continued organizational growth and staff responsibilities, staff feels the need to add someone to transition some entry level duties. Primarily to answer



phones and perform entry level accounting functions such as data entry of Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and filing.

Mr. Andoh stated that the salary would be around \$12-14/hr. (Annual \$23,400-\$28,000) plus cost of health insurance \$5,050 - \$12,200.

Dr. Morris asked where these funds would come from. Mr. Andoh mentioned that the funds will come because of not hiring the Procurement Specialist (\$72K) position and not renewing with APTA (\$18k).

Mr. Smith and Ms. Boulware questioned if the grade is appropriate in hiring a knowledgeable face for the public. Mr. Smith stated he would like to recommend to the Board to approve the position and give Mr. Andoh the discretion to hire at Grade two (2) or Grade three (3) given that we know the funding is available and assign responsibilities based on the of hire. Dr. Morris agreed and suggested Grade 2 or 3.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Dr. Morris to recommend to the Board to approve this position and allow Mr. Andoh to craft it at Grade two (2) or three (3) and assign responsibilities based on candidates' qualifications and staffing needs.

**Approved:** Boulware, Morris, Smith

**Absent:** Dickerson, Howard

**Motion passed.**

**D. Authorize Amendment #2 to Transdev contract and Change Order #3**

Mr. Andoh referred to Page 28 of the packet. Transdev believed Transport Care Services (TCS) was only due growth in management fee based on growth in paratransit service increases. TCS was of the opinion they were due growth in management fee based on growth in all The COMET services, fixed route and paratransit. The COMET agreed with TCS opinion and recommended to Transdev that as long as the growth in cost was split in half and the agreement was amendment to only reflect a growth in paratransit and rural flex services after FY 2017-2018 operated by TCS was incorporated into an amendment, that The COMET would cover 50% of the growth between FY 15-16 and FY 17-18. The amendment was executed prior to 6-30-2019.

Amendment #2 includes the following changes:

- Definitions - defining Authority. Board and Director
- Duties - adding the TCS amendment #1 as Exhibit 9
- Compensation - adding the payment to Transdev for 50% of TCS growth
- Meetings - adding calls and emails must be returned within one business day



- Component Parts of This Contract – updating the date of the RFP to September 2014, not 2013.

Mr. Smith asked about legal involvement in this interpretation and are we at fault. Mr. Andoh stated that legal agreed with TCS and The COMET and the Amendment #2 changes will cost The COMET \$31,291.67. He added this is accounted for in the current budget and prior year. He referred to the attachment on Page 34. He added this was done as a good faith measure to keep the peace between subcontractors.

Mr. Smith expressed his discomfort with the \$31, 291.67 unless we were directly at fault. He suggested consulting further with legal and bringing legal to the next Finance Committee meeting for discussion.

*CD change occurred*

Mr. Smith stated that fixed fees are tied to fixed growth and expressed in the new procurement process ambiguity cannot exist.

Mr. Andoh referred to change order 3: the following changes to Exhibit 1 is proposed to be made to reflect the current operational conditions:

- Section 4.3 in relation to incorporation of the FY 2019-2020 Rates based on CPI + \$1.54 adder for fixed route and the addition of an optional hourly rate for maintain an additional 30 buses supporting shuttle operations.
- Section 1B changing the Insurance requirement for physical damage coverage to the buses (also known as comprehensive and collision coverage) to be covered by Transdev vs. The COMET. This would include the cost of a new bus and the vehicle wraps.
- Section B as it relates to adding 50% of the salaries and benefits of an IT Analyst, 80% of the salaries and benefits of an Operations Planner, 100% of the salaries and benefits of an optional Operations Manager to oversee shuttle operations and 100% of the salaries and benefits of the Megabus Ambassador for customer service at the Megabus stop between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m., seven days a week.
- Section E.7 as it relates to the hours of customer service at Transit Center and Call Center. Customer service must be staffed based on the assumption of Within 30

minutes is 4:32 to 4:52 a.m. to 11:14 to 11:34 p.m. on weekdays, 5:15 to 5:35 a.m. to 10:23 to 10:43 p.m. on Saturday and 5:15 a.m. to 5:45 a.m. to 10:23 to 10:43 p.m. on Sunday.

- Section F.6 as it relates a true-up of parts costs relevant to farebox, TransLoc and Clever Devices. Transdev and COMET to review 12/31/18, 6/30/2019, 12/31/2019 and





6/30/2020. This requires Transdev to implement baseline staff and expenses that correlates to the initial contract submission in 2015.

- Section H.3 regarding full access to the LISTEN Customer Complaint System at 50% of its cost for a license which translates to \$750 per year.
- Section N.7 regarding responsibility of Operations Planning with The COMET funding 80% and Transdev funding 20%.

The recommended changes will increase the hourly rate by approximately \$1.00 per hour. The pass-through expenses would relate to shuttle operations and contingent upon a contract to provide shuttle management services. The Megabus Ambassador costs would be fully reimbursed by Megabus through the lease agreement in place. Amendment #2 changes will cost \$31,291.67 to The COMET. This is accounted for in the current budget and prior year budget.

Mr. Andoh added that legal is reviewing Change Order #3. Mr. Andoh suggested moving forward with Change Order #3 and move forward with Change Order #2. Ms. Boulware suggested waiting on legal advice. If legal doesn't approve, then it will be deferred at the following committee meeting. Mr. Andoh suggested that we could simply take this item to the Board for discussion.

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Dr. Morris defer Amendment #2 to the next committee meeting after legal review and send Change Order 3 to the Board for continued discussion contingent upon legal review.

**Approved:** Boulware, Morris, Smith

**Absent:** Dickerson, Howard

**Motion passed.**

**9. LEGAL/CONTRACTUAL/PERSONNEL (MAY REQUIRE EXECUTIVE SESSION)**

No Legal/Contractual/Personnel to discuss.

**10. ADJOURN**

**Motion:**

A motion was made by Dr. Morris and seconded by Mr. Smith to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting.

**Approved:** Boulware, Morris, Smith

**Absent:** Dickerson



CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this 9/16/19, 2019, Agenda Item \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared by:



Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:



Andy Smith, Board Secretary