

Lowcountry RTA Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 30, 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 2:06 pm.

II. The Invocation was said by Chair Zellman

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Roll Call

Present:

Ms. Susan Zellman, Chair, Beaufort County
Mr. Rick Hamilton, Beaufort County
Ms. Barbara Childs, Vice Chair, Beaufort County
Mr. Chris Bickley, Colleton County
Mr. Darrell Russell, Hampton County
Mr. Charles Mitchell, Jasper County
Ms. Stephanie Rossi, Lowcountry Council of Governments

Others in attendance:

Ms. Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA Executive Director
Mr. Mark Stanley, LRTA Director of Maintenance
Mr. Theodis Jackson, LRTA Director of Operations
Ms. Yazmin Winston Black, LRTA Director of Safety and Training
Mr. Brian Sullivan, LRTA Director of Marketing and Communications
Ms. Laura Atkinson, LRTA Mobility Manager
Mr. Henry Criss, LRTA Director of Finance and Administration
Ms. Cavada Russell, LRTA Office Administrator
Mr. Scott Donahue, SCDOT
Mr. Trey Scott, Mauldin & Jenkins

V. Welcome

1. Guests- Mauldin and Jenkins Audit Presentation

Mr. Trey Scott from Mauldin and Jenkins presented the results of the audit of the LRTA financials for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Mauldin and Jenkins issued an unmodified (or clean) opinion with no findings. The Statement of Net Position shows assets and deferred outflows of resources increased approximately \$1.2 million in the current period. Total assets and deferred outflows of resources amount to \$9.9 million of which a little under \$500,000 is reported as cash and cash equivalents. Liabilities and deferred inflows of resources increased approximately

\$350,000 in the current year. This increase is attributed to an increase in net pension liability as well as an increase in the net Others Post Employment Liability (OPEB). Total Liabilities and deferred inflows of resources amount to \$7.3 million as of year -end. The Authority portion of the South Carolina Retirement System (SCRS) pension liability and the total OPEB liability approximate \$6.6 million. There were two adjustments proposed to the accounts of the Authority. The adjustments pertained to Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 68 pension and (GASB) 75 OPEB. These two adjustments have been posted. There were no past adjustments. There were no significant issues discussed with management concerning financial statements. The auditor recommends the Authority implement sufficient controls to ensure cash is reconciled in a timely manner and all manual journal entries are reviewed and approved prior to posting. This will mitigate opportunities for fraud and strengthen the Authority's internal controls. Mr. Criss commented that the Authority had already implemented policies to address the audit firms' recommendations.

VI Recognition

Drivers of the Month: **September – Holbrook Sanders**
October – Norma Sanders

VII. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Mitchell to approve the meeting minutes of September 23, 2021. Ms. Childs seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VIII.. Actions Items

1. Bluffton Breeze Fares

Ms. Franzoni informed everyone that the new service, The Bluffton Breeze started on September 7, 2021. The ridership numbers are low; however, efforts are being made to bring awareness to local businesses. Ms. Franzoni stated that once ridership increases the service is going to help reduce the number of cars on the road in Bluffton. Ms. Franzoni made a recommendation that the Board continue the initial waiver of fares until the start of the fiscal year of July 1, 2022. This will allow for an opportunity to continue to market the service and to gain more ridership as potential riders can try it out without worrying about the fare. The current fare to ride the Bluffton Breeze is \$1.00 per ride and half price for seniors, disabled passengers, and students. **Mr. Hamilton made a motion to suspend collection of fares until July 1, 2022 and Mr. Russell seconded. The motion carried unanimously.** Chair Zellman asked will there be an option for an extended day pass. Ms. Franzoni replied that we have a mobile payment app that will give a variety of options.

IX. Informational Items

1. Director's Report

Ms. Franzoni commended the Finance Department for their hard work on implementing the new software that will take effect in January of 2022. The months of September and October were very busy. The third Passenger Appreciation Day was held on September 24

with a gift bag for each passenger and an ice cream from Mrs. T's Ice Cream truck. The fourth anniversary of Second Helpings was celebrated with the passengers, staff, and Second Helpings volunteers. Ms. Franzoni met with Stu Rodman of Beaufort County Council as he is the liaison to our agency and wanted to know more about how we operate. We discussed the way Palmetto Breeze is funded, the Urban Master Plan, and the facility improvements we are working on. Mr. Rodman also informed Ms. Franzoni that he wants to work towards securing some dedicated funding for Palmetto Breeze Transit. A final report from the Board Retreat will be made available soon. Ms. Franzoni had an interview with Sun City Television where they discussed the Bluffton Breeze. Ms. Franzoni, Ms. Young, and Mr. Stanley all attended the APTA EXPO held in Orlando, FL in November.

2. Finance Director's Report

The income and expense summaries for the months of September and October show a deficit in August and a surplus in September of \$470,000.00 which exceeds the deficit amount so that allows us to balance out. In regards to the \$24,000. deficit in October, there is a reimbursement for those expenses that comes in November and we recognize those when we receive them because they are not operating revenue.

3. Chairperson's Report

Ms. Franzoni will continue to look for grant opportunities. The procurement training is still pending. The Board will plan to ride the Bluffton Breeze. Chair Zellman was able to inform Lowcountry Presbyterian about the Bluffton Breeze. There was no additional information on Mass Transit funds for Allendale. Chair Zellman thanked the Finance staff for having no findings upon completion of the audit. Chair Zellman is looking forward to the report on the October 28th Retreat in order to start making recommendations for 2022.

X. Old Business

1. LATS Update

The next LATS meeting will be held on December 3, 2021. The survey results will be presented during the meeting. There was a total of 827 respondents to the survey. Public transit ranked 3rd in public spending options. A key takeaway from the survey was a need for more multi modal transportation in the region.

2. LRTA Story Cards

Includes statements about the impact we have on the community.
Ready for publication.

XI. New Business

1. Nominating Committee:

Chair Zellman and Mr. Charles Mitchell

2. HHI Airport Service:

Ms. Franzoni was contacted by the town of Hilton Head asking for services to be provided to the Hilton Head Airport during August of last year. Several meetings were conducted to address that need. Beaufort County asked if Palmetto Breeze had the funds to put out a request for proposal and agreed to pay the local match for the study. We are in the process of selecting a consultant to perform a study on those services and expect to have completed by April 4, 2022.

XII. Next Steps/ Summary of to do Items Resulting from this meeting

1. Mr. Criss will continue the added control for journal posting.
2. Ms. Franzoni will follow up with notes from Retreat.
3. Story Cards will be mailed out to Board members.
4. Ms. Franzoni will continue to look for grants for The North of the Broad Services.

XIII. Announcements

1. **Louise Pinkney Resignation**
2. **Welcome Jairus Bonner HR Manager**

XIV. Adjournment

Ms. Childs made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hamilton seconded. There was a unanimous vote to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 pm.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.