

## **Lowcountry RTA Board Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: May 27, 2020

Location: Teleconference Call with LRTA Board Members and Palmetto Breeze staff at 25 Benton Field Rd, Bluffton, SC 29910

### **Call to Order**

Chair Susan Zellman called the meeting to order at 2:07 pm.

The invocation was said by Mr. Bickley and Mr. Hamilton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Roll Call**

Present:

Ms. Susan Zellman, Chair, Beaufort County

Ms. Barbara Childs, Vice Chair, Beaufort County

Mr. Rick Hamilton, Beaufort County

Mr. Chris Bickley, Colleton County

Mr. Darrell Russell, Hampton County

Ms. Ginnie Kozak, Lowcountry Council of Governments and LATS (ex-officio)

Absent:

Ms. Louise Pinkney, Allendale County

Others in attendance:

Ms. Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA Executive Director

Ms. LaToya Wiley, LRTA Director of Finance and Administration

Mr. Detimex Stanley, LRTA Director of Maintenance

Mr. Ronald McElhose, LRTA Director of Operations

Ms. Yazmin Winston Black, LRTA Director of Safety and Training

Mr. Brian Sullivan, LRTA Director of Marketing and Communications (via telephone)

Ms. Kerry Guzman, LRTA Human Resources and Payroll Administrator

Ms. Zellman welcomed everyone and noted that all Board Members were remote via Zoom to respect safety measures put in place regarding the coronavirus. She thanked everyone for participating. The meeting was being broadcast live via the Palmetto Breeze Facebook page to allow the public the opportunity to listen to the meeting. The public is invited to make comments via Facebook and responses would be sent after the meeting. She asked that all who responded with a comment, motion or second motion to please state their name before responding.

### **Guests and Public Forum**

There were no guests or members of the public.

## Approval of Minutes

**A motion to approve the minutes from March 25, 2020 was made by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mr. Bickley.** Ms. Childs said on page 4, the second to the last sentence, the word “the” in front of Marc Orlando needs to be changed to “that” in the March minutes. **The motion carried.**

## Action Items

### **Resolution for Electronic Meeting:**

Ms. Franzoni discussed the resolution put forth by the Beaufort County Boards and Commissions. It asks that LRTA adopt the resolution in order to explain to the public how the meetings are conducted and how the public would be able to have input. The resolution is from March 23, 2020 to June 11, 2020. It could be extended by Beaufort County. The resolution states that an emergency exists and we are not having in person meetings. It would be adopted today (May 27, 2020) and signed by the chairperson of the board. **The motion to adopt the resolution was made by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Ms. Childs.** Ms. Childs stated that on page 2 sub paragraph A it states, notice of the meeting will be published on the Beaufort County website. Ms. Franzoni stated that she sent the notice to Tithanie Vaughan on the previous Friday for that purpose. Ms. Childs asked if the agendas had always been published in the past. Ms. Franzoni stated she had not looked in the past to see. Ms. Franzoni stated she would check. **The motion carried unanimously.**

### **FY21 Budget Discussion and Approval:**

LRTA has been working on the budget and Ms. Franzoni is comfortable with the numbers. Upon further review of the process, LRTA still needs to enter the data into the spreadsheet for the indirect cost rate and for the split between the rural and urban. Ms. Franzoni apologized for that step missing last Friday. Ms. Franzoni proposed that another virtual meeting take place on June 10, 2020 so LRTA can update the spreadsheet and send out to the board. Ms. Zellman apologized to Mr. Hamilton because he did not know he was the chair of the budget committee. Ms. Zellman asked Mr. Hamilton if he had a report or recommendation. He concurs with Ms. Franzoni. He does recognize that there have been personnel changes internally and on the board. LRTA has given out some good data. Mr. Hamilton congratulates LRTA on being able to offer a budget that is very much on par with the budget from the prior fiscal period. Ms. Childs concurs with Mr. Hamilton. **The motion to postpone the budget vote and propose a special meeting strictly about the budget was made by Mr. Hamilton. Ms. Childs second the motion.** Mr. Bickley stated that he would appreciate it if the budget information could be sent out a few days before the meeting. Ms. Franzoni agreed. **The motion carried unanimously.** Ms. Zellman stated that the special meeting information will need to be sent to Beaufort County since it is before June 11, 2020.

### **Safety Management System Plan Approval:**

Ms. Franzoni stated that this Safety Management System Plan is required by the Federal Transit Administration of all transit systems in the US, Puerto Rico and all of its other jurisdictions. LRTA chose to participate in the SCDOT facilitated plan. The deadline has been extended until

the end of December. The SCDOT asked for volunteers to work with a consultant and set up a template for the rest of the state. Ms. Black volunteered immediately. LRTA is the first property in the state to have the plan come before its board for approval. The consultant came to LRTA a few times and met with all the members of the staff.

Ms. Black thanked the board for reviewing the SMS plan. It sets the standard for Palmetto Breeze. Safety will be the groundwork of everything we do. Everything will be tracked in our new matrix. The goal is to present this plan to our employees during our monthly meeting in June. Ms. Zellman congratulated Ms. Black on an outstanding job. Ms. Black thanked her but stated that it was a team effort to get this done. **The motion to approve the Safety Management System Plan was made by Mr. Bickley and second by Mr. Hamilton.** Mr. Bickley asked how implementing the new plan will affect the day to day operations of the maintenance and operations departments. Ms. Franzoni stated that it will not affect the jobs that much but instead gets everyone rowing in the same direction. She stated that it strengthens everyone being on the same page and on the follow through. Mr. Bickley stated that it will be important on how it is introduced and implemented to the staff. Ms. Childs gave kudos to the staff and to Ms. Black for pulling all of this together. **The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **By-laws:**

Ms. Zellman stated there were four items that she needed input on.

- 1) The spelling of bylaws, by-laws or bylaws. Ms. Zellman asked if anyone had a preference or opinion on what the spelling should be. Ms. Kozak asked if Mr. Sullivan knew what the most common use was. Mr. Sullivan stated he feels the hyphenated version is the most common. Mr. Bickley, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Russell agreed with the hyphenated.
- 2) The old by-laws have the mission statement. The new by-laws were based on a template that did not have the mission statement. If the mission is kept out of the by-laws and needed to be changed, the by-laws would not have to be changed. Mr. Bickley stated keep the mission statement out of it. Ms. Zellman asked Ms. Franzoni if she wanted to keep it out. Ms. Franzoni agreed. Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Russell agreed.
- 3) Citizens Advisory Committee – Ms. Zellman asked for thoughts on the committees' general concept. Ms. Franzoni stated that generally interested parties are usually Paratransit passengers. Ms. Franzoni stated that she has not had much public interest in wanting to be involved in Palmetto Breeze. Ms. Zellman stated that it could be a way to bring in not only advocates but people who could help us. Ms. Kozak stated that we could recruit board members from the Citizens Advisory Committee. Ms. Childs reminded that this would be an advisory committee. Ms. Kozak stated that staff would need to be attached to this committee. Ms. Zellman said that it was written to state that one staff member and one board member would need to be at each meeting. Mr. Bickley stated that generally he does not have positive feelings about the committee. He stated this also created additional staff responsibility that he feels is unnecessary. Ms. Kozak stated that Federal Highways had eliminated Citizens Advisory Committees about six years. Mr. Hamilton agreed with Mr. Bickley. Ms. Childs stated that the by-laws would say “should the board determine that the committee would be beneficial”. Ms. Zellman asked if it should be an ad

hoc committee instead of in the by-laws on its own. It wouldn't be so formal that way. Mr. Bickley stated that on page 14 under section 13 "Committees" sub section A: "The board chair may create one or more committees of the board and appoint members to serve on them and such committees shall have the membership purpose and authority as made be determined by the board". Ms. Childs stated that this says this appoints board members. She stated that it could be amended. Mr. Bickley suggested adding a sentence to the Ad Hoc committee section "Other ad hoc committees may be formed in the future (created in the future) by board or as needed by board action." Ms. Zellman asked for opinion. Ms. Childs asked if we were removing Article Nine. Ms. Zellman stated yes but we are preserving the verbiage in a separate document to reference as needed.

- 4) Ms. Zellman stated that her next question was a moot point. She stated that it was going to be if we should have people be appointed from each one of the appointing authorities. Ms. Childs stated that it would be no more than 15 members but now that it is being deleted from the by-laws, it can be discussed later.

Ms. Zellman stated that Article 9 is being removed from the by-laws. Ms. Zellman asked for any other input. Mr. Bickley stated he thanks Ms. Zellman and Ms. Childs for going through this project. He stated LRTA was created under state enabling legislation. The by-laws reference that. He stated under SC code there is something called the Regional Transportation Authority Law that was adopted in 1985. In there, it makes reference to some RTAs in existence prior to 1985. Mr. Bickley asked is LRTA was one of those. Ms. Franzoni stated that we were. We were chartered before 1985. Mr. Bickley stated that we need to look at the enabling legislation and see if the by-laws are consistent with that enabling legislation. The 1985 law states that the board officers only serve for one year. However, our by-laws and practice have been that they serve two years. Mr. Bickley stated we need to be in compliance with state law. Ms. Childs stated that she would like an attorney to review our by-laws. Mr. Bickley said that our charter should state what law we were chartered under. Ms. Franzoni stated that she would send it out after the meeting. Mr. Bickley said there was a reference on page 18, section 1, The Executive Committee. But on page 15 the executive committee was not listed as one of the standing committees/primary committees. Mr. Russell said there may be a typo with "Executive Director shall provide the board with recommendations for performance." He does not know why they would do that for themselves. He thinks a word might have been misplaced but does not have the page number.

Ms. Zellman suggested that the by-laws be moved to the special meeting on June 10, 2020. This will allow time for the corrections and adjustments to be made. **Ms. Childs motioned to review the by-laws on June 10,2020 with the recommended changes that have been presented and incorporated into the draft by-laws and take action if necessary. Mr. Hamilton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **Informational Items**

1. Ms. Franzoni provided the Executive Director's report. Highlights included:

- Ridership in March was 13,772 versus 20,065 from the year before. Ridership in April 8,459 versus 25,000 from 2019. Ridership is slowly coming up. We are not back to where we were.
- Marketing update: Public Involvement for Transit Master Plan. We are in between week 1 and week 2 for the public comment period. Our website traffic went up 31%. The Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Bluffton are promoting this as well. Ms. Kozak stated that the LCOG is also promoting it.
- March and April were big months in terms of dealing with Covid-19. We are talking with Hilton Head regarding the trolley.
- Effective today, it is mandatory to wear masks on our commuter buses. Each driver has a supply of paper masks. This is for the protection of everyone. Mr. Bickley asked what the response was if someone refused to wear a mask. Ms. Franzoni stated that the person will not be allowed to board the bus and police will be called if the passenger is unruly.
- Renovations are being done for the Administration facility. Kenneth Scott Builders won the bid for the job. The job should take at most eight weeks.

2. Ms. Wiley reported on the financial statements.

- March and April revenue was down due to Covid-19. Contracts were delayed/cancelled, and revenue went down about \$30,000 for the two months. Trolley service is delayed until June 15, 2020. Daufuskie service resumed May 22, 2020. July 1, 2020 fares will resume.
- Building renovation will take about eight weeks.
- Cash position is that we are low on cash. Mr. Bickley asked if we were current on our bills. Ms. Wiley stated that we were within the 30-day net except for the Beaufort County Fuel Bill. Once we receive our local match and the next draw down, we will be good to go. Ms. Childs asked when the next drawdown was. Ms. Wiley stated it would be in mid-June. Mr. Bickley asked if our drawdowns were current with the state and the federal. Ms. Wiley stated that we were. Mr. Bickley asked how we were drawing down without the indirect cost information. Ms. Wiley stated that it was already in place. It was being allocated to the right place.

3.) Chairpersons Report

Ms. Zellman thanked the administration and staff for continuing the mission of LRTA for working and moving forward during the current situation. She also thanked the board members for being on committees.

**Old Business**

1. Urban Study, Phase 2 and the Town Hall Meeting

Ms. Franzoni encouraged everyone to go to the website, look for the Town Hall meeting regarding the urban study, review and leave comments. Ms. Zellman asked if she or Brian could send a list of business this was sent to. Mr. Sullivan said he would send a list out this afternoon.

2. Trolley Service Resumptions

Ms. Franzoni stated Hilton Head Trolley almost ready to go. She reached out to Anne Cyran about the Town's thoughts on us resuming service. Ms. Cyran asked what precautions we were taking. Maintenance is working on putting a screen up between the driver and the passengers. Ms. Franzoni stated that she will provide an update at the June 10, 2020 meeting. If for some reason there is a glitch in the date for the Trolley Service, it will be moved to July 1, 2020.

3. LATS Update

Ms. Kozak referred back to the Transit Master Plan. LATS will have money from Guide Share. This will start in the next fiscal year. It will be somewhere between \$4 and \$5 million to spend on transportation improvement projects. It cannot be used as local match because it is federal money. Ms. Zellman asked if we would have to do a formal application. Ms. Kozak said an application would need to be submitted to the LATS committee. It can be used for capital or operating costs. Ms. Childs asked when the next LATS meeting was, and Ms. Kozak stated it would be a week from Friday. Ms. Franzoni asked if it was a Zoom meeting and Ms. Kozak stated it would be.

4. Board Vacancies

Ms. Franzoni followed up with Jasper County and they had LRTA appointment on their May 18, 2020 agenda. She sent an email inquiring about the appointment. Ms. Franzoni also sent an email to the clerk of council in Allendale asking if Ms. Pinkney was going to be reappointed or if someone else was being appointed. Ms. Zellman asked Mr. Bickley if he had any luck for someone for Colleton County. He has not.

### **New Business**

1. Conflict of Interest Statements

All board members need to sign and either mail or scan and email the statements to Ms. Franzoni. The deadline is the end of the month.

2. Beach Shuttle

This was done last year due to the construction of the new Coligny park area. Ms. Franzoni received a call from the attorney for Hilton Head. They asked for the shuttle this year for the entire summer, Saturday and Sunday only. We have set up a contract with them. There were 450 people on Saturday between 10am to 3pm. There were 275 on Sunday. The Daufuskie Ferry is back in service. We are waiting to hear back from Palmetto Bluff.

### **Announcements**

Ms. Kozak's last day is June 30, 2020.

### **Next Steps**

April 15, 2020 minutes will be sent out and will be included in July's meeting.

Budget approval meeting will June 10, 2020 at 2pm. Data will be sent out by the Friday before.

Ms. Childs will remove Article 9 from the by-laws. A section about the ad hoc committee will be added. There will be an ongoing review about the legislation. Ms. Franzoni will send out a copy of the charter. The by-laws will be discussed on June 10,2020 at 2pm.

Board members will leave comments on the Urban Study Phase 2. Mr. Sullivan will send out the Urban Study Phase 2 distribution list.

Board members need to submit their conflict of interest statements to Ms. Franzoni by the end of the month.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Childs motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Mr. Russell second the motion. The motion was carried unanimously. Chair Zellman declared the meeting adjourned at 3:47pm.