



**Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting**

**Draft Meeting Minutes  
January 19, 2023**

**Members Present:** Judy Alexander, Tyron Jones, Vivian Rogers, Rebecca Gamble, Hattie Burns, George Gebaily, Carolyn Gause, James Jackson

**Members Absent/Web Viewing:** Yolanda Dupree, Belva Britt, Drew Huggins, Adell McManus-McCoy

**Staff Present:** Samantha Mack

**Guests:** None

**A.** Tyron Jones called the meeting to order at 6:14 PM

**B.** Invocation - Tyron Jones

**C. Approval of the Agenda:**

Agenda – motioned, seconded and unanimously approved.

**D. Approval of the Minutes:**

November 17, 2022 meeting minutes – motioned, seconded and unanimously approved.

**E. Public Comments:**

None

**F. Operations Report:**

Don reported met with Pee Dee Coalition 5 of 6 counties represented, asking about connectivity. Needed to access Florence location(main hub). They mentioned the Society Hill connections. Their policy prevents them from providing private transportation in their vehicles. If they were to have access to get Society Hill bus they could get to Darlington. Timing would be the issue with only 3 loops a day from Darlington to Florence. We'll need to come up with more local support, to add an hour of service locally is \$8k/hr. – two additional trips \$16k.

Darlington transit up 36%, commuter down slightly, impacted by holiday breaks; LakeTran up 34%; ; Downtown shuttle up 38%; McColl-Clio-Bennettsville 51%; Express is down, some folks utilizing connect and other services, some down but using other routes and Mohawk has impacted; Dillon express up 39% and connect up 11%; Harbor Freight is continuing to increase when the ridership gets up to ~500-600 then will do a fixed route, currently and on demand; Cheraw connect up 339%; overall 15% up.

December up 6% overall; Florence still up; Johnsonville-Pamplico-Flo down; Lake Tran still doing well; Myrtle Beach route down, Marion; LC Myrtle Beach down 29%; McColl-Clio-Bennettsville up still growing, 58%; Dillon Demand Response is up 110%; Harbor Freight up 211%; Cheraw all up; Housing Authority of Florence same performance; Veterans up 9%, ride fare free; collecting data on Walmart.

Tyron asked on Myrtle Beach route for seasonal employees has there been any traction on the routes from Florence?

Don confirmed, more requests from Florence to Myrtle Beach – considering using funds to do a pilot, beach run on Fridays for a month.

**G. HR Report/Newsletter:**

Don provided report updates; some fluctuation at the end of this week will be at 60 employees with need for more; candidates and applications quality/experience has been wonderful since the raise, some turnover, hired 8-10 new drivers; few positions needing to fill; transitioned some drivers, able to move preferred routes for senior drivers; One transitioned from Utility to dispatch in Marion, lives in Marion; Marion, instead of hiring new, will rotate the drivers and have them cover dispatch.

Mr. Jackson asked on the age range for drivers.

Don and Sam confirmed it is a wide age range; process of hiring/road tests/physical aspects have changed because of new requirements/testing.

EOM – Driver – Lavern Jackson; Penny Pincher – CC; Dot I's Cross T's – Lauren Leonard

EOY – Urban driver, James Smith; Rural Driver, Darlene Murphy; Manager, Jack Picket; Staff, Bo Flowers

Don shared updates in newsletter, Title VI updates Ania does good with ensuring we are following guidelines.

**H. Quarterly Financials:**

Samantha provided update. Operating revenue is cash brought in, above budget except the LC-beach. Bus passes at 147% would like to find places to put passes back in area. Grant Revenue looks good for the ones that we hit; 5307 have been auditing invoices that we draw down everything we could, found some omissions and drew down and that's why 140%; 5307 at 45%; 5311 at 72%; SMTF funds is at 186%; the vehicles are 0 as they have not been received; RTAP up from more training. Non-operating revenue; local match funds at 88%, believe will go up in next quarter.

Don added AR meeting led to follow up with ~6-8 local organizations emailed and ~6 positive response, confirmed sending payment.

Sam added that program revenue is advertising on bus, use on things not eligible for reimbursement; insurance reimbursement, accidents repair at 137%.

Don added that for program income goal should be to wrap older buses if there is no federal or state interest then can use the resource as long as federal/state interest we cannot use the funding for that purpose.

Sam continued with overall revenue being 47% of budget. Operating expenses regular is on target and overtime is at 161% due to additional services and understaffing; physical exams due to testing to filling positions/hiring; fuel is at 76%, concerns with how much buffer is added here; telephone is at 160%, trying different options for communication with drivers, different devices; Marketing is up because budget is small and due to the schedules and new services; overall at 89% of budget, hopeful that the overtime comes down and that the exams level out.

Don confirmed that overtime is starting to trend down; retired drivers are out and covering for these type things.

Tyron commented and hoping that the increases help with turnover.

Don added that we look at classifications and driver that come with no CDL \$6k-8k expense, for those with CDL and tenure still go through program \$4k-6k. Big investment.

Sam continued with maintenance being on budget; some outliers but not much; 161% the buses that came from Coast and working on those.

Don added maintenance is making sure there are no safety issues.

Sam continued with the credit in maintenance, purchasing reached out to Uniform companies charged for items that we did not get immediately and we received a credit. Admin expenses on point at 100%; printing is at 367% with new services; utilities are at 103%; dues and subscriptions at 356% because of timing; events at 176% all included. Non Allowable, put all RTAP in its own account keep separate; all capital purchase items will be capitalized by the end of year; overall at 12% of budget. Net results at 97,569 hoping to recoup.

Don added that we are hoping to capitalize and ensure that we do not miss anything. Ensuring that nothing slips through the cracks.

Q2 Financials – motioned, seconded and unanimously approved.

**I. Committee Reports:**

None

**J. Old/Current Business:**

**a. Marion County Update**

Don provided update, asked the members that attended to share.

Everyone in attendance agreed that it was very nice.

Don added that reflecting on how far we have come in 10 years; the drivers lounge and improvements; check was 139K from Marion Healthcare for services over next 3 years; some additional partners and wrapping buses; hoping to get media and additional coverage. The Marion and Mullins have been in service for a couple weeks now and there are about 15-20 stops on each route.

**b. Timmonsville Update**

Don provided update, met with the Mayor, County council and Hope Health (location in Timmonsville, stakeholder) approved and moving forward with funding on the locals level – hoping to get the funding needed, Honda reached back out to and they are interested in tying in with a workforce route and cover 1<sup>st</sup> shift, some public hearings want to do more there; tie in with the Florence system.

**c. Marion Service Update**

Don shared about how services are going well and Harbor Freight is showing interest, DEW grant years ago connecting Marion to Dillon, tie in workforce. DMA (mini Harbor Freight) meeting scheduled in Marion County, growing with 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> location and they are struggling with the transportation; boat manufacturer turned pool mfg., Marion Ceramics and others, Sopako will work with these industries.

**d. FY21-22 Audit Update**

Sam uploaded all information and trying to get in contact, they have a lot on schedule, hoping next week to schedule the audit, hopeful next couple of weeks. Don't want to be late turning into state.

**K. New Business:**

**a. Board Training**

Don provided an email to the board with the board training. Several members attended before this one is a full day and deeper dive than last 4hr session. Let us know who is interested in attending, can use RTAP funding.

**b. TASC Conference and Legislative Reception**

Don shared that the TASC retreat last week had 1-day training to develop elevator speech, good resource with great examples. Good training leading into March 1<sup>st</sup> legislative reception with the TASC board, working with partners and support to have present to tell story (Harbor Freight and Dr. Bethea as main spotlight) There will be 10x10 static displays and all industry have 3x8 that will speak to why transit is important – funding at the state level limits transit to what we can do and thinking of how to fund better at the local level. Conference is in Columbia with Roadeo.

**c. Budget Season**

Don provided update, worked with Sam on a draft budget, began on board committee discussion.

#### **d. Board Committee Discussion**

Don provided update on speaking with other transit authorities and about their board. Mrs. Burns asked about her committee. Would love to visit the committees and look at opportunity to meet within those committees, ie, policy committee, finance budget – layout what we think, looking at Chesterfield County and how to focus and have these conversations and have the board involved in. Between March and April will have 22 city, town, county council meetings. Plans in place to attend.

#### **L. Executive Director's Comments:**

Don shared he is excited about the growth. Marion was a long time coming, now moving people in Marion on fixed route. Looking forward to connecting the services across county lines. Feels good to be back where we need to be. Other growth - Cades, Black River Hospital/MUSC really good conversation with partners there and looking to move that forward with the service from LC-Cades and then back to Florence and surrounding areas.

George asked a question on if there is an illustration that shows all routes. Should develop something to use when telling the story, big picture showcases all the places and connectivity.

Don confirmed that we do not have something that shows it all, will try to work on this. Geographically speaking PDRTA has largest land mass in US for single RTA.

George shared about a stop where a shelter would be beneficial.

Don added there are federal funds and working on a shelter near the homeless shelter, beneficial to more than PDRTA, kids waiting on bus leads to working with the school district on areas where there is overlap and could both benefit. Shelters pay off big and last for a long time, write a scope and send in.

Don shared one more piece, the electric bus RFP have a company protest in place, at a point where conversations with infrastructure and power supply, etc. – while we would love to have these concerned with the timing. Warranties with the batteries are not good, 6-figures to replace batteries, more research done unveils more headaches. The two RTAs in SC that have, have trouble, dealing with charging stations out of 365 working on the charges 200 days. Grant awarded and won but want to hold off, the cost to come will be greater than what we gain.

Discussions around the reliability and payoff from the electric buses. Ask board approval to hold off on RFP for now, board in agreement with decision.

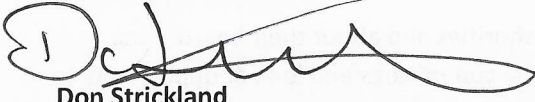
#### **M. Chairman's Comments:**

Chairman Jones thanked everyone for coming.

#### **N. Adjournment:**

Motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:26pm

Respectively submitted,



**Don Strickland**  
**Executive Director**