

**Triangle Transit Authority Board of Trustees**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**January 25, 2006**

Board Room, 68 T.W. Alexander Drive  
Research Triangle Park, NC

**Board Members Present:**

Anne S. Franklin  
Alice Gordon  
W. Lewis Hannah, Jr.  
Thomas Hilliard (left 3:05 p.m.)  
Bob Hinshaw  
Ellen Reckhow

William G. Smith (arr. 2:17 p.m.)  
Kenneth Spaulding (left 2:45 p.m.)  
Bill Strom  
Nina Szlosberg (arr. 1:26 p.m.)  
M. Carter Worthy (arr. 1:09 p.m.)

**Board Members Absent:**

Bill Bell

**Staff Present:**

Amy Armbruster  
Laurie Barrett  
Don Carnell  
John Clafin  
Michelle Dawson  
Saundra Freeman  
Sylvester Goodwin  
Wib Gulley  
Todd Horsley  
Joe Huegy

Patrick McDonough  
Greg Northcutt  
Geoff Powell  
Terry Reckeweg  
Brad Schulz  
Garold Smith  
John Tallmadge  
Kelli Thompson  
Julie Woosley

**Others Present:**

Chris Baysden, *Triangle Business Journal*  
Greg Benz, *Parsons Brinckerhoff*  
Elizabeth Harper, *Parsons Brinckerhoff*  
Mike Kozak, *NCDOT PTD*

Miriam Perry, *NCDOT PTD*  
Greg Phillips, *Durham Herald Sun*  
Chris Shigas, *French West Vaughn*  
Bruce Sicheloff, *News & Observer*

Vice Chair Alice Gordon called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. in the absence of the chair.

**I. Adoption of Agenda**

**Action:** On motion by Hannah and second by Franklin the agenda was adopted. The motion was carried unanimously.

**II. Recognition**

**A. Introduction of New Hires**

General Manager John Clafin recognized new operators Jeffrey Dean, Darrell McCants, Samuel Santana, Samuel Whitney, John Tate, and Larry Villines; along with

Christopher Williams, dispatcher; Kelli Thompson, Receptionist; and Julie Woosley, Marketing Coordinator.

**B. Announcement of Promotions**

None.

Chair M. Carter Worthy arrived.

**III. Public Hearings**

None.

**IV. Public Comment**

None.

**V. Consent Agenda**

**Action:** On motion by Hannah and second by Strom the consent agenda was adopted. The motion was carried unanimously.

The following consent agenda items were approved:

- February 27, 2002 – Regular Session Minutes;
- November 16, 2005 – Regular Session Minutes;
- November 16, 2005 – Closed Session Minutes;
- Unsealing of Closed Session Minutes - Board of Trustees
  - 09/22/2004 - A
  - 11/17/2004 – B
  - 12/15/2004 – A, B, C, D, E
  - 1/26/2005 – A, B
  - 2/23/2005 – A
  - 3/23/2005 – B
  - 5/25/2005 – A, B
  - 6/22/2005 - B
- Unsealing of Closed Session Minutes – Personnel Committee
  - 11/02/2004 – B, C
  - 12/07/2004
  - 2/23/2005 – A
  - 3/01/2005 - A
  - 6/14/2005 - B
- Approval of Sale of Bus to Orange Public Transportation (\$3,394) (Resolution 2006 0001)

The above noted resolution is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

**VI. Presentations**

**A. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)**

Sandra Freeman reported that the audit was performed by Cherry Bekaert & Holland and will be in electronic format on the TTA Web site. She added that first half FY 2006 results will be distributed to the Board at the end of the week.

Geoff Powell then reviewed the FY 2005 CAFR, which is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.

## **B. Monthly Modeling Update**

Don Carnell noted that TTA notified FTA in November about the discovery of additional employment missing from the model, which would delay some results. He also said that TTA visited FTA in November to discuss the potential of the project being “grandfathered” under the old cost effectiveness criteria. Carnell then said that FTA advised TTA in December of a potential low rating for the project in the New Starts report.

Carnell then introduced Greg Benz of Parsons Brinckerhoff, who discussed cost effectiveness (CE) user benefits.

Szlosberg arrived.

Reckhow stated that she understood that the baseline assumes construction of the complete Long Range Transportation Plan, even though it is not fully funded. Benz said yes. Reckhow noted that the DCHC plan was about a \$500 million gap in funding. Strom said that regionally the funding gap is more like \$2.5 to \$3 billion. He said the assumption of funding hurts TTA’s modeling effort. Szlosberg offered to talk to NCDOT about getting information of the lack of funding for HOV lanes, which are in the LRTP. Gulley suggested an alternative LRTP by the MPOs that would show the financial constraints. Claflin pointed out that taking the improvements out of the LRTP would impact the region’s ability to meet air quality conformity—a “catch-22.”

Hinshaw commented that the public should be aware that the \$2.5 billion of improvements is not a TTA plan, but rather the counties and municipalities. Szlosberg suggested providing FTA with information to help them understand the improbability of funding an HOV lane at \$1 billion which would allow for express bus service. Benz said that new guidance from FTA includes a risk assessment on the LRTP demographic forecast and how realistic the assumptions are about the highway program.

Szlosberg added that since the adoption of the LRTPs, the state TIP has been recalibrated for this region, reducing by \$340 million over seven years the money available to apply towards potential projects.

Hannah requested a summary on the baseline and estimated travel times, including assumptions about infrastructure.

Worthy described the bus baseline as a “Cadillac” alternative compared to the worst-case/most conservative rail ridership forecast. She said the discrepancy does not accurately reflect user benefits to the region.

Claflin said that TTA is working with FTA on adjusting the baseline to make it more realistic.

Szlosberg asked what land use assumptions are in the model. Carnell replied whatever is in the adopted plan. Szlosberg then suggested white papers that would

enhancements the modeling effort. Benz said that the New Starts submission has components for the financial plan, project justification, operating efficiency, environmental benefits, and land use and development. He added that up until three years ago, the two primary criteria were cost effectiveness and land use, but today it is all about the financial plan and cost effectiveness and the other criteria is ignored.

Worthy said that the behavior patterns in the model are from 1995 with 2000 census data, but there are documented trends since those times that show a change in behavior patterns. Reckhow noted that a new land use plan was adopted in February 2005 by Durham County, which calls for compact neighborhoods around transit stops. She asked about plugging this new plan into the model as opposed to the one used in the adopted LRTP. Other new developments and adopted area plans were noted that would not have been included in the adopted LRTPs. Clafin said that the MPOs need to update these assumptions on land use and demographics in their LRTPs.

Gordon asked the one or two factors that would most likely to lead to a favorable change with additional work. Benz noted three:

- bus baseline – has the most dramatic effect on user benefits (cost effectiveness)
- modal specific constant – would increase rail ridership and user benefits
- increase in the 45 minute travel time cap to a more appropriate level

Clafin explained that the modal specific constant is related to the attractiveness of rail over other modes, particularly bus. He said that FTA guidance will change effective April 30 to allow use of this constant. He added that each agency would negotiate with FTA the constant amount, based on the agency's prior history. FTA has suggested that TTA look at applying a 3, 6, and 12 minutes constant. Szlosberg clarified that this quantifies a passenger's internal bias to ride a train over a bus. Clafin said it will be more difficult for TTA to justify because there is no experience in this region with rail transit.

Benz said that some of the guidelines are biases to areas that already have transit and in some cases it appears that those with rail get more rail and those without it will never get it.

Clafin then explained that TTA's model shows travel time of 170 minutes by bus and 44 minutes on rail. Currently FTA caps the time savings at 45 minutes, which does not allow TTA to take advantage of the true time savings. Reckhow said the imposition of an arbitrary cap takes away the value of the model. Clafin defended FTA, saying that they had indicated a willingness to discuss a higher cap.

Szlosberg suggested that staff develop a presentation that would highlight the disconnect in the model results and how TTA's project is unique.

Hinshaw suggested that TTA contact its local government partners regarding comments on the new guideline.

Franklin asked for today's travel time in the corridor as well as information on how the rail project competes with highway projects, looking out 20 years or more.

Smith arrived.

## **VII. Reports & Recommendations**

### **A. Personnel Committee Report**

None.

### **B. Planning & Legislative Committee Report**

None.

### **C. Operations & Finance Committee Report**

None.

### **D. General Manager's Report**

General Manager John Clafin reported:

- Met with Rick Weddle, Research Triangle Foundation president, to discuss his master plan for the Park and how rail fits into that plan. Weddle proposed that TTA take a stronger role in the SmartCommute Challenge now that it has become a regional campaign.
- Carter Worthy, Wib Gulley and I traveled to D.C. last week to meet with FTA and visit our Congressional delegation. He said FTA seemed to be willing to work with TTA.
- Provided an update on seamless transit to the mayors.
- Provided an update to the chairs of the County Boards of Commissioners and county managers and heard a presentation to them on regionalization of community transportation agencies. He said one recommendation was for TTA to manage the operations/contracts for the three counties. Clafin added that a copy of the presentation is available.
- Were notified by the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) that effective June 1, 2006, NCLM would not be insure stand alone transit agencies. Clafin emphasized that TTA was not given advance notice that this item was being considered. Szlosberg asked about a grievance procedure. Szlosberg asked for a list of the NCLM Board members. Hilliard asked about TTA's claims experience. Clafin responded that it is not high, but he would get that information to the Board. Worthy recommended referring this item to the Operations & Finance Committee, without objection.
- Senator Dole's transportation aide, Robbie Boone, will visit TTA on Friday.
- Received notification from the State that TTA will receive \$2,115,984 from the state maintenance assistance program. He said the budget is only \$1.8 million, but last year TTA received more.

Gordon highlighted the kickoff event held January 17 for the Hillsborough to Chapel Hill route. She noted that ridership is significantly greater than expected and the trip

time has been cut in half from the previous OPT service. She added that the planning for this route was a regional, cooperative effort and is a success for TTA.

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

General Counsel noted the written report in the agenda.

#### **F. Chair's Report**

Chair Worthy noted several items:

- February committee meeting schedule.
- Recent presentations to: FTA, mayors, county commission chairs, some members of the local delegation, RTA, Senator Dole and Congressman Price.
- Thanked and offered congratulations to staff for efforts on the Hillsborough route. She also recognized the work of Trustees Gordon and Strom.
- Noted other TTA accomplishments: completion of the Norfolk Southern agreement, the progress on seamless transit, TTA carried (on buses and vanpools) over one million riders in 2005, paratransit service increased by 692%, and TTA received for the 11<sup>th</sup> straight year the certificate of excellence in financial reporting.

Spaulding left.

#### **G. Board Member Reports**

##### **1. CAMPO TAC Representative**

Anne Franklin reported from the CAMPO TAC meeting:

- At its organizational meeting Joe Bryan was elected chair. By-laws reflecting the new boundaries and members were adopted.
- Received a presentation on the North Carolina's Strategic Highways Corridors Initiative, which is a state-wide effort to an effort to preserve and maximize the mobility and connectivity on an identified core set of highway corridors.
- Voted to request an area-wide emission budget for the CAMPO region in the State Implementation Plan to meet air quality standards.
- Approved a request from the NC Turnpike Authority for ex officio membership.
- Discussed the Joint MPO task force to address transportation funding issues.
- Requested that public officials and planners be included in the current comprehensive transportation plan process. Information on this plan is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. She requested that the Board endorse the participation of Wake County area Board members TTA and at the meetings and to report back to the Planning & Legislative Committee.

Reckhow applauded the idea, but asked how it fits in with a regional transit vision. Franklin responded that it is a component and a similar process could be held at DCHC.

**Action:** On motion by Franklin and second by Hannah the Board endorsed Board member and staff participation in CAMPO's comprehensive transportation plan process, with a report to the Planning & Legislative Committee. The motion was carried unanimously.

Franklin also reported that she attended the Wake County Growth Management task force meeting and almost all the towns reporting mentioned transit as a growth management strategy.

Worthy suggested that TTA request to get on the MPO agenda, and the Wake County Growth Management Task Force, to discuss the rail project. She also asked that Board members think about opportunities to talk about TTA to other boards and groups they represent. Reckhow agreed. Szlosberg encouraged Board members to get more involved in this area.

Worthy then proposed an ad hoc communications committee to identify and prioritize the Board's expectations for TTA's communications strategy.

**Action:** On motion by Smith and second by Hannah the Board voted to create an ad hoc communications committee chaired by Szlosberg. The motion was carried unanimously.

## **2. DCHC TAC Representative**

Bill Strom reported from DCHC:

- First DCHC newsletter at places.
- Followed the State's recommendation and voted to request a county-by-county emission budget.

## **3. Regional Transportation Alliance**

Chair Worthy asked that the General Manager offer the RTA report. Claflin reported:

- RTA hosted state legislators in order to get feedback on how to present a local option. Szlosberg added that the legislators asked that a specific package of improvements to be funded with a local option be presented first. Reckhow said that she was interested in seeing what transit projects are included on the improvements list. Worthy suggested a presentation at an upcoming Board meeting.

Hilliard left.

## **VIII. General Business Agenda**

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

None.

**B. Norfolk Southern Agreements**

General Counsel Wib Gulley provided a memorandum and power point presentation, which are attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. Gordon asked to look at a copy of the actual agreement. Gulley passed around a copy for review.

Gulley said he was pleased to bring these agreements forward and requested that the Board authorize the General Manager to finalize and execute them. He said that Norfolk Southern will present the agreements for final approval once TTA has approved them. He also said it would not be uncommon for small changes to be requested. Gulley recognized the work of Greg Northcutt on the agreements as well.

Strom asked about the financial impact of the flagging provisions. Gulley responded that it is the significant provision, with training cost at \$1.4 to \$1.5 million per year for three years. Strom asked when TTA must commit to those funds. Gulley said 14 months prior to the need for flagging services for recruitment, hiring, and training. Greg Northcutt said FRA requires one year of training. Strom asked how this timing would work out with FTA funding. Gulley said the current schedule has the Letter of No Prejudice (LONP) coming in January 2007 and NS notice should come about that same time. Strom noted that this component would have to be managed carefully.

Hinshaw asked how this agreement compares to the CSX agreement. Northcutt replied that CSX never indicated a problem filling flagging requirements.

**Action:** On motion by Franklin and second by Smith the Board authorized the General Manager to continue negotiations and execute the agreement. The motion was carried 8 to 1 with Gordon voting in the negative. (Hilliard was absent for the vote but was not excused from the meeting; therefore, his vote was recorded as an affirmative vote.)

Gordon said that she voted no on procedural grounds because the contract was not provided in advance of the meeting.

**C. New Business**

None.

**IX. Closed Session(s)**

**A. Rail Corridor Property Acquisition**

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.

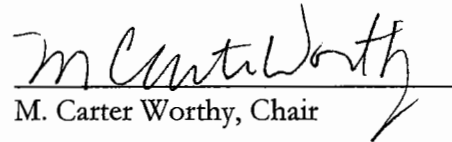
**B. Discussion of Employee Performance**

Pursuant to NCGS §143-318.11 (a) (6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee.

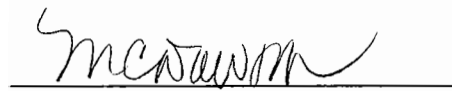
**Action:** On motion by Smith and second by Reckhow the Board adjourned into closed session at 3:25 p.m. The motion was carried unanimously.

**X. Adjournment**

**Action:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

  
M. Carter Worthy, Chair

Attest:

  
Michelle C. Dawson, CMC  
Clerk to the TIA Board