MEETING MINUTES
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation
Board of Trustees
April 8, 2020

Board Members Present:
Abuzuaither, Marikay – City of Greensboro TAC
Austin, Kevin – Yadkin County
Besse, Dan – City of Winston-Salem
Butler, Jim – City of Burlington
Carter, Steve – Alamance County
Coleman, Carolyn – Guilford County
El-Amin, Fleming - Forsyth County
Frye, Darrell – Randolph County
Fox, Mike – NCDOT Board of Transportation
Grimes, Neal – City of High Point TAC
Hightower, Sharon – City of Greensboro
Holmes, Michael – City of High Point
Horn, Mike – Winston Salem/Forsyth TAC
Morris, Rick – Stokes County
Perkins, Andrew – NCDOT Board of Transportation
Truell, Don – Davidson County
Williams, Leonard – Burlington/Graham TAC

Others Present:
Connie Conklin, PART; Sabrina Glenn, PART; Mark Kirstner, PART; David Morris, PART; Scott Rhine, PART; Tom Terrell Jr., Fox Rothschild; Tammy Turner, PART; Angel Wynes, High Point Transit; Toneq McCullough; Stephen Robinson, NCDOT.

Call to Order and Roll Call:
Chair Dan Besse called the April 8, 2020 PART Board meeting to order 8:30am. Chair Besse asked Scott Rhine to call the roll. All members listed above we counted as presented. Shortly, after the Roll Call, Sharon Hightower and Caroline Coleman indicted they were on the line. The PART staff members listed above were present in the Board room and others present were online.

Overview of Meeting Process and Procedures due to COVID-19:
Due to “Stay at Home Orders” related to COVID-19, the PART of Trustees agreed to hold an on-line meeting due to several time sensitive agenda item. Connection information was sent out prior to the meeting and the meeting was recorded. Staff had also sent out recommendations for the on-line meeting protocol. These were as follows:
1. Expect for Scott Rhine and the Board Chair everyone will be placed on Mute except during questions, discussions, and voting.
2. Establish a slower pace for the meeting and allow time for people to think and form a response.
3. Members can use the chat box for technical issues.
4. To establish a quorum there will be a roll, by first and last name. At the completion of the roll call the Chair shall declare whether a quorum is present.
5. The agenda item will be presented by the executive director. Once the item is completely presented, everyone will be unmuted. Questions or comments can be made by state your name first and last name. The chair will then recognize you.
6. If a vote is required on the agenda item, once the questions and discussion are completed, the Chair will call for or made a motion.
7. Once a motion has been seconded and there is no further discussion, the vote will be called for. The Chair will ask for all in favor, receive the responses, and then ask if anyone is against. Online participants are reminder to unmute themselves if they have self-muted.

**Consideration of Resolution for Teleconference and Electronic meeting for April 8, 2020**
Chair Dan Besse introduced the first action item which is the ratification of the resolution to permit the PART Board of Trustees to hold remote and electronic meetings. This action is listed as item 1A and the resolution can be found on page 2 of the agenda package. Each board member received a detailed explanation by e-mail prior to the meeting. The notion of remote and electronic meetings received support from all Board members.

PART is invoking N.C. Gen. Stat. §160A-639(22) which provides that the governing board shall have the power “to do all things necessary or convenient to carry out its purpose and to exercise the powers granted to the Authority”
PART is considering this resolution because of the local and state stay at home orders. This Resolution applies only to the April 8, 2020 meeting but may, upon proper amendment, be extended by electronic vote of the Board of Trustees to apply to future meetings if states of emergency on local or state levels require its extension. It also includes safeguards to ensure in so much as possible compliance with the open meetings law.

Dan Besse: Does anyone have a question or concern regarding this resolution?

Sharon Hightower: I do have a question. This is a great idea, and can this become permanent?

Dan Besse: Let me turn go to our attorney for an answer to that question.

Tom Terrell: It cannot be made permanent until the General Assembly gives PART the power to make virtually at all meetings. If the question is whether or not individual members can call in, that is a policy issue the PART Board has considered and has previously stated no. I'm quick to point out that our general assembly does not even grant that authority to themselves. Taking that action now would open the PART Board to a legal challenge.

After further discussion, Chair Dan Besse, offered a suggestion to schedule the question of remote and electronic meeting for consideration at a future. He instructed the Clerk to place this item on a future agenda as an item for discussion.
Chair Dan Besse then asked for motion to ratify the resolution giving PART the authority to hold remote and electronic meetings.

**Motion to adopt the Resolution to Meet by Remote and Electronic Means on April 8, 2020**

*By: Darrell Frye  
Second: Mark Richardson  
Discussion: None  
Vote: Unanimous*

**Speakers from the Floor**

PART has communicated to the general public via our social media, Facebook, TransLoc, website, and newspaper resources to make the general public aware of our monthly Board meeting. Scott Rhine reported the no one signed up electronically to speak.

Chair Dan Besse then asked if there were any members of the public online that wanted to speak. No one responded. Chair Dan Besse declared the speakers from the floor portion of the agenda closed.

**Consideration of March 11, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Dan Besse asked if there any corrections to the March 11, 2020 Board minutes as presented.

Mike Horn: Asked about the dollar figure under the Grants Fund Amendment section on page 9 in the fifth bullet. The statement read “for replacement vans of 9$31,660) based on actuals.”

Scott Rhine: Confirmed with Commie Conklin, and acknowledged that it was typo. The “9” should be a parenthesis and it should read “for replacement vans of ($31,660) based on actuals.”

Dan Besse: With that correction noted, all in favor of approving the March 11, 2020 Board minutes please say “Aye” and those opposed say “No”.

Numerous Ayes were heard, and no Nos were heard. Chair Besse deemed the vote unanimous and the minutes approved.

**Consideration of Board Business Items**

**A. New Business**

1. Updates of PART Agency business during Covid-19

Chair Dan Besse referred the Board to a resolution that was not included in the agenda that pertained to the CARES Act passed by congress and signed by the President to provide relief to transit systems. He indicted the Scott Rhine was prepared to brief the board on actions PART has taken during the COVID-19 restrictions. Chair Dan Besse asked Scott Rhine to provide the details.

Scott Rhine began by stating that five PART staff have been deemed essential personnel and are coming to the office. They are Connie Conklin, Sabrina Glen, David Morris and Tammy Turner. These individuals deserve a shout out and are working additional hours to maintain our business continuity. Scott will call a Personnel Committee soon to address policies that need to be reviewed and amended as a relates stay at home orders.

Ridership is down. We are doing a great deal with regards to cleaning some additional activities with our services. PART experienced a 36% drop in ridership in March as compared to last year. Routes
4, 19 and 28 have been suspended due too little to no ridership. Route 4 that serves the Chapel Hill area has been suspended. There is stay at home orders in place except for essential personnel at the hospital and the university of Chapel Hill is closed. That route saw an immediate 87% reduction in ridership. Routes 1, 2 and 3 and the Airport Area Shuttle are operating on the Saturday service schedule. PART is doing its best to maintain as much service providing connections to jobs, and those who are still working and hospitals.

In terms of the health of our drivers and passengers PART is taking appropriate measures. The buses and shuttles are being cleaned on a frequent basis. Operators who are not driving are cleaning bused as they come to the CTC throughout the day, approximately every hour.

Presently, we have 21 vans that are not in service due to workers/commuters not working or teleworking. Staff will be discussing this and meeting with the finance, and Ops/Planning committee. The issue is how to fairly maintain the user fees while those vans are not in use and still cover fixed cost such as insurance.

Chair Dan Besse: How are we for mask and gloves for our drivers?

Scott Rhine: Our operators presently have mask and an order has been placed. As you can imagine there are some delays about receiving those. Some operators are choosing not to wear them. But majority are choosing to wear and of course with the CDC recommendations we're making that more of a requirement for operators to go ahead and utilize the facial mask for their own protection.

Sharon Hightower: Scott what are you doing to protect the drivers? Are you having passengers sit a couple seats back from the driver and are you roping off seats to keep passengers separated?

Scott Rhine: PART went fare free on March 27 to address the handling of money and social distancing related to utilizing the fare box. The first rows of seats on both sides behind the driver are flipped up so no one can sit there. These are our ADA wheelchair areas. Additionally, for the past three weeks PART has been running Saturday level service. The first runs of Routes 1, 2 and 3 coming out of our cities in the morning have two vehicles assigned. These are the runs with heavier loads. The additional vehicle gives passenger ample room to spread out.

Additional discussion was centered on being more restrictive with where passengers sit and requiring them to wear masks. Concerns were expressed about enforcement and personal choice. Scott Rhine indicated that the operations committee will be engaged to discuss additional measures and polices that may need to be addressed.

Mike Fox: I would encourage the operations committee to inquire with Mr. Terrell our attorney as to whether you can legally band people from riding if they are repeat offenders on our social distancing policy?

Chair Dan Besse: That item will be referred to Mr. Terrell for additional guidance and that will be referred to the operations committee to consider.

A. New Business
1) Additional Item
Consideration of Resolution Seeking NCDOT And Triad MPO Financial Support Utilizing the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, And Economic Security (Cares) Act
Scott Rhine indicted that PART requests a collaborative and cooperative partnership in receiving CARES Act funding released by the Federal Government to NCDOT, and Triad MPOs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. The funds are 100% and thus do not require a match. These funds are directed to the continuation of operations. PART seeks the support of our member agencies to prudently establish a required Split Letter of designated CARES Act funding to permit the grant development process to commence as expeditiously as possible to support and protect our workforce and the citizens we serve.

Mike Horn: What role will the MPO TAC’s have in approving this?

Scott Rhine: Most of the funding approvals for federal grants and payments have been suspend for this process. Basically, only a Split Letter is required as an administrative action. No specific action is required to take any specific action.

Scott Rhine continued with details about the how funding typically flows and how this stimulus money is different. Several other board members inquired about the process. Scott Rhine indicated that the MPO’s have been engaged and that he has had conversations with NCDOT-Integrated Mobility Division and that they are working through the details.

Motion to adopt the Resolution to Seeking NCDOT And Triad MPO Financial Support Utilizing The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, And Economic Security (Cares) Act
By: Steve Carter
Second: Carolyn Coleman
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

A. New Business
2. Consideration of Proposed Route Changes for FY2020-21

Chair Dan Besse introduced the item and ask Scott Rhine to give the presentation. The summary below highlights two sets of service changes. One is related to the service enhances related to Business 40 Mitigation Closure Strategies proposed to take effect on July 6, 2020. The second set is proposed to take effect on August 6, 2020 and are part of PART regular review of route and schedule adjustment. The presentation was accompanied by maps and ridership data.

In November 2018 Business 40 was closed for construction, scheduled to be completed in 2020. To help reduce commuting challenges, PART received special funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and NCDOT to enhance PART Express service to the impacted areas. With the opening of Business 40 in February 2020, this project has come to a close. Beginning July 6, 2020, the following service changes will be implemented:

**Route 6**
The Surry County Express service connecting Mt. Airy and Winston-Salem will revert back to the pre-Business 40 schedule with a slight change to the schedule.

- Ridership was very strong during Bus-40 closure but was showing a decline.
- Addition funding could not be secured to continue service at the existing levels.
Scott Rhine paused, and Chair Dan Besse asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board members. There were no questions.

**Route 17**
The Kernersville Express service connecting Greensboro to Western Winston-Salem through Kernersville will revert back to pre-Business 40 routing with some additional modifications.
- Route will no longer serve Forsyth and Baptist Hospitals.
- Provide direct service to of Fed Ex Ground and Amazon Distribution Center off West Market Street in Kernersville.
- Relocate stop at Kernersville Town Hall to provide shelter for passengers.
- Route schedule will be changed.

Scott Rhine paused, and Chair Dan Besse asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board members. There were no questions.

**Route 28**
The West Forsyth Express service connecting Clemmons/Lewisville and Winston-Salem will be discontinued.

Scott Rhine paused, and Chair Dan Besse asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board members. There were no questions.

For all three routes Knowing the funding to provide these enhanced services would come to an end, PART spent the last year trying to identify additional funding sources. Unfortunately, alternative funding options have not been made available.

Scott Rhine paused, and Chair Dan Besse asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board members. There were no questions.

Scott Rhine continued with route changes based on our biannual adjustment schedule, PART staff is proposing the following changes for August 6, 2020.

**Route 19**
The Pallidum Circulator will be discontinued.
- The route was started three years ago with CMAQ funding from the City of High Point.
- It serves a portion of the City of High Point and functions as a circulator connecting people to the Palladium area from Route 3 High Point Express.
- Route 3 will still stop on NC 68 at Ramsey and Sutton Way.
- Ridership was historically weak throughout the history of this route.

**Route 9**
The Davidson County Business 85 Express connecting Davidson County and High Point will be modified to provide service from Thomasville to Greensboro, connecting through High Point.
- The route will begin at the Thomasville Park-n-Ride Lot. Riders are encouraged to use Davidson County Transportation for connections to Davidson County Community College and Lexington. Service south of Thomasville Park & Ride Lot to Lexington will be discontinued.
- The route will continue to High Point as it currently does then proceed to Greensboro. Stops along E. MLK Jr. Drive in High Point will be added.
• Route will continue to Greensboro with connections to UNCG, downtown Greensboro and GTA.
• The frequency will be increased from 5 rounds to 6 round and the route will be served by an eighteen passenger 28 ft. vehicle.
• DCTS has enhanced its fixed route service in Davidson County. It provides fare free service in Lexington and Thomasville with connection to Davidson County College. However, it does create a duplication of public transportation service.
• This modification will require a transfer with DCTS but will connect Davidson County residents with more places in the Triad. The smaller vehicle has a lower operational cost which will allows for the higher frequency

Scott Rhine paused, and Chair Dan Besse asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board members.

Don Truell: Does this mean that the only connection between Davidson and PART will be from Thomasville and High Point?

Scott Rhine: Yes, that is correct.

There was further clarification that the route modification will 1) better compliment DCTS, 2) expand Davidson County’s connection from High Point to Greensboro, and 3) the use of a smaller vehicle will allow for one additional run from the current schedule.

With no additional questions Chair Dan Besse asked Scott Rhine to continue.

**Route 10**
The Randolph County Express connecting South Asheboro and Greensboro will be rerouted traveling in and out of Downtown Greensboro.
• Route will travel W Gate City and serve UNCG on the north and south bound runs from the Galyon Depot.
• Relocation of a stop in downtown Greensboro. It will only be served on the north bound trip traveling to the Galyon Depot.
• Slight schedule changes related to tweaks in routing.

Darrel Frye: Just to clarify this does not change an opportunity for Randolph County residents?

Scott Rhine: That is correct.

Darrel Frye: And where will the route connect to?

Scott Rhine: The route will serve downtown Greensboro and UNCG via W. Gate City Blvd.

With no additional questions Chair Dan Besse asked Scott Rhine to continue.

**PART Express Shuttles**
• All Routes (Route 20, 21, 22, 23, and 27) will run on fixed route all day **Monday - Friday**. Every 30 min during peak and 60 min off peak. Only deviations will need to call for a pick-up.
• Saturday service will have no changes.
Route 20
• No changes.

Route 21
Route will be extended to connect to GTA Route 9.
• Will extent down W. Market St. to Swing Rd. and serve the GTA Stop on Swing just south of W. Market St.
• Will no longer serve stops on Burnt Poplar Rd., Cessna Dr. and Boeing Dr. These stops will be served by Route 24.

Route 22
Route will change direction to increase accessibility and safety.
• New route will travel south on Eastchester, north to Piedmont Triad Pkwy, east through Airpark West, and north on Eastchester returning to the CTC.

Route 23
Route will change direction to increase accessibility and safety.
• New route will travel east on Burnt Poplar Rd., South on Chimney Rock Rd., west on Piedmont Pkwy, north on 68 returning to the CTC.

Route 27 – Now Route 24
Route will be revised to provide more efficient access to high ridership employment areas.
• Will eliminate connections to the PTI Airport. A new on-demand service and airport pass will provide connection to the airport.
• Will continue to provide service to Burgess Rd. and Regional Rd. N area.
• Will provide connections to Burnt Poplar Rd., Cessna Dr. and Boeing Dr. area previously served by Route 21.

These proposed general route changes would be implemented Monday, August 3, 2020.

Fleming El-Amin: What will be the cost of the Airport Pass?

Scott Rhine: $10.00 and includes the two-way connection with PART and the taxi.

Chair Dan Besse presented the requested action for the Board today which is:
• Approve proposed changes as presented and set the date for public comment to begin April 9th and continue through May 7th.
• The changes as proposed will be included in the proposed FY2021 budget.
• Any modifications related to public comments or staff adjustments will be detailed at the May Board meeting.
• Approval of the FY 2021 budgets will include approval of the route changes.
• Changes will become effective August 3, 2020.

Chair Dan Besse asked for a motion. Neil Grimes added that the Planning and Operations Committee had reviewed and endorsed the changes, and then made the motion to accept the changes.

Motion to accept these changes and move into a public comment period
By: Neal Grimes
Second: Marikay Abuzuaiter
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

A. New Business
3. Consideration of Agency Safety Plan (ASP)

Chair Dan Besse introduced the items and asked Scott Rhine to provide the details.

Scott Rhine provided the following background. Under 49 C.F.R. part 673, Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans, and associated Safety Performance Targets are required to be developed by local entities. The due date for submission to the Federal Government is July 20, 2020. The reporting agencies required to have coordinated and consolidated plans are State DOT’s, and Urban Area MPO’s.

With PART operating in rural areas of the Piedmont Triad, and Urban areas of our 4 member MPO’s; PART has developed our Agency Safety Plan under the guidance of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and is seeking PART Board acceptance so our plan can be provided to NCDOT, and our 4 MPO’s to be included in their plans for meeting the required deadline of July 20, 2020. A copy of the plan was included in the agenda package.

Motion to approve the Agency Safety Plan and submit it to the MPO’s, NCDOT and FTA by adopting the resolution
By: Fleming El-Amin
Second: Marikay Abuzuaiter
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

Consideration of FY2020-21 NCDOT Grant

The annual Ride Share (Transportation Demand Management) TDM program grant administered by NCDOT for fiscal year 2020-21 requires a Program Resolution to be adopted by the governing board. NCDOT has stated that with the departmental changes that have been occurring over the past several months that no additional funding will be approved compared to the current year. Our program that is being submitted will be at the same level as the current year until such time, that NCDOT has made program changes for the statewide TDM program.

Motion to approve the resolution related to the FY 2020-21 NCDOT Grant
By: Don Truell
Second: Steven Carter
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

Chair Dan Besse indicated that the action items had been concluded. He asked if there were any questions about the staff reports. He reminded the members of the Finance Committee immediately following the meeting. Scott Rhine was asked to state the date of future meeting.
Scott Rhine said that the next full Board meeting will be May 13th and will most likely be virtual meeting. He also stated that meetings of the Personnel and Planning/Operations Committees will be scheduled in the near event to address COVID-19 related issues. Chair Dan Besse asked if there any members of the public on the line with questions and comments then asked the same of the Board members. Mike Fox requested time to give a brief NCDOT update. Chair Dan Besse granted the request.

Mike Fox: Knowing that our board members are also members of MPO’s I want to make sure this information was shared as quickly as possible. The loss of revenue for NCDOT related to COVID-19 is estimated right now in this fiscal year to be $200M. The effects impact NCDOT’s two largest revenue sources, the collection of the motor fuel tax and DMV fees. Pursuant to the stay at home orders and social distancing people are driving less, which means people are buying less fuel, which means there's less gas tax. DMV activities, tag renewals, especially from car buying, have slowed. For the immediate period NCDOT will continue working on all projects that were in progress and we think we can accomplish that right now. At least, through the current budget period. There are a lot of projects scheduled to be let in the next few months that may get delayed. So NCDOT just want to give board members an update on the COVID-19 impact on NCDOT and I will be happy to answer any questions.

Darrell Frye: Could you restate the estimated financial impact?

Mike Fox: a minimum of $200 million and that's just this year, through the 4th quarter, June.

Chair Dan Besse reminded everyone that the minutes will be posted and that assuming the May will virtual PART staff will send out information related to participating in the meeting to board members, the media and the public. If anyone has any suggestions about how to make the virtual meetings more effective, please contact PART administrative staff.

With no other matters to be address Chair Dan Besse declared the meeting closed.

Adjourned 10:16am