



The COMET COVID – 19 Ad-Hoc Subcommittee 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 Friday, February 12, 2021 at 3:15 P.M.***

**Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority
COVID-19 AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, February 19, 2021-10:00 A.M.
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 – Teleconference**

Members Present:

Derrick Huggins*
John Furgess*
RATP Dev
Lill Mood* (joined call at 10:08 A.M.)
*Indicates participation by phone.

Guests Present:

Maurice Bell*, RATP Dev
Joe Sanchez*, Asst. General Mgr./Operations Mgr.,
Ronnie Sweeny*, Maintenance Manager, RATP Dev

Absent:

None

The COMET Staff Present

John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO
LeRoy DesChamps*, Director of Administration & Operations/COO
Tanisha Gibbons*, Customer Experience & Contract Compliance Manager
Eric Harris*, Planning & Development Specialist
Pam Bynoe-Reed*, Marketing & Public Information Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Huggins called the meeting to order at **10:01 A.M.**
A quorum was present at the opening of the meeting as Mr. Furgess was added to the Committee per Mr. Huggins' request.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion:

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

Approved: Furgess*, Huggins*



Absent: Mood

Motion passed.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 22, 2021

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Furgess and seconded by Mr. Huggins to approve the minutes from January 22, 2021.

Approved: Furgess*, Huggins*

Absent: Mood

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 5, 2021 – deferred to the next meeting for approval.

5. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Update Executive Order – South Carolina

Mr. DesChamps stated that the government extended the executive order for another fifteen (15) days. Mr. DesChamps explained that under President Biden's administration, he has required all public transportation agencies to wear a mask. He added that TSA issued a security directive to implement the requirement of the masks. He concluded that The COMET has sent a reminder out to the ridership, staff, and contractors.

Mr. DesChamps stated that the City of Columbia Council extended the mask mandate for another sixty-one (61) days, April 1, 2021.

B. Update of The COMET Operations – including Food Delivery, Vehicle Cleaning & COVID-19 Policy

Mr. Sanchez stated three (3) of their subcontractors have tested positive for COVID. He added that all vehicles have been sanitized, deep cleaned and disinfected. Staff cannot return without proof of a negative test.

Ms. Mood joined the call at 10:08 A.M.

Ms. Mood asked about what proportion of the Staff has been tested. Mr. Sanchez stated that all Staff are approached to be tested but not all opt to have the test.

Mr. Sanchez explained that Lovelace Family Practice did come out and repeat another round of testing.

Number of tests administered:

Administrative: 25

Operations: 100

Maintenance: 12

TCS: 35



194 total

Mr. Sanchez confirmed that for the month of January, we had seventeen (17) food service deliveries.

Mr. Sanchez said that for the period of February 1, 2021 to February 18, 2021, there have been one thousand three hundred and nine (1,309) vehicles detailed, one thousand (1,184) foggings and four thousand five hundred and thirty-four (4,534) interior and exterior cleanings on the fleet.

Mr. Furgess requested just the number of buses that are in use. Mr. Sanchez confirmed that all the vehicles are being detailed even if they are not in use. Mr. Sanchez added that this is by request from Mr. Andoh and it is in the contract. Mr. Furgess asked to bring this topic to the next Board meeting. Mr. Sanchez agreed.

Mr. Sanchez stressed the importance of the community, the Board and The COMET staff to help enforce the mask mandate. Ms. Mood asked about the frequency of issues with the masks? Mr. Sanchez stated that the number is increasing. Ms. Mood suggested keeping track of the number of instances. Conversation ensued regarding the mask mandate.

Ms. Bynoe-Reed stated that the number of social media posts have increased, signage is still on the buses, and a copy of the Executive Order is posted. She continued to state that if a passenger refuses to put the mask on, the implication is a no trespass notice.

C. Update of Testing

Mr. DesChamps said The COMET continued to do COVID testing in coordination with DHEC at Comet Central:

Wednesday through Friday, 7:00 A.M. to noon and 2:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Saturdays from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Mr. DesChamps said he has been in contact with Lovelace to offer testing again at the administration building. He stated that Lovelace has asked to modify our testing times. He did add that he would be working with RATP Dev to find the most convenient time. He confirmed Lovelace is good for continued testing again in April, May, and June.

D. Update of Driver Barriers and FAR-UV Technology

Mr. Sweeny reported that New Flyer barriers are here. The installers will be here Wednesday to complete the New Flyers. He confirmed once this is completed, the entire fleet will be outfitted except for the two (2) trolleys which are being evaluated by the engineering department at New Flyer.



Mr. Sweeny said the FAR-UV technology was installed on Bus 802. He stated that he thought the installation was successful. He did state that he has reached out the manufacturer and they have provided Mr. Sweeny with an Army Major to contact for more information regarding the light.

Mr. Sweeny stated the installation process should be done in ten (10) working days.

Mr. Furgess urged the staff to ensure the public/riders are made aware of the front entrances of the bus once barriers are installed.

E. Update on DART Office Space

Ms. Gibbons said that with the recent positive tests and the close proximity of the cubicles,

Staff has agreed to have the Customer Experience Staff (excluding COMET Central) work from home.

Mr. Furgess suggested taking this topic, working from home to the Board. Mr. Huggins stated that Mr. Andoh will brief the Board at the meeting regarding this matter.

F. Update on Vaccination and Impacts to Public Transit

Mr. Andoh stated that Phase 1B appears to have been pushed back to early spring 2021 for vaccination. He mentioned that Staff have drafted a letter to explain the process that will be introduced to the employees. He continued that we would continue practicing social distancing, wearing the masks, and following CDC guidance.

Mr. Andoh referred to Page 13 explaining the phase process.

G. Don't Miss Your Shot Transportation Program

Ms. Bynoe-Reed stated that the program launched, February 4, 2021. She stated that the communication campaign is going well, and she is continuing to work with news media as an ongoing story. She stated that a radio advertisement will be going out soon and flyers and marketing materials have been distributed to local business, churches, etc.

Ms. Bynoe-Reed referred to the website www.COMETCovidHelp.org and stated this has a direct link to the DHEC website. She added that she will also provide these materials (flyers, posters, brochures) to the partners below:

- Prisma Health
- Lexington Medical Center
- Columbia VA Hospital
- Senior Resources -have been distributing materials.



- Columbia Housing Authority – have been distributing materials.
- DHEC

Ms. Bynoe-Reed stated that we will be presenting at some upcoming events at local neighborhoods. She stated that she is still working to get radio presence and tv opportunities.

Mr. Huggins commended Ms. Bynoe-Reed and her hard work to make this event happen.

Discussion ensued regarding media platforms and keeping track of who is taking advantage of the Don't Miss Your Shot Transportation Program.

H. V-TRIP AND PICK-UP PROGRAM DISCUSSION

Ms. Bynoe – Reed stated that The COMET Pick Up Program gives up to \$50 a month to pay

for taxi, Lyft, or Uber rides. She stated that V-Trip lets riders get money back to pay the people in their life who drive them.

Ms. Bynoe – Reed stated that We have compiled a list of churches in the Midlands and will

execute a distribution plan that includes:

- V-Trip and PUP rack cards
- Thomas Media flyer distribution
- Social media
- Advertising
- Website
- Email Marketing

6. ADJOURN

Motion:

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

Approved: Furgess*, Mood*, Huggins*

Absent: None

Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 10: 50 A.M.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this _____ 2021

Reviewed by:



Paige Jernigan, Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:

Christopher Lawson

Christopher Lawson, Secretary