

**RALEIGH TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
OCTOBER 12, 2017  
MINUTES**

The Raleigh Transit Authority met on Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 3:30 p.m in the Council Chamber, Raleigh Municipal Building, 222 W. Hargett Street, with the following present:

Jason Horne, presiding  
Ray Magsanoc  
Sherita McCullers  
Tolulupe Omokaiye  
Tony Pecoraro  
Debra Rezeli  
Karen Rindge  
Michael Stevenson  
Jane Thurman  
Billy Warden

Staff present: David Eatman, Marie Parker, David Walker

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Horne.

The following items were discussed with actions taken as shown:

**AGENDA – APPROVED AS PRESENTED**

Chairman Horne reported there would be no changes to the agenda. Without objection, the agenda was approved as presented.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 2017 – APPROVED**

Members had received copies of the September, 2017 minutes in their packets. Ms. Thurman moved approval of the minutes. Her motion was seconded by Ms. McCullers, unanimously passed. Chairman Horne ruled the motion adopted.

## **BUS SHELTER COMPETITION – INFORMATION RECEIVED**

Mr. Eatman reported on the bus shelter competition including where we are in the process, where we are headed and efforts to date. He noted he told the authority up front that this is a lengthy process and staff feels comfortable with the way this item is moving forward.

David Walker reported an RFP for service has been let and 1 bid was received noting this can proceed with 1 bid. This company will provide the scope to get the design completed with engineering drawings noting this will also go to NCDOT. Mr. Stevenson asked how this company will be interacting with the original design firm with Mr. Walker explaining they all have been working together. Mr. Stevenson asked if it is expected this will be through the review period I time to implement the new shelter design when the funding from Wake County becomes available. Mr. Walker indicated the \$750,000 would become available 7/1/18 and the manufacturer will get the drawings and once we get the design the contract for the manufacturer will be let. He noted the normal process is being followed.

The update was received as information.

## **WAKE TRANSIT PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Members were provided with a handout entitled “Wake Transit Overview”.

Mr. Eatman indicated the report at this meeting is to provide an overview of the Wake Transit Plan and an announcement of upcoming public meetings to review the plan, five of which will be in Raleigh. He discussed the effort in trying to gauge how we move forward beyond FY 19, what projects will be implemented when. At staff level there is the need to make decision regarding what element of the plan can be frontloaded in FY 19. Priorities used to guide staff were reviewed. Input from the general public will be received relating to what is important to them. Meetings will take place from 10/25 through 11/16. There is a list of questions that will help guide staff, TPAC and the consultant regarding prioritizing future projects and future implementation which should be coming out in a press release soon. The document was prepared by the consultant and the Marketing Committee of TPAC. Ms. Rindge requested an online copy of the document.

## **FY 19 WAKE TRANSIT WORK PLAN ROUTE SERVICE/CAPITAL REQUESTS – PRIORITIZATION APPROVED**

Mr. Eatman explained the process to submit budget requests for FY2019 Wake Transit Tax District was opened on August 30 with prioritized requests due to TPAC on October 18. GoRaleigh has developed a list of prioritized operating and capital transit projects for submission

to the TPAC and if approved, the projects will be funded by the Wake Transit Tax District. The list of priorities had been reviewed by the City's internal TPAC Coordinating Committee.

The proposed list of prioritized projects will be broken into two categories – staffing/operating and capital/planning. Estimated project costs will be included within the budget submittals. The prioritized project list was developed by transit staff for the FY 2019 Wake Transit Work Plan, that includes the FY 2019 budget and are based on a series of interim project selection criteria also developed by staff. Mr. Eatman reviewed the criteria as follows:

- Programmed in Wake Transit Plan
- Provides services to new corridors/destinations
- Reduces headways
- Promotes Transit Priority Corridors
- Supports staff understanding of citizen requests
- Limits disruption to existing services
- Projects inform future implementation
- Projects build capacity for future service expansions

Mr. Eatman then reviewed in detail the draft list of prioritized operating & staffing priority projects for the FY 2019 Wake Transit Work Plan as follows:

• Free Youth Fare – 13-18 years of age	\$150,000
• Southeast Raleigh Service Improvements	3,700,000
• West/Northwest Raleigh Service Improvements	4,400,000
• Marketing of New Services	250,000
• Three full-time staff to support Implementation	450,000
Total Priority Cost Estimate	\$8,950,000

The capital & planning priorities were reviewed as follows:

• 36 New Buses	\$20,800,000
• Bus Shelters & Amenities	750,000
• Western Blvd BRT Corridor Study	500,000
• Marketing of New Services	250,000
• Community Transit Center	350,000
Total Priority Cost Estimate	\$22,650,000

Mr. Eatman explained a finalized list of proposed projects would be presented to the City Council at the October 17 Council Meeting one endorsed by the authority. The TPAC

anticipates releasing the draft FY 2019 Work Plan in January, 2018 for public comment. Public Comments will be received at the 10 meetings scheduled throughout Wake County referred to earlier in the meeting.

A recap of FY 18 Tax District Revenues (totaling \$94,209,000), a graph showing reserve for capital expenditures, expanded service that began on August 6 were provided. Media coverage for the expanded Sunday service was large and records were broken on website tips. Ridership is trending up with a 71% increase on Labor Day. Mr. Eatman reviewed the process for accepting bids for CNG engineering and design. Discussion followed regarding the schedule for getting the CNG facility operational as compared to when new buses will be received with CNG engines. Mr. Steven asked if alternative delivery or procurement methods could be used with Mr. Eatman stating federal procurement guidelines do not mesh with the new design/build guidelines released by the legislature 18 months ago and indicated there are other ways to expedite procurement.

The FY 19 proposed Work Plan was reviewed by Mr. Eatman. In response to a question from Ms. Rindge relating to the purchase of 36 new buses for FY 19, Mr. Eatman stated all buses would be eligible for BRT. Level boarding was discussed with Mr. Eatman noting if level boarding is needed, the buses would not need and would be level. Ms. Rindge questioned affordable housing corridors with Mr. Eatman noting a plan is being developed on how to accomplish having affordable housing along the bus corridors and will be bringing back a presentation on efforts being made and where they should be going in the next 12 months.

Next steps/deliverables were reviewed with Mr. Eatman indicating changes can be made until January, 2018. Ms. Omokaiye asked how the 10 meetings referred to will be communicated to the public with Ms. Wright reviewing the plans to make the public aware of the meetings. Ms. McCullers suggested also providing information at GoRaleigh Station. Lengthy discussion followed regarding marketing information to the public.

FY 19 implementation was discussed with Mr. Eatman advising members not to think of FY 19 implementation as a July 1 event noting without the rolling stock aligning perfectly, we may be looking at something between October and March and this hasn't been narrowed down at this point.

Ms. Rindge indicated the priorities proposed are great and appreciated the hard work that went into developing them. She expressed her excitement about the opportunity to get buses to some places in the City where we haven't been before. She felt a strategic plan for marketing is needed thinking of both new and existing riders. She urged the authority to think about what staff is needed for real community outreach, particularly in Southeast Raleigh where we need to engage the community. Ms. Rindge referred to the Art Museum and would love to see more

thinking about providing service to the museum which would be a great opportunity to building ridership and hoped to see more discussion about that possibility.

Mr. Magsanoc moved approval of the priorities as presented. His motion was seconded by Ms. McCullers, unanimously passed. Chairman Horne ruled the motion adopted.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS – RECEIVED**

Mr. Dewberry, 8201 Old Deer Trail, was present representing the Transit Union. He expressed excitement about the future of the system that he had heard during this meeting. He referred to the previous list of issues from the drivers and indicated there are some things the drivers would like to add noting it is the right time. He noted the union is 125 years old and there are still work station issues. With the new equipment being ordered, needs for employees and riders can be addressed. He spoke to the desire to move pillars and mirrors to make it safer for the drivers. He indicated he had talked to GoRaleigh staff and some modifications have begun for new buses. He asked for the authority's support for the redesign of the buses noting some things are simple, i.e., the mirrors and the left turning issues which will cost \$300 per bus. He explained between the pillar and the left mirror, if someone were moving at the same time, the driver would never see them. More visibility is needed for the driver. He presented a resolution from the union regarding the requested change.

### **STAFF REPORTS – RECEIVED**

Members received in their agenda packets the following staff reports:

1. Statement of Income (August 2017))
2. Variance Analysis (August 2017)
3. Go PASS Ridership Summary (August 2017)
4. Go PASS Ridership by Agency (August 2017)
5. Accessible Raleigh Transportation Summary (August 2017)
6. Operating Statistics (August 2017)
7. Route Statistics (August 2017)
8. Ridership Percentage by Time Period (August 2017)
9. Evaluation by Route (August 2017)
10. Advertising Update (August 2017)
11. On time Performance Report (August 2017)
12. Monthly Talking Points (October 2017)

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS – RECEIVED**

Mr. Magsanoc questioned the rebranding status for the buses. Mr. Eatman stated 13 of the 16 para-transit buses have been branded and there are 6 buses left in the fleet to be branded.

Mr. Pecoraro referred to the Fare Free day noting there was an 18% increase in ridership on that day. That resulted in 3,000 cars not being on the road for that day which is significant. He stated the public is concerned about traffic congestion resulting in the transportation bond being passed. He suggested that members think about the possibility of eliminating bus fares noting passenger revenue only contributed 0.3% of the city budget. He indicated passenger revenues are almost insignificant. He indicated the fares could be eliminated on some routes and not on some routes. Mr. Eatman indicated Chapel Hill also experienced the same increase in ridership on fare free day. He indicated there are challenges to eliminating fares and many agencies have looked at this and there are examples of it nationally. He suggested looking at this in the Finance Committee and staff will do some research and get some data from Chapel Hill. Mr. Pecoraro indicated there were 22,000 riders in 2011 and 16,700 this year which is a 25% decrease in ridership. Ms. Rezeli indicated this a nationwide issue. Mr. Williams asked what the cost of collection fares is in regard to equipment and time spent on collecting the fares noting this could result in increased efficiency. Mr. Eatman indicated staff will provide this information to the Finance Committee. Mr. Pecoraro indicated some input from the City Council is needed. Ms. Rezeli noted the fares are 20% of the GoRaleigh budget.

Ms. Omokaiye asked what will be done with the resolution presented by the Transit Union. Mr. Horne indicated staff will read and study it and what will be done can be determined at the committee level.

Mr. Warden suggested that the Finance Committee develop rationale for why we are discussing eliminating bus fares noting it would help him understand this better. He suggested the possibility of the Marketing Committee reviewing this and writing out philosophically the purpose for this consideration.

Chairman Horne indicated this is Ms. Thurman's last meeting. He stated he is going to miss her and thanked her for the service she has done on the authority.

Ms. Thurman stated she is really proud of the last 6 years working with an incredible staff and working with a congenial board. She indicated this was a fantastic experience.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Hunt