

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

MEETING SUMMARY

May 25, 2011

Presiding: Mayor John Woods (Davidson)

Present: Jim Schumacher (Charlotte Assistant City Manager)
Terry Lansdell (TSAC Co-chair)
Harry Jones (Mecklenburg County Manager)
Mayor Jeff Tarte (Cornelius)
Anthony Roberts (Cornelius Town Manager)
Leamon Brice (Davidson Town Manager)
Mayor Jill Swain (Huntersville)
Mayor Jim Taylor (Matthews)
Ralph Messera (Matthews)
Bill Thunberg (Mooresville Representative)
Erskine Smith (Mooresville Assistant Town Manager)

Chief Executive Officer: Carolyn Flowers

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Metropolitan Transit Commission was called to order at 5:35 pm by MTC's Co-chair, Mayor John Woods.

II. Review of Meeting Summary

The meeting summary of April 27, 2011 was approved as written.

III. Comments from NC Department of Transportation

Secretary Conti

Mayor Woods welcomed special partner Eugene A. Conti, Jr., Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and his staff. Secretary Conti introduced his staff, Deputy Secretary for Transit Jim Westmoreland, Deputy Secretary for Internal and External Affairs Ted Vaden and Reid Simons, Director of Government and Public Affairs with the NC Turnpike Authority.

Secretary Conti said the NC House and Senate will continue to work on the state budget for the Governor's approval. NCDOT remains very supportive of the Blue Line Extension (BLE) and Red Line projects in creating mobility options for the region's people, critical elements in the region's development and quality of life. NCDOT's regional plans include rail modernization projects such as the Charlotte Rail Improvement and Safety Program (CRISP). NCDOT continues to work with the City on High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane issues, particularly I-77 north of Charlotte. NCDOT has also been involved with the City on Independence Boulevard and the good effort under way through ULI and other partners to create a workable mobility corridor.

NCDOT is updating its 2040 Plan to identify the state's transportation needs for the next 30 years. Extensive meetings and a strong online effort are underway to solicit the public's input on the Plan. Secretary Conti encouraged everyone to look at the 2040 Plan online to provide input on how to improve transportation in North Carolina.

Mayor Woods expressed thanks to Secretary Conti for efforts to improve roadways and transit for the region so communities thrive. Mayor Woods noted that Deputy Secretary Westmoreland is leaving NCDOT and wished him the best. He presented Mr. Westmoreland with a certificate of appreciation from MTC for his partnership in working for the area's transportation and transit needs. Mr. Flowers presented Mr. Westmoreland with a model of a LYNX light rail vehicle. Mr. Westmoreland thanked Mayor Woods and said that the Governor and Secretary have changed NCDOT for the better. He encouraged MTC members and said the role they play as elected officials has made a difference in the region.

Discussion: Mayor Swain commented that she loved working with NCDOT and it has been a pleasure working with Secretary Conti.

IV. Transit Services Advisory Committee (TSAC) Chair's Report Terry Lansdell

Mr. Lansdell reported that TSAC met on May 12 and discussed the Independence Boulevard corridor, including information on the corridor's roadway projects and ULI's corridor study. TSAC also heard about CATS' service plans during the construction project. Hilary Broadway is a new TSAC member from Huntersville. Positions for Mint Hill and Pineville are still open.

V. Citizens Transit Advisory Group (CTAG) Chair's Report

No report.

VI. Red Line Task Force Update John Woods

Mayor Woods reported that the Red Line Task Force met at 4:00 pm on May 25. The team is working with partners at NCDOT through the consultant offered by DOT, Paul Morris. There will be a working meeting in June with members from all the towns on the corridor to sort out the various cost and funding opportunities for the North Corridor.

VII. Public Comments

None.

VIII. Action Items

a. State Transportation Demand Management Olaf Kinard

Mr. Kinard, CATS Director of Marketing & Communications, said that CATS has received a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) grant from the state for over 14 years. The state revised its procedures, and Board approval for the TDM grant is now required as part of NCDOT's Board approval process.

Discussion: None.

Resolution: Jim Taylor motioned to approve the resolution to continue the TDM program and allow CATS to receive a matching grant. Jeff Tarte seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

IX. Information Items

a. Special Transportation Service / ADA Report P. Wallace / L. Kopf

Pete Wallace, CATS Manager, Special Transportation Service, stated that STS operates according to the guidelines set out by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which requires entities that provide fixed route service to provide paratransit services within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the local bus route system. STS ridership has increased over the years, and more customers have been certified on STS since there have been changes to the DSS

transportation eligibility requirements. STS continues to meet federal requirements by providing trips within the required ADA ¼ mile buffer area, but the service is nearing capacity. Increased demand within the required area means that STS will not continue to be able to provide service at previous levels outside the required area.

Discussion: Mayor Taylor said the owner of a senior center on the border of Mint Hill and Matthews has reported customer service problems with STS service. Ms. Flowers replied that CATS has worked with the owner of Blessed Assurance to provide improved service. Starting June 7, CATS will start a new service, Route 94 – Matthews/Mint Hill Shuttle. The service will be paid through an NC 5310 Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities Grant, and will run 4 days a week. The route will serve three senior centers, as well as a park and ride and shopping centers. Blessed Assurance is a scheduled stop on the route. CATS is working with DSS to explore ways to coordinate efforts and provide service more efficiently. Mayor Taylor thanked Ms. Flowers for the new service between Mint Hill and Matthews.

X. Chief Executive Officer's Report

Carolyn Flowers

Under the CEO's report, Ms. Flowers discussed the following:

a. Security Update:

Bryan Leaird, CATS General Manager, Safety and Security, reported that following bin Laden's death, federal transportation officials reached out to transit agencies with rail operations to evaluate their security systems. CATS is audited regularly for safety standards and security measures and meets regularly with internal and external partners, including Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police and AlliedBarton, to evaluate current security measures and identify areas for improvement. Safety and Security is working with operators to heighten their safety awareness, as well as increasing safety awareness with the public. Staff holds full-scale exercises yearly with other emergency responders to test the system under various scenarios. Ms. Flowers added that security will be a key initiative in planning for the Democratic National Convention (DNC).

b. Recycling Program:

Leonard Ganther, CATS Manager, Facilities and Transit Amenities, said that staff has identified a \$30,000 grant through the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) that may fund half of a recycling program. Staff is evaluating other areas of funding and partnership opportunities with other City departments.

c. Budget Process:

The Charlotte City Council approved CATS' budget at its meeting on Monday, May 23. The City Manager has recommended a one percent lump-sum payment to employees to be paid from the FY11 budget, if there are budget savings in the general fund of 7.5 million. If the City approves a one percent payment to employees, CATS has identified funding areas from FY11 savings to enable a payment to CATS employees.

Secretary Conti covered the State budget, which CATS will continue to monitor. Dana Fenton, the City's Intergovernmental Relations Manager, is in Raleigh now working on the budget issue as well. CATS hopes to see negotiations between the House and the Senate to reconcile budget differences.

d. Other Updates:

Major Procurements – Staff is working through the agreement for renewal of the Center City Partners contract for the Gold Rush service, which should be finalized in June. Staff will also discuss potential Homeland Security procurements in June, based on grants from Homeland Security and TSA.

Sales Tax Revenue – Revenue was \$4.33 million for the current month, \$9.6 thousand over the amount budgeted, indicating recovery in sales tax receipts. CATS is on target to meet budgeted sales tax revenue projections of about \$56 million, back at the 2005 level.

Ridership – April ridership was 0.4 percent higher than last April. Total year to date ridership is 1.8 percent higher than projected.

Labor Negotiations – Negotiations with the Teamsters were suspended after UTU won the right to hold elections to represent bus operators. Elections will be held June 3. If negotiations are not complete by June 30, CATS anticipates a side letter agreement to extend the contract and allow time to complete negotiations.

Upcoming Meetings – There will be a meeting on the Independence Corridor on June 3. Some MTC members will be at the meeting to discuss ULI's recommendations.

MTC members will decide on the July MTC schedule at the June MTC meeting.

Bus Operations Update – CATS will initiate a new service, Route 94 – Matthews/Mint Hill Shuttle, on June 7. The route will serve area senior centers, a park and ride and shopping centers. The new route is for all transit customers, and will be a vital service for seniors and disabled members of the community.

Rodeo winners competed in Wilmington in the NC State Bus Rodeo this past weekend. Larry Kopf, CATS Chief Operations Planning Officer and Manager of Bus Operations, announced that Henry Minnet won first place in the state for STS. The team from STS won the team trophy for sfirst in the state. STS won the award for the Safest Small Bus System in the state. The Bus Operations Division won the Safest Large Bus System in the state.

Ms. Flowers noted that the American Bus Transportation System is holding its International Bus Rodeo competition in Memphis, TN. Lonny Earnhardt, who has won first place in CATS' Rodeo for 13 years, is competing in the international competition, as is the CATS Bus Maintenance Rodeo team. MTC members will be updated later on Charlotte's status in the international competition.

Discussion: None.

XI. Other Business

None.

XII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm by Mayor Woods.

NEXT MTC MEETING: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2011, 5:30 PM