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Wednesday, November 16, 2022

12:00 p.m.

GoTriangle Board Room

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**Board members present** | Will Allen III, Corey Branch, Brenda Howerton, Sig Hutchinson, Michael Parker

**Board members attending remotely** | Vivian Jones, Elaine O'Neal, Renée Price, Jennifer Robinson, Stelfanie Williams [arr. 12:10 p.m., left 1:24 p.m.]

**Board members absent** | Michael Fox, Valerie Jordan

Chair Sig Hutchinson officially called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

**I. Adoption of Agenda**

**Action:** On motion by Jones and second by Price the agenda was adopted. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

**II. Public Comment**

No comments.

**III. Consent Agenda**

**Action:** A motion was made by Allen and seconded by Robinson to approve the consent agenda. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

The following consent agenda items were approved:

- October 26, 2022 | Regular Session Minutes.
- Ratified adoption of the 2022 Wake Transit Community Engagement Policy.\*
- Adopted GoTriangle FY2023 Budget Ordinance Amendment 2022 0031 and Major Transit Investment Fund Budget Ordinance Amendment 2022 0032.\*
- Approved the FY2023 Q2 amendments to the Durham, Orange and Wake Transit Work Plans and adopt associated budget ordinance amendments:
  - Ordinance 2022 0033 Triangle Tax District - Durham Operating Fund\*
  - Ordinance 2022 0034 Triangle Tax District - Durham Capital Fund\*
  - Ordinance 2022 0035 Triangle Tax District - Orange Operating Fund\*
  - Ordinance 2022 0036 Triangle Tax District - Orange Capital Fund\*
  - Ordinance 2022 0037 Triangle Tax District - Wake Operating Fund\*
  - Ordinance 2022 0038 Triangle Tax District - Wake Capital Fund\*

\*These documents are attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

**IV. Presentations**

**A. Durham County Transit Plan Update**

Meg Scully introduced Ellen Beckmann, Durham County Transportation Manager, and Aaron Cain. The presentation is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

**Key themes**

- Improve the current system
  - All routes 30 minutes or sooner, some 15-minute service
  - Service later in the evenings and on weekends
  - More crosstown routes
- More projects sooner
  - Bus stop improvements
  - GoDurham and GoTriangle paratransit service expansion and improvement study; food access for seniors shuttle
  - GoDurham Connect zones
- Connect the region with quick and reliable service
  - Next steps for commuter rail connecting Durham and Wake counties
  - Better on-time performance of buses
  - Transit signal priority for buses, bus-only lanes, study potential bus rapid transit [BRT] or bus speed and reliability infrastructure
- Better experience at stops and stations
  - Bus stop improvements countywide to include accessible landing pads at all stops; benches, shelters, signage, lighting and sidewalks at certain stops
  - Safer access to bus stops
  - Improve transit centers at Durham Station, Village Transit Center, North Duke Crossing Transit Center, Regional Transit Center [RTC] relocation

Williams arrived.

Compared to the 2017 Durham Transit Plan, the 2022 recommended plan increases the portion of funding for bus projects from 15% to 73% and decreases the amount allocated to light rail and commuter rail from 85% to 27%. Over \$100 million is planned to be spend on improvements and new projects by 2027. The money is allocated as follows:

- 36% enhance and extend bus service
- 27% fast, reliable regional service through commuter rail or other improvements
- 9% bus stop improvements and transit centers
- 9% more routes going more places
- 6% administration and accountability
- 6% faster, more reliable bus service
- 5% operations & maintenance
- 2% paratransit improvements

The plan is expected to be adopted in January.

Parker asked if a sensitivity analysis had been done regarding the impact of a reduction or elimination of the vehicle rental tax reallocated to the transit plan. Freeman stated there has been a preliminary look and it has been discussed with GoTriangle's partners.

Robinson suggested an alternate scenario that does not rely on revenue from the vehicle

rental tax. Lattuca stated that GoTriangle's partners are extremely sensitive to financial issues but a staff working group is dealing with this issue.

**V. General Business Agenda**

**A. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda**

None.

**B. Disposition of Real Property**

Gary Tober stated that .99 acres at 324 West Lane Street in Raleigh have been appraised at \$10.13 million. He requested approved for disposition for not less than that amount. He said GoTriangle currently uses the property to store bus shelters. The federal interest in the property is 55.7%; GoTriangle, 30.7% and NCDOT, 13.6%.

GoTriangle also owns a .32 acre lot at 301 North Harrington Street and 406 West Lane Street which has been used for parking. NCDOT has indicated that these parcels are critical for the S-line and asked GoTriangle not to list these for sale. NCDOT will work with GoTriangle to reimburse the federal interest in the property.

**Action:** On motion by Parker and second by Allen the Board authorized the President/CEO to negotiate and enter into a contract for the sale of approximately .99 acres at 324 West Lane Street, Raleigh, for not less than \$10.13M. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

**C. Contract to Purchase Bus Stop Amenities**

Richard Major introduced Bong Vang who provided an update on the GoDurham bus stop improvements program. The presentation is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. Improvements have been completed at 104 stops in Durham and 11 are currently under construction. Another eight stops are ready to bid with over 200 others in the planning, design, permitting or real estate process.

An inventory conducted in the summer of 2022 lists found 180 stops with existing shelters. GoTriangle has managed the installation of over 40 additional shelters. Shelters are proposed at over 50 additional stops based on GoDurham's criteria of over 25 boardings per day.

Vang then requested approval of a contract with Brasco International Incorporated for \$782,000 for the purchase and installation of 80 bus shelters funded through the Durham Transit Plan.

**Action:** A motion was made by Allen and seconded by Parker to authorize the President/CEO to execute a contract with Brasco International Incorporated for the purchase and delivery of 80 bus shelters to be installed at GoDurham bus stops for an amount not to exceed \$782,000.

Howerton asked for an update on the homeless riding the buses. Vinson Hines responded that operations is reaching out to Housing for New Hope for have staff come on buses to approach non-destination and homeless individuals to provide them information about available services. Eric Curry stated that Triangle Family Services will be conducting a lunch-and-learn program about assisting those in need.

**Action:** Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

**D. Improving Service Reliability and Safety**

Vinson Hines requested a temporary suspension of the CRX | Chapel Hill-Raleigh express and DRX | Durham-Raleigh express. He stated that prior to the Covid-19 pandemic GoTriangle had never missed any scheduled service; however, over the last three months operator shortages have caused GoTriangle to miss a significant number of trips despite relying on overtime to cover open assignments. This results in unreliable service for our customers and an unsafe work and travel environment for fatigued employees and passengers. Continued missed trips and related rider communications challenges have resulted in a significant level of customer complaints. GoTriangle currently is down over 20 operators. The recently approved pay structure with increases for operators has had a positive impact on recruitment, with 100 applications received since the announcement of the new salary structure.

Staff evaluated routes to determine service that could be reduced or suspended to a level that can be supported by the current operational staffing levels with a goal of maintaining service coverage and impacting the least number of customers. The CRX and DRX were selected for temporary suspension because they provide a meaningful reduction in the number of operators required to reliably run the remaining system and there are alternative routes and stops that can be used by customers. This option avoids eliminating coverage level service.

The suspension will affect 524 daily boardings, or 9% of total ridership; however, these customers can use alternate GoTriangle routes and park-and-ride locations to get to their destination. Staff recognizes that the suspension of CRX and DRX could result in a loss in ridership if these customers choose to drive. The vanpool program is an option and staff is evaluating ways to streamline vanpool enrollment and temporarily waive fees to support affected riders. The remaining 91% of GoTriangle ridership will see improved service reliability and fewer missed trips.

If approved, staff will proceed with implementation of the temporary suspension in early December, communicating alternatives with stakeholders and customers. Staff will continue to monitor the onboarding process for new hires with a goal of restoring Routes CRX and DRX to current levels as soon as possible once operator staffing levels can reliably support the service.

No additional funding is needed to implement this temporary suspension. Costs to implement a temporary vanpool fee waiver can be covered with savings in other areas.

**Action:** On motion by Parker and second by Howerton the Board approved a temporary suspension of the Chapel Hill-Raleigh Express (CRX) and Durham-Raleigh Express (DRX) and designated the President/CEO authority to determine when the routes would resume normal service. Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

**B. Operations & Finance Committee Report**

Renée Price stated that several items from committee were approved on the consent agenda. One budget amendment was not recommended - an increase to the board's travel budget. The committee also discussed a 10-year financial projection and how to remain sustainable and increase revenue.

**C. Planning & Legislative Committee Report**

Vivian Jones reported the committee received a presentation on the GoTriangle Short Range Transit Plan.

**D. New Business**

None.

**V. Other Business**

**A. President and CEO's Report**

A list of contracts approved by the president and CEO is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

- Gave an update to Congressman Price. He is working with NCDOT and NCRR on funds for additional work in the corridor planned for commuter rail. These funds could provide five miles of double track west of Cary.
- Spoke at RTA's leadership meeting about commuter rail.
- Met with NCRR staff to provide an update on commuter rail and the decision-making process.

**1. Operations Update**

The October monthly report is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Vinson Hines Jr. highlighted several items:

- Ridership remains positive with 6,147 average weekday boardings in October, the second consecutive month with an average over 6,000 since the start of the pandemic.
- Average Saturday ridership is 40.6% higher than pre-pandemic levels, but 3.5% less than October, 2021.
- Average Sunday ridership increased 16.6% over October 2021 and is up more than 80% from pre-pandemic levels.

- Over 100 applications for operator positions have been received since the new salary structure was implemented. Staff is working to accelerate the hiring and the onboarding process.
- Year-to-date incidents in which the police were called is at 54, with 36 in the same period in 2021.
- Staff is working with Housing for New Hope on outreach to the homeless.
- Operations participated in active shooter training led by Durham Police Department. TSA is considering hosting a full-scale scale exercise next year for GoTriangle, first responders and external stakeholders.
- There is a national diesel fuel shortage but staff is working to maintain its supply.

Williams left.

## 2. **Capital Projects Status Report**

The capital projects status report and update on major capital projects are attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Katharine Eggleston reported that the Hoffman Team has announced a name for its project. The RUS Bus facility will be located on the ground floor of Union West.

She then provided an update on commuter rail.

- Public engagement is scheduled for the first quarter of 2023.
- Funding partners will finalize a proposal in the second quarter of 2023.
- Transit plans will be updated and cost-sharing proposals considered in the second quarter of 2023.

Parker asked what steps would follow approval to move forward with a project. Eggleston replied those activities necessary to enter project development: creating a project management plan, hiring new consultant teams for the environmental analysis and preliminary design and cooperative agreements with partners. She added that the environmental work and preliminary engineering phase is a two to three years process.

## B. **General Counsel's Report**

General Counsel Byron Smith reported that his office continues to support efforts to deliver RUS Bus and commuter rail, reviewing various legal forms and agreements. Interviews for the vacant attorney position have concluded and a new executive assistant has been hired.

## C. **Chair's Report**

Chair Hutchinson stated that board members would be meeting with a facilitator to discover what they need to learn and build relationships. A retreat will be rescheduled in 2023.

**D. Board Member Reports****1. CAMPO Executive Board Representative**

Will Allen III stated that CAMPO would meet later today and will consider consent agenda that includes the Wake Transit Community Engagement Policy, Wake Transit work plan amendment policy update, an extension to the MOU in support of development of the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Project and the Q2 FY2023 Wake Transit Plan work plan amendments.

**2. Regional Transportation Alliance (RTA) Representative**

No report.

**3. DCHC MPO Board Representative**


Michael Parker reported that the bulk of the meeting was a presentation on the Durham Transit Plan.

**4. Rail~Volution**


Written reports on the Rail~Volution conference from Brenda Howerton and Elaine O'Neal are attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

**VI. Adjournment**

**Action:** Chair Hutchinson adjourned the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

  
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Sig Hutchinson, Chair

Attest:

  
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Michelle C. Dawson, CMC  
Clerk to the Board