



The COMET Service 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.

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 3:30 p.m.

**Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority Service Committee
Wednesday August 14, 2019 -12:00 P.M.
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 – Conference Room A**

Members Present:

John V. Furgess, Sr
Carolyn Gleaton
Derrick Huggins*
Skip Jenkins*
Colonel (R) Roger Leaks, Jr., Chair

Guests Present:

Jackie Bowers, Operations Manager, Transdev
Larry Gabaldon, Interim General Manager, Transdev
Zane McGhee, Engineer, Davis & Floyd
Luke Wilkes, AOS

Absent Committee Members:

Lill Mood

**Indicates participation by phone.*

The COMET Staff Present

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

- 1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**
Col. Leaks called the meeting to order at 12:00 P.M.
A quorum was present at the opening of the meeting.



2. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Motion:

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

Approve: Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Leaks

Absent: Mood

Motion passed.

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

No representation.

4. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

- COMMENTS MUST PERTAIN TO ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA. THE BOARD CANNOT
- COMMENT.
- INDIVIDUALS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD MUST SIGN UP PRIOR TO THE CALL TO
- ORDER.
- COMMENT TIME LIMIT - TWO (2) MINUTES PER PERSON.

None

5. **MINUTES FROM JULY 10, 2019 MEETING**

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Gleaton and seconded by Mr. Furgess to approve the minutes from July 10, 2019 with the correction of date on Page 5, 2019.

Approve: Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Leaks

Absent: Mood

Motion passed.

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

A. DISCUSS PREVIOUS MOTIONS FROM 2017 TO PRESENT.

Mr. Andoh explained the items highlighted on the list on Page 14 of the Packet.

- Motion to direct staff and Service Committee to develop a long-term service plan primarily in Richland County
- Motion to direct staff and Service Committee to work with SCDOOT to develop a plan for the Park and Ride Service
- Develop Streetscape Plan for Harden & Taylor Streets, plus SuperStop
- Remove Executive Director from any and all negotiations from selecting a General Manager with Transdev



- All Soda Cap Connector brochures must list Allen University and Benedict College (Closed on 7/10/19)

7. TRANSDEV OPERATIONS REPORT (Jackie Bowers, Larry Gabaldon)

As far as ridership, Ms. Bowers summarized June's boarding's as follows:

Complaints: 68

Ms. Bowers added that this number is typically the average. She hopes this will change when the service changes are being implemented.

Accidents: 8

Safety meetings are now once a month but 2 times during that specified week to allow more people to attend.

Col. Leaks asked about the deep cleaning. Ms. Bowers stated that it has been addressed and hopefully will improve. Mr. Andoh touched on the pest control and Ms. Bowers addressed. She added that two (2) employees have been bitten by spiders.

Mr. Furgess expressed concern about eating and drinking on the bus. Col. Leaks added that He is concerned about allergic reactions to certain foods being eaten on the bus. He also added that perhaps the drivers should be trained in basic CPR and First Aid. Mr. Andoh stated that this could be addressed in the new contract.

Mr. Furgess inquired about the benefit of eating and drinking being allowed on the bus. Mr. Andoh explained, the heat, medical conditions, and allowing the drivers to focus on driving safely is a benefit.

8. RIDERSHIP REPORT (John Andoh)

Mr. Andoh reviewed Pages 83 - 85 of the packet. The boarding's decreased by 11,471 total, the fixed route decreased by 14,018, the flex route increased by 1,314 and the DART route increased by 827 boarding's. Mr. Andoh explained the decline is last year is due to The COMET doing a half pass fare (May June, July and August), and more people rode routes as result of the discounted amount. He also added that the Ridership Report will be more accurate before the Board meeting.

He added that the main corridors continue to perform. Mr. Andoh went through the routes that are performing and explained the ridership increase: 501, 101, 701, 801. Local: 75, 12, 11 and 6. The connector shuttle: 32, Soda Cap 1 and Soda Cap 2, 83L continue to grow. Rural routes are meeting measured goals with 47 being the strongest performer. Express: 53X, 82X, 92 growing, 93X new route still developing. DART 5800 passenger trips. The floor was



opened to questions.

Col. Leaks asked for more clarification on the decline in numbers. Col. Leaks questioned whether the frequency could be one of the reasons for decline. Mr. Andoh explained the price decrease from \$40 to \$20 last year is a major factor. Ms. Gleaton commented on the

fare reduction in January. Mr. Andoh stated the Board approved a free fare pilot that will begin in January which will boost ridership. He added that we are 3% over in revenue for last fiscal year.

9. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS (John Andoh)

A. Passenger Amenities Program Update

Mr. McGhee of Davis & Floyd and Mr. Wilkes of AOS remarked that they are continuing to make progress on the complete shelter and bench inventory of the entire COMET bus stop system. They added that they have completed our initial reviews of the 30 identified routes and will begin working with COMET staff to identify the best locations to install shelters and to identify areas of improving efficiencies within the system. Mr. Wilkes added that they have acquired available Right of Way plans and information and performed a google earth desktop review of all identified routes. As they begin to finalize this process and identify where shelters and benches can be added, they have been reviewing rider data that has been provided by the COMET for the 301 and the 401 routes. With this data, they will be able to target the most used stops for upgrades and can make recommendations on possible stops to eliminate within a specific corridor. D&F continue to work closely with the COMET staff on the new Super Stop located on the Columbia Place Mall property. This project was issued for Bids on August 1, 2019 and we have a set bid opening date for September 13, 2019.

Bus shelters will be built at the following locations listed below in August and September 2019:

Shelters and Benches:

- Stop #1660 Broad River Road and Piney Woods Road - Needs concrete pad and new shelter and bench
- Stop #1238 Garners Ferry Road and Brandon Avenue - pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #691 Decker Boulevard and O'Neil Court - pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #358 Bluff Road and Windy Drive - pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #828 Hallbrook Drive and Ronson Street - pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench



- Stop #1042 Forest Drive and Percival Road - Needs concrete pad and new shelter and bench
- Stop #829 Ulmer Road - pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #595 Fairmont Road and Caroline Road- pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #1257 Bull Street and Confederate Avenue - Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #1740 Gracern Road and Betsy Drive- pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #525 Devine Street and Woodrow Street - pad completed. Handrails in fabrication stage and should be installed within a week. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #822 Blue Ridge Terrace and Peachwood - Needs concrete pad and new shelter and bench
- Stop #1082 Bailey and Colony- pad completed. Needs new shelter and bench
- Stop #1457 Fairfield Road and Ashley Street- Needs concrete pad and new shelter and bench
- Stop #1286 Broad and Brevard - Needs concrete pad and new shelter and bench
- Stop #231 Two Notch Road and Windover Street - pad completed. Needs new shelter due to a car accident

Col. Leaks asked if there is anything the Board can do to help in continuing the progression. Mr. Andoh added he thinks they are moving along relatively well that we are just waiting on city permitting, etc. No further questions or comments.

B. Review Key Personnel Appointment Process

Mr. Andoh began by stating the Staff recommends that the Service Committee provide direction regarding the selection and oversight of the Transdev General Manager. At the June 2019 Board of Directors Meeting, Mr. Furgess made a motion to "Remove Executive Director from any and all negotiations from selecting a General Manager with Transdev". He further stated that at the July 2019 Service Committee Meeting, Attorney Heizer proposed to develop guidelines for the Service Committee and the Board of Directors to review to address the language regarding whose authority it is to select and remove the General Manager and other Key Personnel. He referred to Page 98 and Page 99 as this is a two-step process.

Mr. Andoh opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Furgess questioned the validity of the document presented by the legal team. Mr. Furgess asked that this document be taken back to the Board to be resolved.



Page 98 Number - 1. Approval of a Candidate

(a) The Board of Directors of the Authority (the "Board") intends to approve the acceptability of a Candidate prior to the Candidate's appointment by Transdev. This preference will be communicated to Transdev with a request that Transdev supply to the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED) the names, qualifications etc. of any person being considered as a Candidate. The CEO/ED shall perform appropriate due diligence regarding each such person.

Mr. Andoh asked if the Board wanted Attorney Heizer present at the Board meeting. Mr. Furgess stated that the wording is not what the Board suggested. Mr. Andoh stated that we can strike it out or take it back to the Board. Mr. Furgess asked why we are paying for something we don't understand. Mr. Andoh mentioned that the legal team is paid a retainer fee, not hourly anymore. Mr. Furgess reiterated taking this back to the Board. He added that the Withdrawal of Approval of a General Manager is not worded correctly either.

Col. Leaks stated that this has been taken to the Board and it was sent to Service Committee for review. Other than the verbiage on Approval of a Candidate is the only thing he thinks needs to be corrected. He then asked for suggestions on what needs to be changed and how should it be worded.

Presently the contract as it reads states the following:

Section 5. The Contractor shall report to and be responsive to the Director and the Authority Board. The Director and the Authority Board will be responsible for evaluating the Contractor's performance in accordance with the provisions of this Contract.

Exhibit 1 Section A, Management: states All "key personnel" that will be associated with the provision of services under the Contract shall be identified in the proposal. These positions shall be dedicated 100% to the management of the Authority Contract and shall not be responsible for the management of, or used as a resource for, any other projects without prior written approval from the Authority. The Contractor is required to staff fully the "key personnel" positions identified in its proposal as it is considered part of the pricing. If positions are no longer needed, the Contractor may seek to adjust the Contract terms and pricing, where appropriate. The qualifications and expertise of all key personnel shall be demonstrated in the proposal document. The Authority shall have the right to approve any key personnel employed by the Contractor. Any change in or extended absence of key personnel requires prior written approval of the Authority. In addition, if key personnel position will be vacant, whether on vacation or otherwise, for more than two weeks, the Contractor must notify the Authority in writing of such vacancy. During the period of



performance, the Contractor shall make no substitutions of key personnel unless the substitution is necessitated by illness, death, termination of employment, promotion, or the employee leaving employment. The Contractor shall furnish a full-time qualified General Manager, acceptable to the Authority, to supervise the fixed route and paratransit services. The Authority can withdraw approval of the General Manager at any time. The

Contractor will have (90) ninety days from the date of written notice to furnish a qualified successor General Manager acceptable to the Authority. Failure of the Contractor to provide a qualified replacement within the ninety (90) day time frame, unless such time is extended in writing by the Authority, may constitute a ground of default under the Contract. At the present time, Legal Counsel Review: Burr Forman McNair staff has prepared a proposed approach regarding the selection and rejection of Key Personnel.

Recommended Motion:

1. To recommend to the Board of Directors acceptance of the proposed candidates for the Maintenance Manager, General Manager and Paratransit Manager.
2. To recommend to the Board of Directors authorization for Transdev to subcontract the Transdev Technology Manager to Team Logic IT, a DBE.
3. To recommend the proposed guidelines by General Counsel on future acceptance/withdrawal of key personnel.

Mr. Furgess recommended either A or D be withdrawn due to redundancy. He questioned the fact that the document refers to "Transdev." He added it should state "contractor," Mr. Andoh agreed. Mr. Jenkins stated that because this is a legal issue and we should involve legal. Mr. Furgess stressed that this document should have been resolved as a Board function not as a committee.

Col. Leaks requested it go back to Attorney Heizer for appropriate changes. Col. Leaks asked Mr. Andoh to read number 1 (one) and number 2 (two) slowly for the committee allowing time to process the wording. Mr. Furgess reiterated that the Board does not "accept" they only "withdrawal approval" if the Board is unhappy with the approved General Manager by the contract. He added that the Executive Director has never been included in this process. Mr. Andoh added that we want to be sure that we are all following the contract. He added in the past the contract has not been followed. It was discussed in length, but the consensus was to take the document back to legal and keep the current key personnel as "interim" for the time being.

CD change occurred



Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Furgess and seconded by Ms. Gleaton to send the staff report and approval of key personnel to the full Board for discussion with Attorney Heizer present at the next meeting for finalization.

Approve: Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Leaks

Absent: Mood

Motion passed.

C. Service Committee Responsibilities Pages 118-119

Mr. Andoh reviewed the bylaws for the Service Committee responsibilities.

- All matters relating to service including contact with riders, transit center, shelters and amenities shall be referred to this committee.
- This Committee will recommend to the Board for adoption appropriate service-related metrics such as passengers per hour or mile or revenue per hour/mile
- This Committee will recommend to the Board for adoption, in accordance with the strategic plan, expectations for performance of routes and services based on the approved metrics.
- The Committee will review regularly all services based upon the appropriate standards and metrics and will make recommendations to the Board regarding underperforming routes.
- All recommendations related to service changes will include a fiscal impact statement estimating the capital and operating costs if any of said changes.
- The Committee will receive detailed reports on all service-related metrics under the operator's contract.
- Continued implementation of innovative mobility, including mileage reimbursement and volunteer transportation programs, subsidized taxi, microtransit pilot as part of the ReFlex "brand."
- Review of pilot routes Soda Cap Connector, Routes 92X and 93X by May 2020
- Review of routes and make recommendations for service changes in May 2020 based on productivity standards.
- Redesign presentation materials to Board and Committees regarding Service and Contractor performance.
- Launching of "Let's Reimagine The COMET" project which includes the origin & destination survey, short range transit plan, comprehensive operational analysis, express bus plan and park and ride lot plan.
- Implementing new intelligent technologies such as a new Mobility as a Service app, automated passenger counters, automated vehicle locator, paratransit and fixed route dispatching software.
- Review and test transit services along Trenholm Road.



- Implement a health care shuttle to take people to pharmacies and medical appointments.
- Implement Lower Richland Express and rural service to Batesburg-Leesville (carryover from FY 2018-2019) by January 2020.
- Study university transportation/partnership.
- Discuss marketing The COMET and Soda Cap Connector.

Col. Leaks stressed the importance of the new intelligent technologies, specifically pertaining to the app and route dispatching software. Ms. Higgins, agreed but wanted to detail the difference between travel training and the ability to use the app. She added that she is working with SCDOT and Feonix Mobility Rising to improve the current app, consolidating everything into one app.

Mr. Andoh asked for further recommendations. Col. Leaks stated that the committee will look at the items and see if others need to be added. Mr. Furgess asked about the Batesburg Leesville routes and timeframe. Mr. Andoh added that the survey just closed, and routes will be established in 2020. Col. Leaks asked about the reality of running the routes only once per week. Mr. Furgess added this may be one of the issues that we should just wait and see what happens. Mr. Andoh stated it will run 1 (one) day 3 (three) times per week and that he is working with the county to work out the details.

Mr. Furgess added that we should pull out the Soda Cap Connector information separately to present to the committee. Mr. Andoh confirmed.

D. Mobility As A Service & Transit Technology Pages 120-122

Mr. Andoh stated that the Staff recommends that the Service Committee start a discussion about Mobility As A Service (MaaS) and transit technology. Mr. Andoh referred to Page 120 and 121 and that Ms. Higgins is taking the lead. He stated that in the same way travelers consume online video, and telephone and internet services, they now have access to a range of transport services that is not only simpler regarding ticket purchasing, but also broader and more practical. By grouping all local transportation services, bicycles, carpooling, transportation network companies and taxi services under one fixed-rate payment, Mobility as a Service (MaaS) simplifies and enhances the traveler experience to promote the use of public transport. MaaS is a real revolution in the way it is helping people organize the way they travel. This concept was born in Finland and is starting to grow worldwide. The COMET wants to redesign its Catch The COMET App to be more of a Mobility As A Service app and for the interim, hard link to many of the mobility options while in the future working out an integrated ticketing solution.



The proposed MaaS app that would incorporate the following:

- Trip Planning on Public Transit
- Hardlink to ReFlex Microtransit services powered by Via
- Fare Payment
- Rideshare Matching with Enterprise (our vanpool contractor)
- Hardlinks to Uber and Lyft for ridesharing
- Hardlinks to Blue Bike SC
- Hardlinks to Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Linked In)
- Hardlinks to Amtrak
- Hardlinks to Greyhound
- Hardlinks to Megabus
- Traffic Conditions through 511 or Google
- Hardlinks to Taxi Providers with Apps in the Central Midlands
- Hardlinks to AARP Ride 50+ Program by Feonix

Mr. Andoh stressed that we do not want to have three or four competing apps trying to address commute alternatives, which will confuse the public. Ms. Higgins explained the plan in detail as stated above. Mr. Andoh stated that he would keep the Board informed.

E. Disaster Recovery Plan Pages 123-133

Mr. Andoh referred to Pages 123-133 in the Packet and stated that per contract Transdev has to present the Disaster Recovery Plan to The COMET. Col. Leaks stated that the plan is not sophisticated and needs to be updated and more detailed, ex. phone tree. He recommended working with Transdev to make revisions. Mr. Andoh agreed and asked Mr. Gabaldon to work on an updated version.

10. LEGAL/CONTRACTUAL/PERSONNEL (may require executive session)

None

Mr. Furgess asked that a "Motion Period" should be on every agenda even if no motion is expressed. He made a motion to terminate food and drink on The COMET buses effective immediately. Mr. Andoh stated that no action could be taken on an item not listed on the agenda per FOIA violation. Ms. Higgins asked it to be reworded to say "eating and drinking," instead of food and drinks. Mr. Furgess asked the Committee to take it to the Board for discussion. Mr. Andoh suggested this motion be made at the Board meeting. He added that if it is not on the agenda as it is a FOIA violation. Mr. Furgess expressed his frustration on why he couldn't make the motion in the committee meeting. He insisted the motion stand and be reflected in the minutes.



Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Furgess and seconded by Ms. Gleaton to end all eating and drinking on The COMET buses be sent to the Board for discussion.

Approve: Furgess, Gleaton, Huggins, Leaks

Absent: Mood

Motion passed.

Mr. Andoh stated that he will have legal provide feedback at the Board meeting.

11. ADJOURN

Motion:

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

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this 9/10/19, 2019, Agenda Item _____

Prepared by:


Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:


Andy Smith, Secretary

