



**LOWCOUNTRY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**

**Wednesday, March 22, 2023.  
2:00 P.M.**

**Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority Boardroom  
25 Benton Field Road  
Bluffton, S.C. 29910**

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION**

Board Vice Chair Childs gave the invocation and Director of Maintenance Chris Dreisbach led the pledge of allegiance.

**3. FOIA**

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

**4. ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS AND RECOGNITION OF STAFF PRESENT**

**Board Members Present:** Representing Jasper County: Board Chair Charles Mitchell; Beaufort County: Vice Chair Barbara Childs, and Art Handman; representing Allendale County: William Robinson; representing Hampton County: Laura Atkinson; and representing Lowcountry Council of Governments: Stephanie Rossi.

**Staff Members Present:** Mary Lou Franzoni, Executive Director; Kristine Hepburn, Director of Finance & Administration; Brian Sullivan, Director of Marketing & Communication; Chris Dreisbach, Director of Maintenance; Karen Morales, Mobility Manager; and Cavada Russell, Office Administrator.

5. **WELCOME**

Board Chair Mitchell welcomed all Board members and staff.

6. **PUBLIC FORUM**

No members of the public were present.

7. **RECOGNITION OF DRIVER OF THE MONTH**

Executive Director Mary Lou Franzoni recognized Mr. Larry Hanson as the Driver of the month for January and Mr. Michael McEachern for the month of February.

8. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

January 25, 2023, Board Meeting

**Motion:** Board member Mr. Handman moved that the minutes from the January 25, 2023, Board meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Board member Robinson. Board member Atkinson abstained.

**Vote:** The motion was carried.

9. **ACTION ITEMS**

None

10. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Executive Director's Report** – Executive Director Franzoni presented her report and discussed some of the ramifications of the 2020 census. The City of Beaufort and the Town of Port Royal have become a small urbanized area. This means LRTA will receive an allotment of FTA small urban funding for this area. The timing plays into the study that will be started in the fall regarding transit service north of the Broad River. Ms. Franzoni gave highlights on Palmetto Breeze Transit Annual Employee Appreciation Day that took place on March 17, 2023. The Maintenance Department received a Mock OSHA Audit facilitated by SCDOT.

**B. Finance Director's Report** – Director of Finance & Administration, Ms. Hepburn presented a summary of financial reports for the most recent period. A brief explanation was given to the ongoing task of cleaning up the financial accounts, status of current audit was given and upcoming budget.

**C. Board Chair's Report** – Chair Mitchell, reported that the TASC Conference held in Columbia, SC was a success and congratulated the Maintenance team on their first-place win. Chair Mitchell also acknowledge Mr. Sullivan on doing a great job with managing social media interactions and advertisements on behalf of Palmetto Breeze Transit.

**D. Committee/ Project Reports**

- **Operations Committee** – Board member Atkinson presented her report. The Operations department had three non-preventative accidents. A total of five complaints were reported, of the five two were verified. As a result, the driver received counseling on customer service. Drugs screenings are up to date. Mr. Cattell in Operations and Mr. Dreisbach in Maintenance have both completed National Incident Management System (NIMS) training for the Emergency Operations Center. There were no grievances. CDL drivers are needed as Trolley Season approaches.
- **Maintenance Committee** – Maintenance Director Dreisbach presented the Maintenance Committee report for the preceding months. Some highlights included: Preparation of the Trolley buses has been in full swing as we prepare for the 2023 season. We are searching for two additional mechanics in order to be fully staffed. Mr. Dreisbach welcomed Morgan Puccini as the new Maintenance Administrator.
- **Finance Committee** – Board member Handman reported on the financial review of accounts. Mr. Handman anticipates the Finance Department will be ready for April's audit. The Finance Committee discussed the prior two months' financials, the status of the audit and briefly touched on open FTA grants – revisions, open and ones awaiting closure. The budget and budget issues were discussed as well.

**11.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

- A. LATS Update** – Stephanie Rossi from the Lowcountry Council of Governments provided an update on the status of several projects. The next LATS meeting is scheduled for March 31, 2023. 9:30 a.m. and held at The TCL campus.
- B. Hilton Head Airport Service Update** – The Study is completed and we are scheduled to present the study to the Town of Hilton Head, SC on April 13, 2023.

- C. Bluffton Breeze Update** – An adjustment was made on February 15, 2023. Due to low ridership the Bluffton Breeze has downsized to two drivers. Ms. Franzoni would like to explore extending service to the Sun City Community as a way of attracting new riders to the service.
- D. Northern Beaufort Transit Study** – Ms. Rossi gave an update on the Northern Beaufort Transit Study. The funds are programmed in Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (would be available October 2023).
- E. Annual Audit Presentation** – The audit presentation will be presented at next Board meeting on May 24, 2023.

## **12. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. APTA Award Recognition** – Mr. Sullivan accepted the Excellence in Marketing Award for the special event category. The award was won for the Trolley Rocks campaign last year.
- B. Breeze Trolley Season** – Trolley season begins April 1, 2023.

## **13. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A.** The Maintenance team placed first in the state Rodeo.

**Motion:** At 3:04 P.M. Board member Handman moved that the Chairman be authorized to amend the agenda. Board member Robinson seconded.

**Vote:** The motion was carried unanimously.

**Motion:** Board member Atkinson made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Board member Handman seconded.

**Vote:** The motion was carried unanimously.

**Motion:** Board member Handman moved to resume the meeting back into regular session. Board member Childs seconded.

**Vote:** The motion was carried unanimously. No decisions or votes were made in executive session. Regular session resumed at 3:29 P.M.

## **14. ADJOURNMENT**

Board member Childs made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Board member Handman. The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 P.M.