



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 Monday, June 1, 2020 at 3:15 P.M.**

**Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority
COVID-19 AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, June 5, 2020-12:00 P.M.
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 – Teleconference**

Members Present:

Col. Roger (R) Leaks, Jr.*
Transdev*
Derrick Huggins*
Transdev*
Lill Mood*

Guests Present:

Larry Gabaldon, Interim General Manager,

Rosalind Lorick, Quality Control Manager,

April Platts, Interim Paratransit Operations
Manager*
Betty Robinson, Safety Manager, Transdev*
Barry Walker, Mayor, Town of Irmo

**Indicates participation by phone.*

Absent:

None

The COMET Staff Present

John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO
Pamela Bynoe-Reed, Marketing and Public Information Manager
LeRoy DesChamps, Director of Administration & Operations/COO
Alexis Feliciano, Transit Traffic Checker
Tanisha Woodson, Interim Customer Experience and Contract Compliance Specialist
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 12:00 P.M.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion:

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

Approved: Huggins*, Leaks*, Mood*

Absent: None

Motion passed.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM May 22, 2020

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Huggins and seconded by Ms. Mood to approve the minutes from May 22, 2020.

Approved: Huggins*, Leaks*, Mood*

Absent: None

Motion passed.

4. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Update of the COMET Operations, Vehicle Cleaning, Food Delivery and Re-Opening
Mr. Gabaldon gave an update of the current operating procedures. He confirmed that they are currently delivering eighty (80) to ninety (90) meals currently.

Mr. Gabaldon explained the bus cleanliness process changes. He mentioned that the Supervisor on the Service Line is focused on approving vehicles before they leave the lot. He added that they are working hard to ensure the buses are clean before they are put into service. The cleaners are being trained to clean more efficiently using a fogger machine that will disinfect the bus after it is cleaned. Discussion continued regarding improvement of the bus sanitation.

Ms. Mood wanted more information regarding the COVID-19 testing and the amount of time it takes to obtain the results. Mr. Gabaldon confirmed that The COMET Staff have been tested and the bus operators are currently being tested. Mr. DesChamps informed that the lab results turnaround time range from twenty-four (24) to forty-eight (48) hours and no positive reports have occurred.

Mr. Huggins reminded the group of the importance of the safety of the drivers.

Mr. Gabaldon did state that the triple number routes continue to be full. He added that businesses are opening, and this is a major factor in the increase in ridership on these routes. Discussion



continued regarding the crowds protesting and increase in ridership.

B. Recommendation to Adopt a COVID-19 Operational Policy

Mr. Andoh reviewed the attached COVID-19 Operational policy. He explained that the policy will address the use of masks, cleaning, installation of barriers to separate bus operators and passengers, and rules governing how those can interact on buses and in the facilities. He explained that The COMET will provide masks for an initial forty-five (45) day period starting from June 15, 2020 to July 31, 2020. Masks will be available on the buses next to the rear door on transit and trolley buses and the front door on cutaway buses and vans. It was explained that starting on August 1, 2020, passengers would need to provide their own masks or ask for one at COMET Central or Lowell C. Spires Regional Transit Facility during customer service hours. He explained in detail the steps taken to gradually incorporate the policy.

Discussion ensued regarding the sustainability and the cost of providing masks through the duration of the pandemic. Mr. DesChamps explained that the need is for individually wrapped masks which could become costly.

Mr. Andoh explained that this policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors every three (3) months starting September 30, 2020, or more frequently if necessary, for continued applicability until the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and/or South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has determined that the Coronavirus pandemic is over with relaxed restrictions regarding the interaction of people.

It was discussed that the most important thing is to have a successful public relations/marketing plan. Mr. Andoh explained that press, signage, social media, etc. will be used to promote the masking policy. Ms. Mood suggested enlisting help from Midlands Transit Riders Association. Mr. Andoh agreed that was a great idea.

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Mood and seconded by Mr. Huggins to recommend the adoption of the COVID-19 policy.

Approved: Huggins*, Leaks*, Mood*

Absent: None

Motion passed.

A. Update on Bus Operator Barriers

Mr. Andoh explained that the passengers are still boarding from the rear door since they cannot access the farebox from the front of the bus. He added we are testing barriers to see if it works from the manufacturers. He added that quotes should be coming in shortly, but we are looking at about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250k.)



Mr. Andoh mentioned that to address the deficit in fare collection, The COMET is using the CARES Act funding to pay its operations and maintenance contractor, so there is no financial implication to The COMET. Discussion ensued regarding the CARES Act Funding.

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 12:57 P.M.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY


Adopted this July, 2020, Agenda Item _____

Prepared by:



Paige Jernigan, Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:



Andy Smith, Secretary