



The COMET 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 pjernigan@thecometsc.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 Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 3:15 P.M.

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority
COVID-19 AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, May 1, 2020-1:00 P.M.
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 - Teleconference

Members Present:

Col. Roger (R) Leaks, Jr.*
Derrick Huggins* (joined call at 12:12 P.M.)
Lill Mood*

Guests Present:

Jackie Bowers, Operations Manager, Transdev*
Larry Gabaldon, Interim General Manager, Transdev*
Rosalind Lorick, Quality Control Manager, Transdev*
Betty Robinson, Safety Manager, Transdev*
Tanisha Woodson, Human Resources, Transdev*

*Indicates participation by phone.

Absent:

None

The COMET Staff Present

John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO
Leroy DesChamps, Director of Administration & Operations/COO
Alexis Feliciano, Transit Traffic Checker
Eric Harris, Planning and Development Specialist
Paige Jernigan, Administrative and Customer Service Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER

Col. Leaks called the meeting to order at 12:06 P.M.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Col. Leaks to adopt the agenda.



Approved: Leaks, Mood
Absent: Huggins
Motion passed.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 24, 2020

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Col. Leaks to approve the minutes from April 24, 2020.

Approved: Leaks, Mood
Absent: Huggins
Motion passed.

4. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Update of the COMET Operations

Mr. Andoh explained the photos of activities in the packet for review. He added that Mr. Gabaldon will be discussing operations, the food delivery program, and bus cleanliness. Mr. Gabaldon gave an update of the current operating procedures. He added that The COMET is partnering with Senior Resources to deliver approximately one hundred (100) meals to seniors per week. He added they will also deliver food for ABLE South Carolina and Axiom Farms.

Mr. Gabaldon explained the partnership will help seniors in Richland County from Gadsden and Hopkins to parts of Irmo and Elgin. Each person served receives five frozen, nutritionally well-balanced meals delivered to their homes. He added that The COMET drivers trained with Meals on Wheels staff prior to the start of the delivery service. For safety, recipients were notified that the drivers would arrive in Dial A Ride Transit (DART) cutaway buses and dressed in The COMET uniforms with proper identification badges. They will be wearing face masks as well for COVID-19 precautions.

Mr. Huggins joined the call at 12:12 P.M.

Mr. Gabaldon described the temporary barriers using the shower curtains on the cutaways. It was confirmed that the cost was \$329 dollars for all the Dial A Ride Transit (DART) buses to be outfitted with the provisional protection.

Ms. Mood inquired about the ridership. Ms. Feliciano explained that she is still reviewing the data, but she hasn't seen a significant increase or decrease since the last report. Ms. Woodson mentioned the panhandling and the disembarking of the buses when the driver exits the bus on route at the beginning and end of destination. It was explained by Mr. Andoh that this was a way to minimize those riders who are riding with no destination in mind.



Col. Leaks asked about the riders wearing masks. Ms. Mood proposed reaching out to governance to propose an ordinance to require public transit riders to use masks while on buses. Mr. Andoh stated he will reach out to Mayor Coble regarding the ordinance. Mr. Andoh referred to the copy of the Executive Order in the Packet.

B. Reopening The COMET after COVID-19

Mr. Andoh referred to the matrix on Page 31. He added that the staff are working on a contingency plan to prepare for service to return to normal after the State of Emergency is lifted. It was discussed that this would take at least a week to implement due to the steps needed to fully operate again. Drivers would need to be retrained, drug tested, allowed to bid, cleaning of the buses etc.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of social distancing.

C. Recommendation to the Board of Directors and Finance Committee Regarding Budgeting CARES Act Funding for FY 2020 and 2021.

Mr. Huggins stressed the importance of the CARES Act Funding and the ability to absorb any spikes that may arise during the pandemic. He urged his priority is protecting our drivers and our riders. Mr. Andoh stated that he would give an update on what has been spent out of the fund thus far at the upcoming meeting.

Ms. Mood asked about the testing of the drivers. Ms. Woodson reminded the committee of the company called SC House calls that would be willing to test our drivers at a cost of \$125 dollars. She added that you do not have to have signs or symptoms to be tested. She noted that they could send a nurse practitioner to come to us for testing at one time. Ms. Mood suggested reaching out to the Governor's work group to a request for the requirement for a doctor's order for COVID-19 testing be waived for our drivers.

Mr. Andoh confirmed that it would cost approximately \$28,000 dollars to have all employees tested. Ms. Woodson stated that she has been in contact with DHEC and they continue to work together. The staff will determine an action plan regarding testing. The committee discussed this action and it was determined that action would have to be recommended to the Board for retroactive approval.

Mr. Gabaldon explained that the bus cleanliness is still an issue. He mentioned that currently the subcontractor is not meeting expectations. He added that random spot checks will begin this week. Mr. Gabaldon stated that they are developing an action plan to remedy this issue in writing per Mr. Andoh's request. Ms. Mood recommended more random checks of the buses should be performed. She suggested that each bus be inspected daily for service. Mr. Andoh confirmed that he and Transdev would work together to resolve this problem.

5. ADJOURN



Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Huggins to adjourn the meeting.

Approved: Huggins, Leaks, Mood

Absent: None

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 P.M.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this May, 2020, Agenda Item _____

Prepared by:



Paige Jernigan, Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:



Andy Smith, Secretary