

RALEIGH TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MAY 8, 2014
MINUTES

The Raleigh Transit Authority met on Thursday, May 8, 2014 at 3:30 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Room 207 of the Municipal Building, 222 West Hargett Street, Raleigh, NC with the following present:

Jason Horne, presiding
Corey Branch
Irene Godinez
Sherita McCullers
Tony Pecoraro
Craig Ralph
Debra Rezoli
Jane Thurman

Staff Present: David Eatman, Mike Kennon, Scott McClellan

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Jason Horne. The following items were discussed with actions taken as shown:

AGENDA – APPROVED AS AMENDED

Mr. Pecoraro added an item to the agenda relating to retaining minutes for various committee meetings. Without objection, the agenda was approved with this addition.

MINUTES – APRIL 10, 2014 – APPROVED

Members had received a copy of the April 10, 2014 minutes. Mr. Branch moved approval of the minutes. His motion was seconded by Ms. McCullers, unanimously passed. Vice-Chair Horne ruled the motion adopted.

ART-ON-THE-MOVE – 2015 – APPROVED

Kim Curry-Evans, Raleigh Public Art Coordinator, reported since 2007 the Raleigh Arts and Capital Area Transit Departments have partnered to emblazon the sides of City buses with artwork as a part of the widely popular “Art-On-The-Move” public art project. Hundreds of Raleigh and Wake County artists have applied over the years to be one of the select few whose

artwork is enlarged and placed on City buses, with the debut of the artwork occurring May, 2015. Ms. Curry-Evans indicated this is the most popular public art project done in Raleigh. The art is on the buses for 6 months. A panel is put together to select the 12 artists. New this time involves a partnership with Pullen Outreach in the selection of one of the artists working with classes of middle school students in an after school program in designing a bus wrap. The timeline for selection to the finishes product was reviewed. The busses with the new wraps will debut May, 2015. Slides of past wraps were presented. Ms. Curry-Evans requested that the Authority approve going forward with this partnership to begin the process.

Discussion followed relating to the reason for using 12 buses with Mr. Eatman indicated this is the number found to be the most appropriate for this use since it does take this number of buses out of the advertising revenue stream and involves a 6 month allocation of space. Buses are also loaned for special events and other activities. This number is a good balance and allows for a diverse number of artworks.

Ms. Godinez questioned if the call for artwork is provided in languages other than English. Mr. Horne encouraged staff to use other languages in order to obtain the most diverse works.

Mr. Ralph moved approval of going forward with this partnership to begin the process. His motion was seconded by Mr. Branch, unanimously passed. Vice-Chair Horne ruled the motion adopted.

COMMITTEE MINUTES – PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION TO MEMBERS – AUTHORIZED

Mr. Pecoraro indicated each of the committees of this authority is obligated to assure that all authority members are informed about what goes on at the various meetings. He indicated minutes should be provided for each of the committee meetings referring to GS 143-218.10. Mr. Eatman indicated he did not disagree with Mr. Pecoraro's comments. Mr. Eatman reviewed how this has been handled in the past noting the Authority previously used a court reporter for their meetings which was very expensive and currently summary minutes are done. He noted the committee minutes would capture all action items but may not be quite as detailed as the authority minutes.

Mr. Pecoraro moved that minutes be prepared for the various committees of this body and distributed to the membership of the authority. His motion was seconded by Ms. Rezoli, unanimously passed. Vice-Chair Horne ruled the motion adopted.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – REPORT RECEIVED

Mr. Horne reported the committee did discuss the Productivity Policy noting Mr. Pecoraro came up with a form discussing benefits. The decision at the meeting was staff will bring back examples of kinds of analyses they have already to determine if that meets the needs.

Discussion also took place at the committee meeting on expanded customer service hours at Moore Square and it was agreed to review that in conjunction with the Moore Square Renovations.

Discussion of the Rules of Conduct Policy, service animals and the appeals procedure also took place at the meeting including what the drivers can and cannot ask. Mr. Eatman indicated staff would bring back amendments for consideration at the next meeting and allow the board to review the changes with action to take place at the following meeting.

Mr. Pecoraro questioned the appeals hearing with Mr. Eatman explaining the hearing is before a representative from different City departments and the members are not all transit staff but from multiple disciplines throughout the City.

The report was received as information.

MARKETING COMMITTEE – REPORT RECEIVED

Ms. Thurman reported the Marketing Committee did not meet in order to have a longer meeting on May 22. The meeting will involve the marketing plan based on the retreat and prioritized goals and other ideas.

Mr. Eatman reported there will be a Regional Branding Meeting on May 29, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. at RTP Biotech Center. The meeting will involve CAT, Triangle Transit, CTran and Chapel Hill Transit.

ROUTE COMMITTEE – REPORT RECEIVED

Mr. Ralph reported the Route Committee met on May 5. Route #7 (South Saunders) was discussed and numbers by combining Routes 7 and 8 were reviewed. He indicated the Authority made the right decision originally noting everyone can't be pleased. He indicated, given the numbers and times, all that can be done was done. There are 5 future routes that could be expanded should the funds come from the City Council.

The Route Committee also discussed elimination of Route 18 I front of Marbles. The committee will meet with the stakeholders. He noted someone suggested sending the route to Person Street. A group of stakeholders for both would be formed.

The Committee did approve the Fare Equity Analysis and recommended that the full Authority approve it. Mr. Eatman suggested that staff provide final copies and holding this item until the next meeting. He explained the FTA says the analysis must be done and approved and members should receive the copy as information prior to the vote. He noted since the committee approved the analysis, it would be included as an action item on the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – RECEIVED

Rowland French, Jr., 216 E. Lenoir Street, questioned, in light of the fares being increased, how is that affecting the CAT budget noting there are employees that have to work on wrapping the busses for Art-On-The-Move and this should be looked into. Mr. Eatman explained very limited staffing is involved on this project and the Arts Commission pays for the installation and removal of the wraps and maintenance of the artwork. The only in-kind contribution provided by RTA staff involves the busses taken out of circulation as a possible use for advertising space. This is a well-received public project and helps us reach markets we would not be able to reach otherwise. We are not losing or making money on this project. Mr. French indicated he would like the rate of increase for the disabled versus the increase of Social Security checks reviewed. He stated there should be the same increase level as the Social Security base rate increase.

REGIONAL FARE INCREASE – APPROVED

Mr. Eatman reported the region has been discussing a fare increase for 18 months or more and it has taken that much time to do necessary analysis. An Equity Fare Analysis was done and various public meetings held to receive public input. A mitigation strategy has been proposed to meet any mitigating effects included in the Equity Analysis. All public participation steps have been completed to meet Title VI requirements and a summary of comments had been provided to Authority members. The next step is approval of the increase as proposed, with amendments or sending the item to committee for further discussion.

Mr. Pecoraro read from previous minutes that noted senior and youth fares would generate around \$3 million and were we to raise senior fares to full fares, that would add only 1% to revenues. He noted it hardly seems worth going through the agony to generate \$12,000-\$13,000 for youth fares. Mr. Eatman indicated the analysis presented to members today showed a different revenue. He indicated we are now implementing a fare structure that serves a growth budget of \$18 million and serves 22,000 trips per day. If this growth is continued or there is major investment, we could see major growth in the transit network. This is building a

foundation to support future levels as well and have a stable fare structure as we move forward. He noted there are many good valid points for approving or not approving increases and was not here to debate.

Mr. Horne indicated the proposal is for 50% fares for youth, elderly and disabled. Mr. Eatman indicated the youth fares would be half fares, seniors currently are free and it is proposed they go to half fares. Currently youth 12 & under are free and 12-18 are half fare. Mr. Ralph suggested reviewing this item in committee. Mr. Eatman stated the region is trying to move forward at a reasonable pace with this increase. Mr. Eatman passed out information relating to fare increase analysis by media type and reviewed the document in detail. He indicated it generally takes 12 months to recover from the shock of an increase and comes around in 12 months after everything is said and done. Mr. Eatman indicated during this whole process, members were advised projections indicate there will be a decrease in ridership in the beginning.

Mr. Branch questioned if there is an estimate of what going to new service on weekends will do to ridership. Mr. Eatman indicated this projection does not account for those service mile increases and takes FY 12 and adds 3% and did provide a future growth.

Discussion followed relating to the proposed youth fares with Mr. Eatman noting it was felt youth between 12 & 18 need to have the bus to access jobs and would be half fare. The proposal adds half fare to the youth between 6 & 12 and provides a great break for young teens. Ms. Rezoli asked how these youth would show they are 12-18. Mr. Eatman indicated some discretion would have to be used but most schools have some form of ID.

Discussion took place relating to the disabled group with Mr. Eatman indicated they are paying half fare and no change is recommended except the proportional change everyone else will see.

Mr. Horne referred to comments made at a public hearing relating to the need for seniors to be encouraged to ride the bus for safety reasons and their fares should continue to be free. He indicated if seniors are able to ride free, it may not take up resources from the ART program that is more expensive. Mr. Branch indicated there comes a point where we have to do what is best for all citizens and noted his vote would be to move the seniors back to free and approve keeping all other increases where they are.

Ms. Thurman indicated this is a tough decision and thinking about demographics and baby boomers in the region and everyone wants the transit system to be as good as possible with more services, more routes and faster times.

Mr. Ralph indicated Raleigh has a good bus system and the Authority is trying to make the best possible decisions.

Ms. Godinez agreed with comments about keeping the seniors free but was concerned about youth 6-12 years of age. She indicated there are families that are struggling with a number of children and demographics are shifting. She questioned if that is something the Authority had been considering.

Mr. Eatman explained traditionally, the FTA says you only to provide half fares to seniors and those with disabilities during peak hours. We have said we will provide that across the board. The Authority has not talked about changing that and the proposal would make it easier for us and riders to provide the same fare at all hours. In regard to the youth 6-12, Mr. Eatman stated it is realized that will be an increase for passengers and the proposal is raising one category and lowering another. Ms. Godinez stated if she were a parent, this could get confusing really fast. She questioned if there is a way to cut back on confusion and how does this compare with other cities. Mr. Eatman responded this puts CAT more along the lines of other transit systems.

Discussion followed relating to various options. Ms. McCullers moved approval of the fare increase as proposed with the exception that seniors and the 6-12 age group will be free and 13-18 age group will be half fare. The board will continue to monitor ridership of the 6-12 age group to determine if a change should be made within the 2 year implementation of this plan. Her motion was seconded by Mr. Ralph, unanimously passed. Vice-Chair Horne ruled the motion adopted.

Mr. Kennon indicated City Council members have expressed concerns about this increase and mixed messages had been received from them. He suggested communication from this body to the Council relating to thought processes, etc. for the change to help them understand as well as appearing before the Council. He indicated staff would draft a letter outlining the multiple steps and regional activities involved in this process. Mr. Branch noted Council members are welcome to attend the Authority meetings.

Mr. Horne indicated this was a difficult decision and thanked staff for putting this information together.

STAFF REPORTS – RECEIVED

Members received in their agenda packets the following staff reports:

1. Income Statement (March, 2014)
2. Operating Statistics (March, 2014)
3. Evaluation by Route (March, 2014)
4. Ridership by Time of Day (March, 2014)

5. Variance Analysis (March, 2014)
6. Variance Analysis Fiscal Year Breakdown (March, 2014)
7. Go PASS Ridership Summary (March, 2014)
8. Go PASS Ridership by Agency (March, 2014)
9. Accessible Raleigh Transportation Summary (March, 2014)

CONCLUDING REMARKS – RECEIVED

Mr. Pecoraro referred to the staff reports and requested that the variance Analysis be discussed in the Finance Committee.

Mr. Ralph indicated he likes the Art-On-The-Move program. He indicated when the new sign ordinance starts to come up before the Council, the Authority needs to be aware of what occurs.

Mr. Eatman reported there are 21 busses on order with 11 to be delivered in October and 10 delivered at the end of January, 2015.

Mr. Branch indicated staff should be sure that those who don't travel normally on the bus are aware of any changes in routes, charges, etc. and suggested possibly including this in the "At Your Service" inserts in the water bills. Mr. Eatman indicated we currently do print ads, social media, bus placards and information at Moore Square and could probably do more to reach people that may not ride currently. He indicated staff could look at this and discuss it in the Marketing Committee.

Mr. Branch indicated in driving on Atkins Road, the 7L he noticed one old bus sign in the Southgate Community and requested that staff review the signage in this area.

Ms. Rezoli questioned when the fare increase would go into effect. Mr. Eatman indicated this action would be relayed to the regional partners so they can meet and deal with any variances. Triangle Transit is taking this to their board later this month which will give us the opportunity to do some marketing and take this to the City Council in the form of a letter in the June presentation and provide 4-6 weeks to let riders know of the change. The earliest effective date will be in August. Editing changes must also be made to the website and printed materials which takes time. He noted we can move independently of others in the region.

Mr. Ralph noted that Chairman Seitz was absent from today's meeting and hoped he gets better soon.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Hunt