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Wednesday, August 23, 2023

12:00 p.m.

GoTriangle Board Room

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**Board members present** | Sig Hutchinson, Vivian Jones, Elaine O'Neal, Michael Parker, Sally Greene, Jennifer Robinson [left 1:57 p.m.]

**Board members attending remotely** | Brenda Howerton [arr. 12:18 p.m., left 12:59 p.m.], Stelfanie Williams [arr. 12:33 p.m., left 1:57 p.m.]

**Board members absent** | Mary-Ann Baldwin [excused], Corey Branch, Michael Fox, Valerie Jordan

Chair Sig Hutchinson officially called the meeting to order at 12:14 p.m. A quorum was present.

**I. Adoption of Agenda**

Chair Hutchinson requested to add a closed session to discuss employee performance pursuant to NCGS §143 318.11.(a) (6) and approval of employees' work plans following the closed session.

**Action:** On motion by Jones and second by O'Neal the agenda was adopted with the additions as requested. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

**II. Public Comment**

No comments.

**III. Consent Agenda**

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

The following consent agenda items were approved:

- June 28, 2023 | Regular Session Minutes.
- June 28, 2023 | Closed Session A Minutes.
- June 28, 2023 | Closed Session B Minutes.
- June 28, 2023 | Closed Session C Minutes.
- Adopted the FY2025-2030 Wake Bus Plan.\*
- Authorized staff to conduct property coordination, outreach and acquisition for GoDurham bus stop improvements at locations identified in Table 1 for bus stop improvements on behalf of the City of Durham.\*
- Approved the FY2023 Q4 Wake Transit Work Plan period of performance amendments.\*
- Approved an amendment to the Board of Trustees' Rules of Procedure related to committees and boards.\*

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

**IV. General Business Agenda****A. Items Removed from Consent Agenda**

None.

**B. Appointment of Nominating Committee**

Chair Hutchinson recommended that Elaine O'Neal [Durham], Michael Parker [Orange] and Sig Hutchinson [Wake] serve on the Nominating Committee.

**Action:** A motion was made by Robinson and seconded by Greene to appoint the members as named to the Nominating Committee. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

**C. Operations & Finance Committee Report**

Michael Parker stated that several items were approved on the board's consent agenda: Durham bus stop right-of-way acquisition, Wake Transit work plan period of performance amendments and an amendment to the Rules of Procedure related to the new committee structure. He added the committee also received updates on the newly established transit ambassador program and the internal review of Bret Martin's letter.

**D. Planning & Legislative Committee Report**

Vivian Jones reported that the committee meeting was canceled due to lack of quorum.

Howerton joined.

**E. Regional Rail and BRT Next Steps**

The presentation by Katharine Eggleston and Paige Cureton is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Eggleston reminded the board that the MPOs have appointed subcommittees to discuss next steps for rail and regional transit. Feedback received to date suggests that regional leaders are interested in a future that includes both planning for bus rapid transit and continuing to pursue federal funding opportunities to support a longer term vision for passenger rail. She stated that there are BRT projects underway and in development within the region; however, no one is working on regional connectivity.

Cureton said transit integration - the coordination of infrastructure and planning for all modes - is essential in delivering a seamless transit experience for riders, not just between local and regional transit services, but integration with other modes of transportation within the regional network. She said GoTriangle's role as the regional transit agency is to ensure the regional transit system is well integrated and connected to deliver high quality transit services in coordination with local, regional and state partners.

Cureton stated that GoTriangle can build upon the FAST 2.0 study being led by RTA and NCDOT and the region's 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and other county planning efforts to conduct a regional BRT and bus study. The study would evaluate

GoTriangle's existing and future regional transit routes to identify candidates for regional BRT consistent with the vision of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the potential for converting routes to regional BRT.

Cureton discussed features of BRT systems, corridors, service and routes as well as station examples:

*Bus Rapid Transit [BRT] Features*

- Bus lanes
- Transit priority signals
- Convenient, all-day service
- Convenient boarding
- Real-time rider information
- Comfortable enhanced stations
- Unique branding
- Dedicated fleet with specialized vehicles

*BRT Corridors*

- Dedicated running ways – exclusive bus lanes and transitways, dedicated access [ramps, bus on shoulder]
- Transit signal prioritization/queue jumps
- Managed lanes
- Intersection treatments

*BRT Service*

- Frequent, all-day service
- Short headways [15 minutes or better]
- Wide station stop spacing

*BRT Route Structure*

- Simple routes
- Convenient transfers
- Integrated station locations with land use
- Service to major activity centers

*BRT Stations*

- Freeway – allow buses to stop within freeway right of way to quickly pickup/unload riders
- Arterial – located along roadways with convenient access to neighborhoods
- Transit Center – multi-modal mobility centers with connections to other forms of transit

Williams arrived.

Cureton then highlighted examples of freeway-based BRT systems in the Puget Sound, Washington and Los Angeles, California. She noted several considerations for BRT:

- Integrated as part of the overall regional transit network
- Incremental, scalable delivery
- Typically lower capital cost than light or heavy rail

- More exclusivity, higher quality means higher costs
- Shared ownership of project goals by all partners
- Resource commitment by project partners

**Action:** A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Parker to direct staff to engage with partners to develop a regional BRT and Bus Study. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

Eggleston shared that there are several grant opportunities now and next year through the USDOT. The Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Regional Partnership Challenge has been identified by staff to help with the incremental, strategic and programmatic approach of investment in a passenger rail program in the Triangle. The program is up to \$450 million, with three to five grants being awarded that would provide up to 80% federal funds for projects to incentivize stronger partnerships between local and state governments, MPOs and other community partners. The application must consist of a partnership between two or more eligible agencies.

**Action:** A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Robinson the board endorsed a long term vision for regional passenger rail and pursue grant opportunities to support that vision including the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Regional Partnerships Challenge. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

Hutchinson pointed out that the GoTriangle board has not endorsed the 37-mile commuter rail corridor. He suggested that action should be taken before this grant application is made.

**Action:** On motion by Parker and second by Robinson the board voted to endorse the 37-mile regional rail corridor in Durham and Wake counties with potential future extension into Johnston and Orange counties. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

**F. New Business**

None.

**V. Other Business**

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

A list of contracts approved by the president and CEO and the capital projects status report are attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

Lattuca reported on the following items:

- Announced the hiring of Director of Human Resources, Michelle Ally-Crosby.
- The joint MPO regional rail subcommittee will be meeting in the next few weeks.
- GoTriangle is scheduling a meeting with the airport authority and other partners to discuss improving transit to the airport.
- Discussions continue with CAMPO about the vehicle rental tax. Wake County is now taking lead on the issue.

Due to concern about losing quorum, Hutchinson asked to rearrange the agenda to move into closed session at this time.

## VII. Closed Session | RUS Bus

**Action:** A motion by O'Neal and seconded by Parker to enter into closed session at 1:37 p.m. pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11.(a) (3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged and NCGS §143-318.11.(a) (5) to establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating (i) the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

**Action:** The board voted to return to open session at 1:49 p.m.

## V. Other Business

### A. President and CEO's Report

#### 1. Capital Project status

Katharine Eggleston updated board members on RUS Bus, a joint development project with planned mixed-use high-rise and ground floor transit facility funded through a federal grant. The funding for the public component is comprised of a \$20 million federal BUILD grant, \$8.8 million allocated in the State's TIP and \$9 million from the Wake Transit Plan and GoTriangle. Phase two construction on the public component is planned to begin in the fall.

The private component of the facility is undergoing design changes due to rising construction costs and challenges in the private financing market. The project now includes 385 residential units, with 10% or 39 units affordable, a private parking garage and ground floor retail. The developer is working with the City of Raleigh on approval of this revised program and will need additional time to obtain financing. To mitigate a schedule delay on the transit facility and provide more time for the developer to obtain approval and financing, staff is recommending that the board authorize a reimbursement arrangement for early private overbuild activities. Approximately \$10.8 million in the private overbuild, including foundations, some structural elements on the ground floor and the parking garage ramp adjacent to the transit facility, are integral with the public facility and need to commence when the public facility construction starts. In the proposed reimbursement arrangement, GoTriangle would provide funding for those activities up front and the developer would reimburse GoTriangle when financing is in place. An initial \$3 million for foundations activities would go into effect in September and require commitment of an additional \$8 million by November 30 for the other integral private overbuild activities to occur concurrently.

**Action:** On motion by Parker and second by Jones the board voted to authorize the President/CEO to execute an amendment to the development agreements with RB

Infrastructure LLC an RB Vertical LLC, special purpose entities owned and controlled by Hoffman & Associates in order to maintain the transit project schedule and allow additional time for private overbuild financing, including the allocation of \$3 million for initial foundations activities and a commitment of an additional \$8 million by November 30 for other early private overbuild activities that have been determined to be integrated with the ground-floor transit facility, requiring concurrent construction. Upon vote the motion was carried unanimously.

Robinson left.

## **V. Other Business**

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

#### **1. Capital Project status**

Katharine Eggleston reported that staff continues to pursue grant opportunities for the regional bus capital program. In September Representative Ross will present an award for a Community Project to support the bus stop program in Wake County. An application also was submitted for the Federal Highway Administration PROTECT Program for green infrastructure planning at the Nelson Road Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility. Staff is preparing multiple applications for programs to support the relocation of the Regional Transit Center, now the Triangle Mobility Hub, to the site owned by Research Triangle Foundation at NC 54 and Miami Blvd in Research Triangle Park. Staff is conducting public engagement on a short range transit plan in Durham and Orange counties.

#### **1. Operations Update**

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

Lattuca stated the chair asked us to contact the City of Raleigh to talk about the issues they are experiencing with the unhoused. Vincent Hines reached out to David Eatman and was told they are seeking funds for additional security. Hines added that the Downtown Raleigh Alliance and various city departments are working together to address the issue.

Vinson Hines shared the following statistics:

- FY2023 ridership: 1.5 million, down from 1.6 million in FY2019
- FY2023 average weekday boardings: 5,310, up 7.7% from FY2022, down 12.6% from FY2019
- FY2023 average Saturday ridership: 2,535, up 54% from FY2019 and up 7.7% from FY2022
- FY2023 average Sunday ridership: 1,822, up 91.4% from FY2019 and up 15% from FY2022
- July average weekday ridership: 5,177, up .5% from 2022 but down 9.9% from 2019
- July average Saturday ridership: 2,443, up 11.5% from 2022 and up 58.4% from 2019

- July average Sunday ridership: 1,824, up 8.2% from 2022 and up 106% from 2019
- Applications: 95 for bus operator received month-to-date.
- Operators: 63, including 6 trainees
- The next training class is scheduled for September 11<sup>th</sup>.
- There were 4 safety and security incidents in July. The catalytic converters were stolen from ten paratransit vehicles in July. An operator was assaulted by a passenger in July as well.

Parker asked if weekend riders are commuting to work or using the bus for recreation or shopping purposes. Hines responded that there are more non-destination riders on weekends. Eggleston stated that an onboard survey was recently completed and staff will investigate to try and answer that question.

**B. General Counsel's Report**

General Counsel Byron Smith stated that he has been working on a regional cost sharing agreement for rail and BRT.

**C. Chair's Report**

Hutchinson noted efforts by the City of Raleigh to add a Transit Overlay District along the New Bern Avenue bus rapid transit corridor and stated his desire for GoTriangle to support these efforts. He stated that he had asked staff to prepare a letter of support. The board will have another round of small group meetings on August 30. He noted that this is the last meeting for Stelfanie Williams and expressed his appreciation for her contributions to a very significant impact on this board. Other board members echoed their appreciation

Mayor O'Neal stated that Durham attorney Patrick Hannah has been recommended to fulfill the remainder of her term. Durham County has voted and the City Council will take action in September.

**D. Board Member Reports**

**1. CAMPO Executive Board Representative**

Hutchinson stated that the CAMPO executive board held public hearings on the Locally Administered Projects Program [LAPP], the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan [MTP] amendment and the Transportation Improvement Program [TIP]. An update was given on the 2020 Urbanized Area and MPO boundary, which is required every ten years, with expected expansion into Chatham, Harnett and Johnston counties.

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

Hutchinson reported on the RTA annual transportation breakfast.

**3. DCHC MPO Board Representative**

Parker stated that he did not attend; however, the agenda included a review of SPOT 7 projects and the scope of work for a new 15-501 corridor study.

**VII. Closed Sessions****A. RUS Bus Update**

Covered earlier in the meeting.

**B. Performance Evaluations**

Defferred to September meeting.

**VII. Adjournment**

**Action:** Chair Hutchinson adjourned the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

  
Sig Hutchinson, Chair

Attest:



Michelle C. Dawson, CMC  
Clerk to the Board