



MINUTES

Greenville Transit Authority
Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 19, 2021
Virtual Webex Meeting

Attending

- Board Members:** Mr. Stephen Astemborski, Mr. Scott Craig (Treasurer), Ms. Addy Matney, Mr. David Mitchell, Mr. Dick O’Neill (Chairman), Ms. Amanda Warren (Vice Chair)
- City Staff in Attendance:** Beth Brotherton (Director of Communications & Neighborhood Relations), James Keel (Transit Director), Jasmin Curtis (Safety & Operations Manager), Nicole McAden (Marketing and Public Affairs Manager), Jason Sanders (Fleet Manager), Micah Snead (Financial Analyst), Kayleigh Sullivan (Transit Planning Manager)
- Others in Attendance:** Larry Finney (Greene Finney, LLP)

Mr. Dick O’Neill, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m.

A quorum established via roll call.

Mr. David Mitchell made a motion to approve the February 19, 2021 Committee of the Whole Minutes. Mr. Scott Craig seconded the motion. There is no opposition. The motion carries.

Annual Audit (Greene Finney, LLP Partner Larry Finney):

GTA will receive final statements next week. Statements represent financial activity for the year. The end-result of audit is an opinion issued by auditors. This is reasonable assurance. GTA received an **Unmodified Opinion** by the auditors, which is the best opinion an audit can provide. The Net position of GTA is \$14.7 million, which is up by \$2 million dollars for 2020 compared to 2019. Of this amount, \$670,000 (8.33% of 2020 operating expenses) represented unrestricted net position. This is an increase of \$1,000 over 2019. This amount is approximately equivalent to 1 month of operating expenses. Non-operating revenue, which includes fares, went down. Operating expenses are around \$8 million. Non-operating revenue is \$6.6 million; which is a \$700,000 increase over 2019 due to higher funds from the City and County. Capital grants and contributions went down.

The auditors are required by the FTA to do a single audit since GTA receives federal funds. The FTA asks that auditors look at GTA compliance with requirements related to federal funds. There were no findings this year or last year. The Board will receive management letter from auditor, which is a required communication. There were no issues to report. Financial conditions (net position) is getting better. Aging fleet improved considerably. The Board should keep in mind increases in retirement and health costs relative to the budget.

Media Interviews (Beth Brotherton, Director of Communications & Neighborhood Relations):

- With public meetings conducted in virtual environment, you should avoid a false sense of casual. Do not know who is listening. What you say in pre-meeting conversations can be heard by others. The Microphone is always hot. You have an audience. Cameras could be recording you. Beware of anonymous listeners.
- For Media request protocols, don’t panic or go at it alone when the media calls. James Keel and Nicole McAden should be notified. City communications is here to help with a unified message. Use talking points.
- Strategize before you speak. Words can be taken out of context. Prevent “oops” moments. Question basis of their story. Is there a news story?. Are you poised to make a decision? Decide if you want to be the face on an issue. Statements can be sufficient. Avoid “no comment”. When doing interview, identify two or three main points. Don’t let media dictate your words. Stick to your message.
- Remind yourself you are the expert. Put on your game face. You choose the location. Eliminate distractions. Be hospitable. Don’t keep people waiting.

- 51 • Ignore the camera. Do not use acronyms average person does not know. Speak conversationally. Ask for take two.
52 Be reachable. Answer follow up questions. Leave reporter with parting gifts such as documents on subject of
53 interview.

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55 **Staff Reports:**

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57 **Quality of Service** – (Safety & Operations Manager, Jasmin Curtis):

- 58 • Fixed Routes were on time 77% of the time. Fixed Routes were late 19% of the trips and early 5% of the trips.
59 Trolley routes were on time 79% of the time. GAP was on time 99% of the trips. Average GAP trip length 19
60 minutes.

- 61 • No accidents. Nine complaints; 5 of them unfounded.

- 62 • There are 35 current employees. One in CDL program. Six have been interviewed. Three resignations. Four
63 applications fell out of hiring process. Two were in hiring process, one fell out. One moved to hiring process. Four
64 interviews scheduled. Some applicants in referred list. Five openings need to be filled.

65 **Reliability of Service** (Fleet Manager, Jason Sanders): Farebox had highest number of failures. New fareboxes will be
66 installed next month. AVL major interruptions increased from 3 to 6. Diesel and electric vehicle reliability goals met.

67 **Quantity of Service** – (Transit Planner Kayleigh Sullivan): Ridership is up from previous month. Route 502 had highest
68 ridership. Revenue miles and hours are up. TouchPass usage up by 1% from January 2021. Fixed Route ridership trends
69 up. Trolley ridership is up with North Main having highest ridership then South Main. Clemson ID for Route 509 about the
70 same and Clemson ridership on Route 601 is up. GAP no shows did not change. GAP ridership continues to increase.

71 **Marketing Report** – (Marketing and Public Affairs Manager Nicole McAden):

- 72 • Signed one new contract totaling \$525 for Oak Street Health. Received \$75,158.88 in total ad revenue since July 1.
73 • Fare Free Day in honor of Rosa Park's birthday covered by Word FM and GVLtoday. Food for Fare event covered by
74 Word FM. Maintenance facility coverage relative to New Washington Heights by WYFF. Greenville Journal covered
75 "Day in the Life" of a Greenlink driver. Progress on Transit Development Plan coverage by Post and Courier.
76 • Staff met with Upstate Mobility Alliance about the Memorial Hospital shuttle concept.
77 • Art in Public Places contest extended 2 weeks since contest originally stated have to attend high school inside City of
78 Greenville or live within the City of Greenville limits. Only 11 students met this requirement. As of yesterday, there
79 were 59 art submissions. Mr. David Mitchell and Ms. Amanda Warren are two of the judges.
80 • Food for Fare event collected 309 food items for United Ministries.
81 • Citizens Transit Academy had 17 graduates in February. Public safety customer feedback collected February 5
82 compiled for video on website. Clips have been posted to Twitter. Maintenance facility stakeholders meeting occurred
83 on February 18 had 24 attendees.

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85 **City's Monthly Financial Reports for January 2021** – (Micah Snead, Financial Analyst):

- 86 • The 2020 column is now listed as audited.
87 • Total operating passenger revenue decreased by 24% over prior year. Advertising revenue increased. Operating
88 expenses increased by \$58,000. Material and supplies and temporary personal increased. Non-operating revenue
89 increased. Total grants and contributions increased. Federal grants increased. State capital lower since overhaul
90 project concluded.
91 • Accounts Payable at January 31, 2021 was \$658,128.79. Largest amount owed to the City. Audit amount is \$6,000.
92 All bills paid except amount owed to the FTA.
93 • Accounts Receivable at January 31, 2021 was \$869,555.39. As of March 15, 2021, \$796,734.98 has been received.
94 Bon Secours sent checks to wrong address. They will send to checks to correct address.

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96 **Unfinished Business:**

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98 **Key Performance Indicators - (Nicole McAden, Marketing & Public Affairs Manager):** Survey conducted before
99 January 2021 work session proposed moving forward with three public KPI metrics as follows:

- 100 • On-time Performance Target 85%.
101 • Excessive GAP Trip Length Performance Target 60 Minutes.
102 • Vehicle Reliability Performance Target 90%.

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New Business

Action Items: GTA Invoices (Presented by Micah Snead, Financial Analyst):

Date	Vendor	Description	Invoice #	Amount
3/10/21	City of Greenville	February 2021 expenses	87439	481,633.83
3/1/21	CTG	TDP update consulting services	1 GSP-TDP UPDATE	12,088.12
2/28/21	Greene Finney	Audit services for February	17494	6,000
3/4/21	Mike's Body Shop	Painting on bus 2022	4354	3,422.14
3/11/21	Mike's Body Shop	Painting on bus 2023	43541	3,422.14
2/28/21	Roe Cassidy Coates	Legal services rendered	1033097	100
3/2/21	Samsara	License fees for cameras and support	3051335304	1,073.10
3/10/21	Wendel	Professional services rendered for property	501420	48,798.49
2/24/21	Willis Towers Watson SE	Insurance installment	2790936	90,121.00
Total				\$646,658.82

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Ms. Addy Matney made a motion to recommend payment of invoices totaling \$646,658.82. This is subject to the availability of funds. Mr. Scott Craig seconded the motion. There is no opposition. The motion carries.

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Advertising Sales Revenue & Request for Proposal (Nicole McAden, Marketing & Public Affairs Manager):

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For Advertising Sales Revenue, staff is looking to put out RFP for third party advertising sales. Greenlink had 21 buses available for advertising for FY 2016 and FY 2017. In FY 18, 16 buses were available. In FY 19, 15 buses were available. In FY20 there were 14 buses available and for FY 2021 there are 12 buses available. Revenue has decreased due to less buses available due to disposing, midlife overhauls, and no advertising on new buses. At January we had \$55,000 in advertising dollars which surpassed advertising dollars for last year. The highest revenue ever received was \$144,000. Estimated revenue for 12 buses at 70% occupancy is \$90,762 and 100% occupancy would be \$129,660.

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In February 2020 Board agreed to expand options in RFP to include wrap on rear and wraps below windows on the old paint-scheme buses, which could potentially increase revenue by 50%. Estimated revenue for partial wraps with 70% occupancy is \$136,206, for 80% occupancy \$155,664, for 90% occupancy \$175,122 and for 100% occupancy \$194,580. These numbers are for fleet of 12 fixed route buses, assumes full wraps on 3 of those 12 buses and assumes remaining 9 would accommodate wraps below windows.

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Adding wraps to windows of new paint schemes vehicles would nearly double the available real estate on the sides of 12 buses. Adding advertising to windows could potentially increase revenue by 90%. Utilizing partial and window wraps would increase number of fleet for advertising to 19 buses. Staff does not have the time to promote new advertising options. Therefore, having an advertising firm promote new options would be necessary. This assumes fleet of 19 fixed route buses, 3 full wraps of those buses, 9 accommodate wraps below windows and on windows, 7 accommodate wraps on windows, and wraps on windows of 5 cutaways.

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Should consider importance of brand vs importance of revenue, consider whether the RFP is appealing, and keep in mind that advertising agencies will take a cut of 50%.

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Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Craig stated they were open to advertising in windows of older buses, but are opposed to advertising on new buses especially the new Proterra buses. Mr. Keel questioned whether the Board was open to wrapping 6 buses versus the 3 currently wrapped for ads. Board felt full wraps on all of the old buses was acceptable. Ms. McAden will update RFP to include wraps on 12 older buses.

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TouchPass Umo App Advertising Revenue Opportunity (Nicole McAden, Marketing & Public Affairs Manager)

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TouchPass has been acquired by Cubic, a large trip planning company used by larger agencies. TouchPass is being rebranded as Umo. Umo is used as more than fare paying tool. It will be used as whole trip planning service. December 31 is their timeline whereby the TouchPass app will be updated to Umo. This allows an agency to launch rewards to

146 customers. Transit agencies can give incentives for traveling on certain low performing routes or at certain times less
147 traveled. Free passes could be given on Saturday or during middle of the day.

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149 The new app will also allow for agencies to earn revenue from in-app ads. Umo has their own advertising sales team.
150 This ad space can also be used to send out surveys or PSAs. Umo would sell the space at \$5 for every 1,000 impressions
151 for the month. UMO takes out its overhead and from net revenue the agency would receive 20%. Must decide if we
152 want to put ads inside of the apps. Since we have a contract with TouchPass signing up for this would require that
153 addendum be signed. We can do a 90-day unpaid trial.

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155 **FY2021 Budget Amendment #4 (James Keel, Director):**

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157 This amendment is for approval and adoption of the fiscal year 2020-2021 Capital budget amendment # 4 and
158 authorize a change order with Wendel Companies. This amendment is necessary to allocate funding to cover two (2)
159 change orders for the design of the new maintenance facility. The first is to appropriate \$94,666 from the CARES Act for
160 a slow fill compressed natural gas (CNG) station. The amendment would also allow for \$92,691 in funding to design a
161 residual park that would be available for use by the New Washington Heights neighborhood. The total amount of
162 increased funding is \$187,357. This will be voted on at the March 25, 2021 Board Meeting

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164 **Mr. David Mitchell made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Scott Craig seconded the motion to adjourn. There is no**
165 **opposition. The motion carries. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:33 a.m.**

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167 Minutes were transcribed by Lorrie Brown and distributed via email on Thursday, March 25, 2021.