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DIRECTOR

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BERRY GRAY  
CHAIRMAN

***Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority  
Governing Board Meeting Minutes  
July 27 & August 3, 2023***

The Board of Directors of Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority met for a regular session at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 27, 2023, at the City of Goldsboro Mayor's Conference Room, 214 N. Center Street, Goldsboro, North Carolina.

**Members in attendance:** Berry Gray, Chairman; Hiawatha Jones, Vice Chairman; Steve Wiggins; and Robert Dingess

**Members absent::** Octavius Murphy, Secretary/Treasurer; Barbara Aycock; and Gregg Batts

**Others in attendance:** Don Willis, Lee Sutton, Ms, Wiggins

**Call to Order**

Vice-Chairman Hiawatha Jones called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM and welcomed Board members. Chairman Gray was able to participate by phone, and thanked Vice-Chair Jones for presiding. There was a roll call to assure a quorum was present.

Upon review of the agenda topics Board members expressed a desire to amend the agenda in order to wait for full attendance to take certain actions. Steve Wiggins made motion to table Election of Officers; Director Recommendations, and also Closed Session items until the Board could reconvene the meeting on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2pm in the Mayor's meeting room. Rob Dingess seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Director will follow up.

**Recognition of Van Driver of the Year**

GWTA Van Driver of the Year, Welling "Lee" Sutton joined the meeting in progress at 10:30am and was appreciated by the Board members in attendance. Lee commented on how he enjoyed serving the public and meeting their important needs to get to the doctor, work, and grocery shopping. Director noted Lee has retired from military service and anchors our afternoon return trips. This is a chaotic time of day and he is often given difficult trip assignments that take people way out in the county and to Mount Olive as well. Board members commented on their appreciation for his military service and also the excellent services Lee provides to the community. Vice-Chair Jones thanked Mr. Sutton for his years of service and on his recognition as the Van Driver of the Year.

**Approval of Minutes**

Vice-Chairman Jones requested the Board review and approve the minutes provided. A motion was made by Rob Dingess to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 22, 2023. Berry Gray seconded the motion. The Board provided unanimous approval of the minutes.

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**Director's Report**

GWTA is awaiting an approved state budget. Currently GWTA expects the urban SMAP allocation to remain at the prior year amount of \$196,772. GWTA expects the rural ROAP allocation to also remain at or near the prior year amount of \$229,908. SMAP is used to reduce the local match burden on Goldsboro to leverage federal funds. ROAP funds are divided three ways (rural public, employment, and Elderly/Disabled) and used to pay for eligible trips. GWTA operates into the new fiscal year in good faith that these funds will eventually be forthcoming.

Director reported last month submitting on short notice a request for additional rural grant funds. Since last meeting NCDOT/IMD has announced an allocation of \$222,000 for the GWTA to assist with certain rural operating expenses during FY24. These additional funds are available without need for local match, and can be used for rural operating expenses such as fuel costs.

Staff is working on year end close out and preparation of documents needed for our annual single audit. In addition, GWTA continues to prepare for our federal triennial review which is scheduled for mid-September.

**Marketing and Public Relations Update**

Director discussed ongoing work with QCA on the graphics design for the new urban buses that are currently in production. GWTA celebrated Rural Transit Day in July with social media posts highlighting our Operators. GWTA also announced and celebrated our Drivers of the Year. Drivers of the Quarter for the new year will be announced at the July team meeting and celebrated in August.

***Outreach and Activities***

Director reported he and staff met virtually with broker MTM to discuss billing and reimbursements on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Director reported staff participated in NCHHS training in the NCTRACKS system on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Director and staff participated in annual Emergency Operations Center and Dialysis Center coordination session to prepare for emergencies on July 13<sup>th</sup>. Director reported participating in a virtual meeting with broker ModivCare on July 14<sup>th</sup>. Director also participated in NCDOT virtual meeting with stakeholder group to develop enhancements to their online grant application system on July 17<sup>th</sup>. Director participated in monthly conference call with NC Division of Health Benefits to discuss progress and ongoing challenges with brokers on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Director participated in monthly statewide call with NCDOT on July 19<sup>th</sup>. Director participated virtually in quarterly NCPTA Board of Directors meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup>.

***Training***

Director reported GWTA employees received First Aid refresher training at the July meeting.

Hearing no further business, Vice-Chairman Jones asked for a motion to recess. Steve Wiggins made motion to recess the meeting and to reconvene the meeting on Thursday August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2pm in the Mayors meeting room. Rob Dingess seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. Board recessed at 10:35am after sharing appreciation with Van Driver of the Year Lee Sutton.

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The Board of Directors reconvened at 2pm on August 3, 2023.

All Board members were in attendance.

Other attendees were Borden Parker and Don Willis.

Chairman Berry Gray recalled the Board to order at 2:03pm.

Chairman Gray reviewed with the Board the items that had been tabled for action when the Board reconvened.

**Election of Officers**

Chairman Gray opened a discussion about the need to annually elect officers to the Board. There was discussion among the Board about the three officer roles and responsibilities. After discussion, Rob Dingess made a motion that the Board re-elect all three officers for a new one year term. Barbara Aycock seconded the motion. Each officer agreed they were willing to serve, and the motion passed unanimously as follows:

Chairman	Berry Gray
Vice-Chair	Hiawatha Jones
Secretary/Treasurer	Octavius Murphy

**Recommendation for Attendance/Safety Incentive**

Director presented a recommendation to begin an attendance and safety incentive program for hourly employees that maintain perfect attendance for a quarter of the year and that also have had no safety or other incidents by providing a \$100 gift card.

Director noted the Board had been discussing challenges with attendance regularly at Board meetings over the last year. Director stated that covering all routes every day has been a challenge. Better attendance and heightened focus on safety will improve quality of services to the public. Full time and part time hourly employees will be provided with a memo clearly outlining criteria that will be used.

Board members discussed the recommendation. There was agreement that offering incentives was necessary in the current market. Board members asked Director to discuss with staff and to make clear with them exactly how this incentive could be earned and exactly what would exclude them from earning the incentive. Director will develop clear guidance and will discuss with staff at future team meetings to assure understanding. Board members noted it would be important to discern between approved and unapproved absences. Board members asked the Director to look into any potential tax implications. If there are any, then Board agreed that GWTA should handle that rather than take it out of the incentive. Steve Wiggins made a motion to support the recommended Attendance and Safety Incentive. Greg Batts seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Recommendations for Employee Personal Observance or Juneteenth Holiday**

Director presented a recommendation to provide all employees with one additional leave day which can be used to observe personal days of importance. The additional day would be subject to the normal approval process so that all employees could not choose to take off on the same personal observance day. Or to change the GWTA holiday schedule to reflect Juneteenth as a Saturday Schedule beginning in 2024.

Director discussed that the City of Goldsboro has added a holiday to recognize Juneteenth each year. Wayne County government has decided to also add a day, but to make it a personal observance day so that employees with different days of personal importance have an opportunity for another day off throughout the year, without closing down county operations. GWTA provides essential services and traditionally seeks to limit days when there is no service provided at all. Director recommends the proposed personal observance day outlined above so that sufficient staffing is maintained while also allowing for employees to take a holiday similar to what other local government here are doing.

Board discussed the importance of the Juneteenth holiday to both our employees and also to the passengers who rely on the GWTA to provide services. Many pros and cons were discussed regarding each option. The importance and significance of the actual day was highlighted by several Board members. The Board expressed full agreement that the day itself should be celebrated in a manner that would also limit loss of service to our customers who need to get to medical treatments, to work, and perhaps even to a Juneteenth family gathering. Hiawatha Jones made a motion that beginning in 2024 the GWTA identify Juneteenth as a holiday and that services would be offered on a Saturday schedule. Rob Dingess seconded. There was further discussion with Board members expressing an expectation that the Director work with as many employees as possible that wanted to observe the holiday, while still maintaining service. The motion passed unanimously.

**Closed Session to Discuss Personnel Issue**

Steve Wiggins made motion to enter closed session in order to discuss a personnel issue. Hiawatha Jones seconded, and the Board unanimously agreed to enter closed session at 2:33pm.

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Barbara Aycock made a motion to exit closed session. Steve Wiggins seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously agreed to exit closed session at 2:50pm.

Hiawatha Jones made a motion to meet the request of the Executive Director to become a direct GWTA employee at an annual gross salary of \$89,550 effective on September 1, 2023 and to also allow the Executive Director to become immediately eligible for 457B plan matching rather than waiting a year. Director noted health insurance costs are not needed. Barbara Aycock seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Director thanked the Board for their leadership, their confidence and support for the GWTA.

Greg Batts made motion to adjourn, and Steve Wiggins seconded. Motion passed unanimously and meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.