

ARC COMMITTEE MEETING FOLLOW-UP

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE

January 14, 2016 Meeting Notes

Voting Members Present:

Commissioner Tim Lee, Chair
Mr. Sonny Deriso
Interim CEO Lee May
Commissioner Tom Worthan
Mr. Clark Boddie
Mr. Fred Daniels

Voting Members Absent:

Mayor Kasim Reed
Commissioner Charlotte Nash
Commissioner Buzz Ahrens
Mr. Kerry Armstrong
Mr. David Austin
Commissioner John Eaves

Non-Voting Members Present:

Mr. Rudy Bowen
Mr. Doug Hooker
Commissioner Charles Oddo
Ms. Carol Comer

Non-Voting Members Absent:

Mr. Keith Parker
Commissioner Pat Graham
Mr. Donald Hawbaker
Commissioner Pete Amos
Commissioner Richard Oden
Mr. Krik Fjelstul for Chris Tomlinson
Commissioner Keith Ellis
Commissioner Kevin Little
Commissioner Tim Lassetter
Commissioner Tommy Smith
Commissioner Jeff Turner

The committee held quorum.

Due to time constraints, Chairman Lee requested that the agenda be adjusted so that SRTA presented on the GO Bonds before the committee approved the previous meeting's minutes.

To accommodate the Douglas County presenters' need to leave early, the presentation on the Douglas County Transportation Services Study has been moved to the beginning of today's agenda. Similarly, Scott Haggard's update on the FAST Act has been moved up.

1. Welcome, Chair's comments, Approval of meeting summary, Public comment period

Chairman Lee welcomed everyone to the first Regional Transit Committee meeting of the new year and acknowledged that there was quorum. The meeting minutes from the previous RTC meeting held on November 12, 2015 were approved.

There was no public comment.

Chairman Lee introduced the new director of Cobb Community Transit, Vida Covington.

2. **ATLtransit.org (presentation)**

Mr. Landon Reed, Transportation Technologist at the Atlanta Regional Commission, discussed

Landon: New version of website is now available; the website is in a beta period. In March with the regional transit marketing push, we will drive traffic to the website. We have a strong project that will be beneficial for region. We've done some branding and design work, trip planning improvements, refined the content to provide clearer information, a quick start guide, real time and schedule information, park and ride locator, fare calculator to make sense of the complicated structure, all the different passes on various transit agencies, if children ride free, etc. with discounts, information on the paratransit services such as details on access based on the trip origin and destination, added streetcar route and schedule details as well as CATS in Cherokee County. We are excited to launch it.

Questions:

- Question from Fred Daniels: Will this work on my phone?
- Answer from Landon Reed: Yes, let me show you. When you scale it down, it sizes itself to the device accessing it. Great question; thank you.
- Comment from Cain Williamson: Call attention to the connections between the various RTC projects. The user experience should be logical across the projects.
- Comment from Jane Hayse: Landon has done an incredible job on this project. He will moving on from ARC, as he has many talents.
- Comment from Cain Williamson: I agree. He will be missed at ARC.
- Comment from Chairman Lee: We cannot underestimate the importance of having this website. Landon took one of these components of the RTC program and made it a reality. Cain's staff has been rocking and rolling and making these projects a reality.
- Comment from Doug Hooker: Would be good for Jane, Cain, and Scott to go sit with Senator Brandon Beach about progress and next steps.

3. **Douglas County (presentation)**

Randy: Excited to present information that has come out of study. Introduced the project team GS&P Jamie Cochran and Erin. Also, Gary Watson who works for Douglas County Department of Transportation

Background on project: originally programmed to do a transit feasibility study, but after scoping work they began to look at what could come from study – did not think transit study would address all needs. Broadened scope to look at more options. No silver bullet to address problems, but need to provide transportation choices. Regional transit depends on local areas building and enhancing complementary services already offered.

Approach: focus on mobility services and identify a litany of options for multiple audiences. How to leverage existing services and emerging technology? Need for a flexible infrastructure that could be coordinated across a number of services. Recognize need for options to change and adapt as the county's needs change. Focus on citizens' needs today and in the next ten years. Desire to engage citizens in a meaningful way. Jamie C. will talk about the process, some of the input that they had and discuss the recommendations.

Jamie: Happy to have Chairman Worthan who was a key part of the study. Often challenging to figure out the context of the area that you're planning in. Part of the study process was assessing how the county is changing to tap into the values of the community. Number of licensed drivers is decreasing, there are increasing needs for mobility for medical appointments... a number of needs that are under the radar.

Assessed existing conditions, identified needs and opportunities, identified and assessed options, then created action plan. Focused on the needs of the community, then tailoring solutions to meet those needs.

Population to grow 60K in next 15 years. There are many "atypical" travel patterns/needs (people with multiple part-time jobs, students). Participation process: lots of face time and in-person communication with citizens. One of the most important concerns facing citizens was affordability and safety/security. Citizens provided feedback on usefulness of possible solutions and deployment timelines for the services.

Recommendations: Flexible zone circulators, partnering with private services (like Uber/Lyft), Capital facilities improvements at Park and Ride lots (would like to add more lots), use technology better to push and receive information.

Study views solutions as integrated and complementing one another. Must be adaptive to meet changing needs over time. Chairman Worthan was instrumental in getting elected officials involved in process.

Questions:

- Chairman Lee: where are the major commute destinations outside of Douglas? (Jamie: Emory/CDC, Airport, Perimeter Center, but other trips are to central part of Douglas and across county e.g. Lithia Springs and Villa Rica)
- Chairman Lee: can the data be shared with Cobb? (Jamie: lots of interest in what Cobb is doing with flex services; Worthan: looking forward to sharing information on transportation and how to solve problems)

4. Cobb County (presentation)

Vida Covington, Director of Cobb Community Transit,
Bus procurement update: 2016 35 new buses will be delivered to CCT: 33 diesel, 2 CNG
2017 - 6 buses for Cumberland area.

Avg fleet age is currently 11.3, but will drop to 2.52 years once the new buses are delivered

Question: Daniels – What's the average mileage 600 -700K, but average for industry is 500K

AVL system update: better manage what's happening on the street, service monitoring, ability to give dispatchers clear idea of what's happening on the road. Currently in design testing phase, installation will begin in Spring 2016 and will be done by the summer (this will be all of the buses in the fleet).

Question: Cain – we talked about flex bus presentation, but CCT would like a full year of data to show the group. Tim – you can update on the new transfer station when updating on

Daniels: compatibility – Are we coordinating with ATLtransit to make sure that the information is available collectively?

Jane: Cost of system? (Vida: will check) Jane: are there transit agencies that don't have AVL (we'll have it on all systems soon)

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5. **FAST Act (presentation)**

Mr. Scott Haggard thanks committee for having him. FAST Act passed in early December and was immediately signed into law. Something we've been looking forward to for some time.

Overall, FAST Act is a significant achievement. Much longer bill than the past reauthorizations and has a large portion of money for highway/transit.

Apportionments for GA will increase by about 15% for highway spending (which is about equivalent to increase in transit). Transit ended up in a much more positive place than originally anticipated.

Freight: new project for nationally significant freight and highway projects – applicants can be states, MPOs, municipal government, and it is all discretionary grants.

GA transit funding increases about 14% under FAST Act. Overall national funding increased 17% over 5 years. New Starts gets new increases in funding, and the bill codifies a max of 60% federal funding for New Starts. Small Starts max increased to \$100M.

Bus funding increases 62.5%, and almost 90% over 5 years. TOD projects can now apply for TIFIA loans and the minimum loan amount has been reduced. New pilot program allows states to use their own environmental process in lieu of NEPA. This is an area where it seems like congress really listened.

Questions:

- Fred Daniels: Any discussion on state of good repair? (Not a specific category, but the funding categories used for SoGR increased greatly, especially considering the increases in bus funding)
- Daniels: TIFIA loans, anything significant for our region in these changes? (Most significant thing is that we're not harmed. General increase in funding is a good thing. Also, bike/ped monies slightly increased even though there were fears about losing funds here.)
- Cain: Anything about state legislative session? (It's early, but Senator Beach will be introducing MARTA bill today – ability to increase MARTA tax from a penny to a penny and a half, which would be great for MARTA to more plans forward. HB170 – important to note that it looks like the money from HB170 will be used wisely.)

6. Updates and Wrap-Up

RTC update from Janae and Chairman Lee's closing statements.

Regional fare clearinghouse: negotiating methodology for sharing costs. Final report from Grant Thornton delivered (December)

Bus stop signage – updating fabrication guidebook and design documents

- Applying for funds for GO Bond, next step is to submit application by end of January

Marketing – at last meeting agreed on final deliverables (video, etc.)

- Marketing aimed at Millennial segment
- Launch in mid-March will run for 8 weeks
- Driving traffic to ATLtransit, long term goal increase ridership
- Online transit promoters – agreed to promote marketing materials. Janae happy to add people to the list
- Other groups – universities, chambers, etc. can use assets for cross promotion. Janae actively meeting with groups across the region.

Questions: Cain – can you pull up the project document? (J: Sure) Tim: Project document is available on RTC website to keep staff on track and in order to share the status of the projects with other people on your staff or who may be interested.

Next meeting is March 10. We stand adjourned.

Handouts supplied in advance on the ARC website: (www.atlantaregional.com/rtc)

- 1/14/16 RTC Agenda
- 11/10/15 RTC Meeting Notes and Summary
- Presentations
 - Douglas County
 - Cobb County
 - FAST Act
- Handouts
 - RTC Project Update File