

**WINSTON-SALEM TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Clark Campbell Transportation Conference Room
100 W. Fifth Street, Winston-Salem, NC**

MINUTES

THURSDAY, March 26, 2015

PRESENT:

Board Members

Robert Garcia, Chairman
Keith King, Vice Chairman
Dr. Jack Fleer
Dr. Trae Cotton
Nora Streed

WSTA Staff

Art Barnes, General Manager
John Ashford, Assistant General
Manger
Verylen Crawford
Tina Carson-Wilkins
Tikiha Alston
Teika Holloway

OTHERS:

Toneq McCullough, Transportation
Director
Bobby Fitzjohn, City Financial Analyst
Dewey Williard, City Transport. Finance
Manager

Kaori Fujisawa, City Transit Planner
Claire Stone, Transportation Advocacy

ABSENT:

Ruth Carter
Pridgen Amos

Meeting Opened: 4:02 pm

Chairman Robert Garcia Welcomed everyone to the March 26, 2015 WSTA board meeting.

Approval of the Minutes:

The approval of minutes was the first order of business. Mr. Garcia asked that the members of the board take a few minutes to review the minutes from the January 29, 2015 meeting.



A motion was made by Mr. Keith King and seconded by Ms. Regina Streed. The Board approved the minutes by common consent.

Resolution Authorizing the Winston-Salem Transit Authority to Enter into an Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)

Mr. Art Barnes reminded the Board that WSTA has grant money to purchase six large hybrid replacement buses and one hybrid paratransit replacement bus.

The City of Winston-Salem and WSTA applied to the State for a state share in the amount of 7.5% which equals \$300,000. This is the State's contribution for participation in the purchase of the above mentioned buses. The application was a competitive one; however, WSTA was awarded the unbudgeted funds and will greatly benefit from them.

On December 4, 2014, the Board of Transportation approved WSTA's request for a 5307 Capital Grant (the NCDOT award letter was included in the meeting packet).

On a motion by Dr. Trae Cotton and seconded by Ms. Streed; the General Manager, Mr. Barnes, was authorized to enter into a contract with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and execute all agreements and contracts with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division.

Resolution Authorizing a Contract for Security Services

WSTA has had the same security service since 2008. Within the last couple years, there have been some experiences that persuaded WSTA to put the security service contract up for bid.

The four proposals received were evaluated based on price, training, experience, and support. WSTA is recommending that North State Security Group of Winston-Salem assume the contract. Normally the contract does not exceed \$100,000. However, there was a request from the Mayor's Office due to an inquiry from some of the neighbors; therefore, we can expect an increase in the amount budgeted for security. The contract amount was increased to \$130,000 and this newly derived amount was applied for in the new budget that will begin July 1, 2015. If the new budget is approved by the City, during four hours of the day there will be two officers on duty.

Mr. Garcia feels the budgeted amount for security is low. Mr. Barnes explained that the amount is based on their salary and category level of security. In addition Mr. Barnes assured that the guards are bonded and insured.

A motion to approve a contract award for security services was given by Dr. Jack Flear and was seconded by Dr. Cotton. The resolution was passed giving the General Manger, Art Barnes, authority to enter into a contract with North State

Security Group for the provision of security services at the Clark Campbell Transportation Center.

Public Comment:

- Ms. Claire Stone distributed CATS meeting minutes from their March 10, 2015 meeting. Ms. Stone asked that the minutes be read at leisure. She stated that the CATS minutes reflect a meeting that was held at the Transportation Center in February. The handout also contained the eight compiled complaints that have not been responded to. Ms. Stone stated that she just gave the complaints to Ms. Tikiha Alston yesterday (March 25, 2015) and is aware that Ms. Alston has not had time to review them. In addition Ms. Stone addressed the Boards request for her to specify names and details of the individuals filing the complaints. Ms. Stone complied with this request by providing names and details of complaints she received and said that, going forward, she will continue to provide this information to WSTA.

Ms. Stone expressed her concerns that the list of complaints shown by WSTA is not accurate. She went on to say that this is not the first time she has broached this subject. She gave an example using the data from the February 2015 Board Report for Trans Aid.

- Mr. Barnes confirmed that he received Ms. Stone's request for minutes from the Public hearing and explained that the meeting was very lengthy (two hours); therefore, no one has had an opportunity to transcribe them.

Information Items:

Kaori Fujisawa-Mr. Barnes announced that Ms. Kaori Fujisawa will be leaving to pursue other endeavors. He thanked her for her services on behalf of WSTA and the Board.

CATS Meeting-Mr. Barnes reported that the meeting with Ms. Stone and the members of her organization went well. As a result of the meeting, WSTA went to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) website to search for answers to inquiries that came up during the meeting. Mr. Barnes feels that WSTA can comply to pretty much everything with exception to scheduling Trans-Aid riders on our scheduling software due to capacity issues. The number of Trans Aid trips has increased substantially over the months and is now averaging an approximate increase of 6%. Therefore, it has gotten to the point where the software will not accommodate all the trips. By no means are the trips denied; as a result, the dispatchers are required to put in the trips as they are working them up. WSTA inquired about being out of compliance for the way the overflow of trips are being handled. Two different answers were received. WSTA is non-compliant according to the FTA website, because the process in which the overflow trips are handled constitutes a wait list. The question was then presented to WSTA's FTA representative at FTA that handles ADA matters along with the FTA's website

answer. The representative's response was that, WSTA is not out of compliance unless the FTA said so (the FTA has not said so). The representative did ask for additional information. WSTA then added that there were no trips being denied in the ADA category. With that being said, Mr. Barnes feels that WSTA is not out of compliance with FTA guidelines. Mr. Barnes also expressed that WSTA's goal is to have all trips scheduled by the software in the near future.

In WSTA's effort to reach this goal, there are new hires starting a training class within the next two weeks. It will take about three to four months before they are all trained. The majority of these trainees will be assigned to Trans-Aid.

During the conversation Mr. Barnes had with the FTA representative he asked that the grant for 6 new Trans-Aid vehicles be expedited. The grant is now in the final phase and is expected to be approved in a month.

Having more manpower and an increase in the Trans-Aid fleet will greatly assist in all trips being scheduled by the software.

These seven para transit vehicles (including the one mentioned above in the DOT agreement) are replacement vehicles. The ones currently being used have reached their useful life. Fortunately the engines are in good shape and are still able to be used.

COA-Mrs. Barnes revealed the proposed new bus routes to the Board. He explained some benefits and reasons for the changes. One concern about the route change is passengers having to go downtown to be transported to certain locations in the city. Mr. Barnes pointed out a couple of routes as examples of routes one could take without going downtown to the Transportation Center. The question was asked if the City Council have approved the new routes. Mr. Barnes responded that their approval is not needed; they are only required to give feedback.

There is a schedule of implementation; WSTA is planning to have public hearings in the form of Town Hall meetings. Notice of the public hearings will be sent out on April 6, 2015. Presentations of the new routes will be given at the Town Hall meetings with the final presentation being presented at the WSTA Board meeting being held May 28, 2015. There will be presentations in June or July to the Public Works Committee and the City Council.

State Maintenance Assistance Funding Program Allocation (SMAP)-Mr. Barnes discussed the annual allocation WSTA received from State. There has been a steady decrease in the amount of operating funds received each year. Detailed information was included in the meeting packet for review.

Title III Allocation-Mr. Barnes reported a reduction in the Title III allocation. WSTA applied for **Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)** funds. These funds are excess funds that were not used by other transit authorities. WSTA was awarded

\$114,000 by JARC. A handout was included in the meeting packet that listed the agencies and the amounts they are allocated.

Application for 5310 funds-An application for 5310 funds was submitted. These funds are for the purchase of accessible vehicles or communication equipment to be used in transporting seniors and individuals with disabilities. These funds are available on an 80% Federal, 20% local matching basis. Section 5310 of the Federal Transit Act, as amended, authorizes the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to make capital assistance grants to private non-profit organizations or to public bodies which certify to the Governor that no non-profit corporation or association is readily available in an area to provide services for seniors or individuals with disabilities.

If awarded, the monies will be used to purchase an additional new Trans-Aid vehicle. Mr. Barnes is currently working on the application.

Request for a Proposal for Bus Stop and Shelter Improvements-A statement of qualifications was included in the packet. The statement expressed WSTA's desire to make improvements to two WSTA corridor bus stops and shelters by engaging a qualified private designer or engineering firm's professional services. The statement also gave details of the project background and scope of work desired. The bids will be awarded in the near future. In addition, there is .5 million dollars available for construction use.

Operations Report-There is a 1% year-to-date increase in Fixed Route passengers. Preventable vehicle accidents went up from 7 to 20 year-to-date. This issue is being addressed; however, the great majority of these accidents are things like swiping poles that must be classified as accidents. There has been discussion with both safety directors in regards to giving more training on avoiding contact with fixed objects. Chargeable complaints are down from 23 to 12 for Fixed Route.

Most chargeable complaints for Trans-Aid appear to have derived from late arrivals. This issue is being addressed; part of the problem is capacity. Mr. Barnes expressed that he understands Ms. Stone's concerns with the complaint module. There are not enough people neither are there enough vehicles to handle the demand for service. Trans-Aid's preventable accidents are down and chargeable complaints are down.

In the Maintenance Department Fixed Route road calls are down and Trans-Aid road calls are up.

Financial Report-Mr. Barnes made some adjustments to the Consolidated Statement of Revenues and Expenses. The adjustments were made to amounts reported under Transit Operating Revenue that included Greyhound (under contract), JARC, Federal Operating funds, Preventative Maintenance, and State Maintenance Assistance Program.

Mr. Barnes explained that the Transit Administrative Fund is the same as the Property Tax Transfer and these funds should be simply regarded as money from the City.

In addition to the adjustments listed above, an adjustment was made to reflect the amount of SNAP money we will lose. Mr. Barnes expressed that part of the problem with the expenses is the amount of over time being paid due to the shortage of drivers. There are new driver training classes being conducted to address this issue.

Marketing Report-Mrs. Tina Carson-Wilkins gave a detailed Marketing Report. The report included coalition building with various agencies, special events, segment marketing, service design and coordination, advertising, and upcoming events. A handout was included in the meeting packet that outlines the above noted marketing logistics.

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Transcribed by: Teika Holloway

April 1, 2015