

Lowcountry RTA Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: July 28, 2021.

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

I. Call to Order

Chair Susan Zellman called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm. 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.

II. The Invocation was said by Chair Zellman.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. 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. Louise Pinkney, Allendale County
Ms. Stephanie Rossi, Lowcountry Council of Governments via zoom

Absent:

Mr. Charles Mitchell, Jasper County

Others in attendance:

Ms. Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA Executive Director
Mr. Detimex Stanley, LRTA Director of Maintenance
Mr. Theodis Jackson, LRTA Director of Operations
Mr. Brian Sullivan, LRTA Director of Marketing and Communications
Ms. Kerry Guzman, LRTA Human Resources and Payroll Administrator
Mr. Henry Criss, LRTA Director of Finance and Administration
Ms. Cavada Russell, LRTA Office Administrator
Mr. Scott Donahue, SCDOT via zoom

V. Welcome

There were no members of the public present.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Hamilton to approve the minutes from the Board meeting held on May 26, 2021. Mr. Bickley seconded the motion. A motion was made by Ms. Childs to approve the minutes of the special meeting held on May 28, 2021. Mr. Hamilton seconded the motion. Both motions carried unanimously.

VII. Discussion Items

Ms. Franzoni stated that the driver of the month was awarded to Clarence Majors for the month of May and Roshanda Green for the month of June.

VIII. Informational Items/ Reports

1. Director's Report

May and June statistics show healthy ridership. 2020 shows ridership of 214,660 and 2021 shows ridership of 217,211. The numbers also include Trolley riders. Ms. Franzoni and Mr. Criss met with Beaufort County to discuss the administration of the authorization and ticket functions of the Daufuskie Ferry now and in the future. The Mobility Manager and the Director of Marketing assisted with the Community Rides Grant submittal. We are still waiting for the announcement of the selected projects. Ms. Franzoni was interviewed by the Bluffton Chamber of Commerce concerning Bluffton services.

2. Finance Director's Report

Mr. Criss presented the financial statements for the months ending May 31 and June 30, respectively, and pointed out that the June budget-to-date reflect 100% of the fiscal year elapsed. During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021, there were a great deal of unexpected in- and out-flows related to the pandemic and CARES Act funding. Mr. Criss also called attention to the fact that the Balance Sheet reflects a continued growth in fixed assets, as to be expected with the additional capital projects. Ms. Zellman asked Mr. Criss why the amount of expense in the administration department was so high and Mr. Criss explained that the income statement does reflect a larger number than may have been anticipated due to the inclusion of depreciation expense, which had not been previously reported on the income statement. Mr. Criss went on to explain that moving forward, the plan was to include expenses such as depreciation in the month end reports, to be more in line with generally accepted accounting principles. Mr. Hamilton pointed out that on the June 30th balance sheet total current assets exceed total current liability by half a million showing a system wide increase. Ms. Zellman asked Mr. Criss to revise the monthly report and provide a detailed explanation by email regarding how the expenses were stated.

Mr. Criss then informed the board that Cindy Steel, our previous Staff Accountant had departed and interviews had been conducted to fill the position. An offer has been extended to an applicant who is due to begin August 10, 2021. Additionally, the audit begins mid-August.

Mr. Criss also reported that he had completed the analysis of required expenses that would be needed to maintain minimal operations for a period of three months and that is \$800,000. The challenge with building a cash reserve is that the Authority is not a profit generating operation and that most of the revenues we bring in are already allocated, as they are reimbursements. It would take a dedicated funding source that is outside of the grants and local match to produce surplus revenue and build a cash reserve.

3. Chairperson's Report

Chair Zellman stated that The Bluffton Sun featured Palmetto Breeze in the Article for the Kindness Campaign. The Executive Director's performance appraisal is completed and a follow up meeting is scheduled for July 30, 2021 at 11:30am. Two items were approved online through the FTA, checks were signed, liaison meetings were conducted, and Ms. Franzoni gave updates. Attendance reports for the Board members were sent out to the respective counties by Ms. Franzoni. Ideas for the information card for Palmetto Breeze services were welcomed.

IX. Old Business

1. Board Retreat:

Sergeant Jasper Park will be the location for the Board Retreat. It will be a one-day event in the month of October tentative dates are 26th or the 28th. Next steps are to find a facilitator who is knowledgeable about transportation. Mr. Bickley agreed to be a part of the Board Retreat Committee.

2. Sale of Property:

The potential buyer, Carolina Investment South, is asking for a \$125,000 reduction in the offer that was agreed upon or they will be cancelling the offer to purchase.

3. Low Country Area Transportation Study (LATS) Update:

The LATS Technical Committee meeting was convened in June for a kick-off meeting with Kimley Horne, the consultants for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update. The LRTP update is scheduled for completion in June of 2022. There will be a LATS survey conducted in August. There will also be a stakeholder meeting in the near future.

X. New Business

The USBC service is a shuttle service called the Sand Shark Shuttle that will transport students, faculty, and staff to and from Bluffton, Beaufort, and Hilton Head Universities. The service runs Mon-Fri from 8:00am to 4:30pm and is free to students and staff. The shuttle runs during the regular school year.

XI. Next Steps/ Summary of To Do Items

1. Contact the facilitator for the Board Retreat.
2. Mr. Bickley will take part in the planning process for the Retreat.
3. Chair Zellman will meet with Mr. Sullivan to work on a draft for the informational cards.
4. There will be committee meetings at the next Board meeting held on September 22, 2021.
5. Follow up with the North of the Broad services in light of the grant result.
6. Revisit June 30th expense sheet.
7. Continue Daufuskie Ferry conversations.

XII.

Announcements

There were no announcements

XIII.

Adjournment

Ms. Childs motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Russell seconded. There was a unanimous vote to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 3:12pm.