



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

**Draft Meeting Minutes  
February 16, 2023**

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

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

**Staff Present:** Samantha Mack

**Guests:** None

A. Tyron Jones called the meeting to order at 5:48 PM

B. Invocation - Tyron Jones

C. **Approval of the Agenda:**

Agenda – motioned, seconded and unanimously approved.

D. **Approval of the Minutes:**

January 19, 2023 meeting minutes – motioned, seconded and unanimously approved.

E. **Public Comments:**

None

F. **Operations Report:**

Don reported, January not typically a great month but this year we increased by 39%. Trends still positive and recovered to pre-pandemic. Darlington at 280%; LakeTran over 1,100; Hartsville 1,209; DT Shuttle 2,290; Bennettsville Express is at 1,300 trips 24%; McColl-Clio-Bennettsville up 68%; know situation with Mohawk; Dillon Express doing well, up 76%; Dillon Demand Response at 90%; Harbor Freight continuing to improve, discussing 2<sup>nd</sup> shift and weekends; Cheraw Express up 48%; 398 Veterans used service; 1,500 Housing Authority trips, not all inclusive. Looking forward to getting closer to 30k trips/month, hopeful in 12-18 months.

Jebaily commented on the large increases and if could look at comparison with other RTAs.

Don added that to compare the difference would be population density and service hours. Our numbers compared to our population are above average.

Jebaily asked for historical trends on Florence Routes

Don added that we can look at this data; confirmed that we are trending back to pre-covid.

Jackson asked about Myrtle Beach service and if this would run later.

Don added that some services run later. Look at our peak time, have had 31 passengers at once, route 1 and 4.

**G. HR Report/Newsletter:**

Don provided report. 56 employees at the time of report, now 58 need to be at 66; 5 drivers in pipeline to be hired; looking for new positions and interviewing; hired a new utility worker. Newsletter highlights a lot of the programs that are available to us, more being marketed; Angela Drawhorn is the spotlight. Overall, still happy with the drivers and increased interest due to the changes made.

**H. Committee Reports:**

None

**I. Old/Current Business:**

**a. Board Training**

Don provided update. The Columbia training June 29 – have had some interest and asked to let us know if interested. Room available night before if not driving. Should be a good presenter, went well at last conference.

**b. WBTW Marion Reopening Update**

Don provided update. Article summarized and aired a couple of times on the news. Don shared about the upcoming transit retreat and sharing the poster from that event.

Don added that he is attending 26 city, town and county council meetings over the next couple of months. One Tuesday between 6-630pm 5 are happening at the same time; big area to cover.

**c. Audit Update**

Sam shared that auditor has all information; may need a special board meeting to allow time before the next meeting.

Don added 3 members on audit committee, need to stick to deadline and not ask for extension. Will need to approve at the March Board meeting.

**d. MUSC Update/Transit Symposium**

Don shared that working with Williamsburg; Hospital in Cades and 60% Lake Tran elderly using our service and need access to Hospital; idea to run from Lake City to Cades multiple times and connect to Florence; Working with Williamsburg to handle that side; Chairman Jones attended; McCall Farms interested in workforce transportation.

Chairman Jones shared, symposium was promising; a lot of people attended; excited for that area.

**e. Timmonsville Update**

Don shared that Sam and he have met in Timmonsville a couple of times; last visit councilman Yarborough, Mayor, Hope Health were there; excited about the connection from Timmonsville to Florence and the route within. Working with Honda to conduct a lunch and learn, hope to build in workforce transportation. Closer to new fiscal year, possible still May.

**f. Pee Dee Commerce City Workforce**

Don shared update about 8 months ago with Ruiz Foods; found folks that are paying a lot to commute; lunch and learn and similar to symposium and have had several others now interested, Niagara and PFG; Ruiz committed to private program; Pepsi interested; other business in area attended and recognize the need; QVC, Otis. April 10 will begin Demand Response service for Ruiz.

Jackson asked about the park and ride.

Don shared that the only focus now is 29501, 29505 then 29506. Park and rides is the #2 #3 model, lunch and learn had 7 people from Bennettsville, could use the Enterprise PDRTA to carpool. More to come on workforce transportation.

**g. Legislative Reception Presentation**

Don shared the partners that contributed to the presentation for TASC presentation; shows positivity and value in community; rotating at the legislative reception.

**J. New Business:**

**a. Vacant Positions**

Don shared, mentioned in HR Report; positions are crucial to filling; DOO would help with taking some direct reports.

**b. Chesterfield County**

Don shared that met with Jefferson, Pageland, Economic Development; working on 3/1 County Council and Chesterfield City Council meeting; services in Cheraw and Bennettsville but the need to tie in the Jefferson, Pageland and Chesterfield. Working with health care foundation, Sandhills. Discussions around other surrounding areas and towns and tying in; hope local fund will be there to help with federal funding; getting additional \$150k from state for rural areas; allocation appropriation decreased; opportunity for new starts; more possibility for urban, as we tie in rural service can allocate more to urban funds; opportunity to chase inner city funds from the Irby

Street stop; Amtrak planning line to connect Fayetteville/Lumberton/Dillon to low country, looking at LC stop.

**K. Executive Director's Comments:**

Don asked the board what he can do better, George mentioned more graphs regarding ridership data; what else would be beneficial?

HR Monthly Report, remove Future/Blank columns.

**L. Chairman's Comments:**

Chairman Jones thanked everyone for coming.

**M. Adjournment:**

Motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:36pm

**Respectively submitted,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Strickland', written over a horizontal line.

**Don Strickland  
Executive Director**