



Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority (WPRTA) Board of Directors

Time and Place: 10:00 a.m. on Thursday September 15, 2011

Location: Greenway Conference Room, 1515 4th ST. SW, Conover, NC 28613

Attendees: Rick French, Todd Clark, Warren Wood, Stan Kiser, Susan Berley and Tom Lundy.

Others: Ed Clifford, Suzette Bradshaw, Camille Sterling, Olivia Greenhill, Patti Foster, Scott Young, Sandy Lewis, Kim Sadler, Curtis Jones, Johnnie Busic, Larry Pope, Erin Todd, John Tippet (Authority Clerk), and Terry Taylor (Authority Attorney).

1. **Call to Order** – Mr. French, Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM and welcomed all present.

Items for Individual Consideration

2. **Employee of the Month** – Ms. Sadler introduced Curtis Jones as the Employee of the Month of August. Mr. Jones is a dispatcher in the Conover office. Before coming to Greenway he worked for Getrag in Newton, NC. He is originally from Caldwell County and now resides in Newton with his wife Sabine. Curtis has two children and two grandchildren. He enjoys fishing, hiking and watching sports. Mr. Clark presented him with his Employee of the Month pin. Ms. Sadler next introduced Johnnie Busic as the Employee of the month for September. Mr. Busic is a van driver assigned to Burke County. His main client groups served are dialysis patients and Skill Creations. Johnnie is from Burke County and resides in Morganton. He has one son and three grandchildren. In his spare time he enjoys working in his yard and fishing for trout. Ms. Berley presented him with his Employee of the Month pin.

3. **Executive Director's Report** – Mr. Clifford presented the Board with an update on the following items:
 - a. Employee of the Year Ceremony
 - i. Held at J. E. Broyhill Civic Center in Lenoir on Saturday, August 27th
 - ii. Approximately 30 employees and family members attended
 - iii. Van driver Linda Bertke was selected as the 2011 Employee of the Year
 - iv. Linda is a 10 year employee and she works in Catawba County
 - b. Warlong Project
 - i. Lease negotiations continuing
 - ii. Grant review on hold until late October due to changeover in Fiscal Year
 - iii. NCDOT has allocated newer funds to the project to prevent funding from lapsing
 - iv. FTA requested a comparison of lease versus buy and build options
 - c. NCDOT Update
 - i. ROAP Funding delayed
 - ii. ROAP applications due September 30th
 - iii. Awaiting legal review of the NCDOT MOU

- iv. Meeting with Miriam Perry and staff on September 13th
- v. Paul Morris is the new Deputy Director for Transit
- d. Marketing Update
 - i. September 22, 2011 Free Fare day on the Fixed Route service in Conover, Hickory and Newton
 - ii. Advertising Contract Extensions:
 - Farm Bureau 12 months 9/2011 – 8/2012
 - Carolina West Wireless 7/2011 – 6/2012
- e. Special Services and Charter Regulations
 - i. Recent inquiries:
 - Service between hotels and Western Piedmont Community College training events
 - Service between hotels and convention center
 - ii. FTA Charter Ombudsman
 - iii. Compliance with Charter Regulations
 - These services can be initiated and operated by WPRTA as long as there is no exchange of money; fares are considered an exchange of money.
- f. New Hybrid Vehicle – Available for a brief ride after the Board meeting.
- g. Biodiesel Follow up – Bernhardt Furniture in Lenoir is doing a test run using biodiesel. There is a station in Caldwell County now with biodiesel for refueling.
- h. Authority has the first Building Permit for the installation of new Bus Shelters

4. Public Hearing on Proposed Service Changes – Ms. Foster reviewed the service changes as follows:

- a. Staff Presentation:
 - i. Request – In accordance with Federal requirements, a public hearing was scheduled for September 15, 2011 to allow the public to provide written and oral comment on the following route and schedule changes. Staff requests that the Board approve changes as presented:
 - ii. Background –
 - Flex Route service is both Fixed Route service and Dial-A-Ride van service. Passengers can access the bus at a designated bus stop along the route or call for a pick-up or drop-off within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the bus route by calling 828-464-9444 by 12:00 pm the business day before the requested date. The flex route additions are:
 - a. Current van route in Catawba will change from van service to a Flex Route
 - b. Flex Route service from Glen Alpine in Burke County to Hickory
 - c. Flex Route service between Lenoir and Hickory
 - Fixed Route Service is offered in the cities of Conover, Hickory and Newton. Passengers may access the bus at designated bus stops along the route. No reservation is required. The service is currently being offered Monday through Friday from 5:45 am to approximately 7:30 pm and Saturday from 8:45 am until 5:20 pm. The following changes will be made to the fixed route service:
 - a. The **last run** for route 3 and 4 (red route) which serves Hickory and Newton will no longer be offered as of October 31, 2011.
 - b. A new Saturday only route from Lenoir-Rhyne University into Hickory will run every hour from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm.

- b. Conduct Public Hearing – A motion to open a Public Hearing on Proposed Service Changes was made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Wood, the motion was unanimously approved.
- c. Mr. Pope was in attendance for public comment.
 - i. He wanted a better understanding of the new flex routes.
 - ii. Mr. Clifford explained the flex route parameters and also the new route locations.
 - iii. Would the Authority consider adding Saturday service? Ms. Foster said they will take it under consideration after implementation of the new routes which will better gauge rider interest.
 - iv. In discussion with senior bus riders the question came up about a possible transit service to Crawdads stadium for games during the baseball season. Mr. Pope feels this will boost ridership and attendance. Mr. Clifford will discuss it in more detail with him later and it could be marketed as “promotional” service.
 - v. Will there be other fixed route expansion to allow paratransit into the Mountain View area for medical appointments for passengers without medical transportation assistance? Ms. Foster informed him that Dial-A-Ride goes to more locations than Paratransit service. The cost would be the same; reservations need to be made for Dial-A-Ride by noon on the previous business day.
 - vi. The new bus shelters, will they be larger than the latest ones, will they have the plexiglass surround to protect the waiting passengers from the elements? Mr. Clifford said the new shelters will not have the plexiglass, it is a matter of maintenance cost and vandalism.
- d. A motion to close the public hearing was made by Mr. Lundy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wood and approved unanimously.
- e. After a brief discussion, a motion to approve the changes recommended by staff was made by Mr. Wood. The motion was seconded by Ms. Berley and approved by a unanimous vote.

5. Monthly Financial Report – Ms. Bradshaw gave a brief review of the Operating Income/Expense budget for August. She distributed a spreadsheet that was just completed so it had not been distributed with the agenda packet. Ms. Bradshaw told the Board that it is hard to give a report with meaningful data due to lag time on accruals and reimbursements. The accounting is convoluted because of conflicting grant requirements. The report presented to the Board was created from 4 different reports out of QuickBooks and compiled into an Excel spreadsheet. Mr. Lundy requested that she email the report when it is ready next month so the Board members have more time to review it before the meeting. She said she would do so. Ms. Bradshaw announced that there will be two new Finance employees beginning work at the Authority on Monday as Ms. Lewis has accepted a position in Operations. Mr. Wood asked for a status update on the Audit. Ms. Bradshaw doesn't think it will be completed by October 31, 2011. She estimates it will be finished before the end of the calendar year.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR REVIEW, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

- 6. Consent Agenda** – Mr. French announced consideration of the consent items and asked if anyone was requesting removal for discussion of any of these items. As there was no discussion, Mr. French asked for a motion to approve as listed in the agenda. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Clark and was seconded by Mr. Kiser. The motion was unanimous.
 - a. August 11, 2011 Board Committee Minutes – for informational purposes
 - b. Approval of August 18, 2011 Board Meeting Minutes
 - c. Approval of TEAM User Access Requests

7. **Discussion of Items Removed from the Consent Agenda** – There were no items removed from the consent agenda.
8. **Public Comment** – There was no one present for Public Comment at this time.
9. **Other Business** – The next regular Board meeting will be held at 10:00 AM on the third Thursday, October 20, 2011.
10. **Adjournment** – A motion was made by Mr. Clark to adjourn the meeting at 10:47 AM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wood and approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Todd Clark, Board Secretary

John Tippett, Board Clerk