



MEETING MINUTES
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation
Board of Trustees
February 12, 2020

Board Members Present:

Abuzuaite, Marikay – City of Greensboro TAC
Austin, Kevin – Yadkin County
Besse, Dan – City of Winston Salem
Carter, Steve – Alamance County
Coleman, Carolyn – Guilford County
El-Amin, Fleming – Forsyth County
Frye, Darrell – Randolph County
Holmes, Michael – City of High Point
Mengert, Paul – PTAA
Perkins, Andrew - NCDOT
Richardson, Mark – Rockingham County
Truell, Don – Davidson County

Others Present:

Terry Anderson, PART; Connie Conklin, PART; Sabrina Glenn, PART; Fred Haith, Winston Salem DOT; Megan Hoenk, NCCR Director of Communications; Mark Kirstner, PART; Brooke Kochanski, PART; Kyle Laird, PART; Mark McDonald, High Point DOT; Mike Mills, Division 7, NCDOT; Anna Lea Moore, NCCR Vice President Economic Development; David Morris, PART; Supriya Raghav, PART; Scott Rhine, PART; Scott Saylor, NCCR President; Jon Stewart, PART; Tom Terrell Jr., Fox Rothschild; Shae Tharrington, PART; Tammy Turner, PART; Angela Wynes, High Point Transit System.

Call to Order:

Chair Dan Besse called the February 12, 2020 PART Board meeting to order 8:40am.

Speakers from the floor - None

Oath of Office

PART Legal Counsel with Fox Rothschild, Tom E. Terrell Jr. administered the Oath of Office to Council member Michael Holmes, who represents the City of High Point. Thank you for serving and welcome!

Consideration of Minutes

Motion to accept the January 15, 2020 minutes: Darrell Frye

Second: Fleming El-Amin

Discussion: None Vote: Unanimous

Report from Board Committee The Operations and Planning committee met last month on January 15th. The focus of our agenda was to discuss efficiency of routes and services that are currently in operation, with proposed modifications for those routes for the upcoming Fiscal Year.

Consideration of Board Business Items

A. New Business

1. NCRR Presentation

Scott Rhine welcomed guests from North Carolina Rail Road Company; Scott Saylor President of NCRR, Anna Lea Moore, Vice President of Economic Development and Megan Hoenk Director of Communications.

There was a video presentation of the history, growth and development of the NCRR Company. Their Mission Statement: Putting the NCRR Company to work for the growth of the people of North Carolina. NCRR Vision: To improve our State by expanding freight rail opportunities to grow businesses. Enabling rail to move people and to invest in North Carolina. You can go to ncrr.com for more information.

2. FY2021 NCDOT Program Resolution presented by Scott Rhine:

We received information from NCDOT as this is related to our annual RideShare Program, TDM-Vanpool grant. This resolution is a standard local commitment we send to the state regarding local matching funds that are committed to be utilized with state funds for the Ride-share program.

Motion to approve the FY2021 Program Resolution: Mark Richardson

Second: Carolyn Coleman

Discussion: None Vote: Unanimous

3. PART Express Service Modifications

Scott Rhine showed a presentation for PART Express proposed service changes to be implemented in August of 2020. Operations Committee has been discussing the modification of routes; specifically, the proposed modifications include routes related to Business 40 mitigation efforts, and other routes to improve efficiency and daily operations.

Route 6 – Surry County, Loss of funding (Business 40) – request for Federal operating funds for the rural to urban service.

Route 17 – Kernersville Express, Loss of funding (Business 40), Address job access opportunities

Route 28 – West Forsyth Express, Loss of funding (Business 40). Address low ridership.

Airport/Business Area Shuttle System – Address mid-day and evening demand response service

Complaints, Evaluate low ridership to PTIA.

Route 19 – Palladium Circulator, Loss of funding (CMAQ). Address low ridership.

Route 9 – Davidson County, Investigate service alternatives, Additional analysis underway.

Route 10 – Randolph County, Address operational route concerns.

The PART Express Service Modification presentation can be sent to you upon request.

Dan Besse; we will give an advanced notice period to riders under the federal rules of Title VI, and our public outreach for service modifications. These various changes would take place at the start of the next fiscal year.

Dan Besse; our action item on the budget and these changes will be in May?

Scott Rhine; it will release in May and come back to the PART Board with a public hearing to adopt budgets at our June meeting.

Dan Besse; will that meet the minimum notice period that you just described?

Scott Rhine; we will start that notice period sooner as route 6 will be impacted with possible reduced service and route 28 W. Forsyth Express and route 19 for the Palladium will be eliminated. We need to go ahead with the sixty-day notice period for our riders no later than April.

Dan Besse; would our meeting schedule in April and June permit us to make a formal decision on the recommendations in April and have sufficient notice for us to have and take action in June?

Scott Rhine; it would; the only thing we need to decide at the Board level is directly impacted with our budgets. If there are any questions about what is being eliminated and the Board has a different opinion, we need to include that in the budgets. If the Board is recognizing that this is something we should move forward with, we can still have that as our planning process in terms of what the budget impacts will be.

Dan Besse; there is a hanging question regarding the frequency of service for Surry County Route 6, and the resolution and item number 4 deals with a request that we could potentially make to NCDOT with regard to a potential funding source for route 6 and route 10. I am inquiring if it would be advantageous for us to get the formal resolution on this in April so as to permit the time for the discussions with DOT about that potential funding source.

Andrew Perkins; I think the answer to that question is NCDOT is having a very difficult time maintaining the budget now; we have got federal acquisition in order; we have state budget as well. We are getting ready to lose our secretary at the end of this month and there will be a re-prioritization. I would suggest you put this funding source in as quick as possible. It is based on the fact that we are going to eliminate the stress on having Business 40 close down.

Dan Besse; is there any reason we shouldn't hold the formal Board resolution on the proposed changes till April?

Scott Rhine; no, I think for the Board action with the proposed changes and service modifications, there are routes that will be eliminated, the question related to route 6 is from an economic stand-point, we are limited on our local funds, we went after federal funds and did not get approved; that is why we have this resolution as it is a NCDOT policy challenge.

Dan Besse; in respect to the Board's time, I will suggest we schedule this as an action item in April for the Board. Are there any objections? Hearing no objection, make it so for April. This is good information presented, and it will come back and be in written form in the Board packet for consideration, so if there are any modifications the Board wants to determine or members want to suggest you will have everything laid out in writing to review.

Darrell Frye; why not March, if there was some urgency?

Dan Besse; to allow us a little more time for conversation to find funding sources in particular to route 6, the Surry service.

Darrell Frye; are we having discussions with Surry directly?

Scott Rhine; with regards to expanding their local fund source we brought that up before. We have not proposed that we bring the registration fee back up to Surry County. The request we made on the FTA 5311 funds was essentially to seek some federal dollars that would match with our local dollars to allow us to continue that expanded service.

Darrell Frye; if there is cost associated with route 10, Randolph is a donor county, there should be funds to take care of that.

Scott Rhine; we do not have any federal funds that match the local dollars. Both of these counties are in that same category, we do not have federal funds because they are rural routes. That is the purpose of the letter and resolution, PART is not recognized as an agency eligible for the rural routes based on the policy that NCDOT has for recipients of Section 5311 funding. That is why we are not included with the other seventy-seven grant recipients. We are not recognized as a rural transportation system and technically speaking PART is not recognized as any agency that is similar to anything else in the state because we are not. As reference Go-Triangle is an urban region, they have three county members and they are urban, there is no confusion. We are the only entity in the state that is regional and just as much rural as we are urban, and finding programs are a challenge for us because we don't fit in with the norm. That is the purpose of bringing this up with NCDOT. This is the reason for the letter and resolution.

Dan Besse; there is no modification proposed to the Randolph Express route that will affect frequency of service. Just on the route on the Guilford end for the convenience of riders.

Scott Rhine; the one item we proposed with Randolph County with these funds, was to expand frequency. That is what our request was for route 10 with these funds was to get back to that level we had in the early 2000's, we had more ridership because of frequency. Yes, we have the one hundred forty-five thousand from the vehicle registration fee, but there are no federal funds to match and that is where it has been capped for frequency and service.

Dan Besse; back to the original question; the reason I am suggesting April rather than March is the action on the whole package is to permit time and candidly for discussions with DOT in recognizing that DOT has legitimate issues at this point, perhaps the extra month will give us an opportunity to resolve some of these questions and an option to maintain this level of service to Surry as well as potential to expand that service. That is my recommendation. This will be assigned to our April calendar as an action item, we will have everything in writing.

4. Consideration of PART Express Support Letters

Dan Besse; moving to item 4, this is what Scott has suggested as an approach to framing the additional conversations we hope to have with NCDOT. That the Board approve a resolution. On behalf of the Board, we are asking NCDOT to reconsider the eligibility of PART for that funding stream since we actively serve rural areas as a part of our mission. NCDOT can elect to maintain the eligibility as that is not in our control but the opportunity for conversation is what the resolution would support.

Motion to approve the Consideration of PART Express Support Letter: Darrell Frye

Second: Marikay Abuzuaiter

Discussion: None Vote: Unanimous

Dan Besse; thank you, this completes our action items for today. There is no Old Business. Departmental Staff reports are in your packet for your review. Our March meeting is scheduled during the National League of City's Conference, I will not be here, our Vice Chair Mayor Lenny Williams will handle the March meeting.

Adjourned: 10:15am