



DON WILLIS  
DIRECTOR

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BERRY GRAY  
CHAIRMAN

***Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority  
Governing Board Meeting Minutes  
August 24, 2023***

The Board of Directors of Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority met for a regular session at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 24, 2023, at the City of Anteroom, 214 N. Center Street, Goldsboro, North Carolina.

**Members in attendance:** Berry Gray, Chairman; Hiawatha Jones, Vice Chairman; Octavius Murphy, Secretary/Treasurer; Gregg Batts, Steve Wiggins (by phone); and Robert Dingess

**Members absent:** Barbara Aycock

**Others in attendance:** Don Willis, Borden Parker

**Call to Order**

Chairman Berry Gray called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM and welcomed Board members. There was a roll call to assure a quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Berry Gray requested the Board review and approve the minutes provided. A motion was made by Steve Wiggins to approve the minutes of the meeting of July 27 and August 3, 2023. Hiawatha Jones seconded the motion. The Board provided unanimous approval of the minutes.

**Director's Report**

Director noted the need to hold a public hearing at the September meeting to meet a grant deadline to NCDOT for the Community Transportation Program grant. The grant is due October 6<sup>th</sup> and will cover significant portions of the administrative expenses (85%), capital expenses (90%), and also operating expenses (50%) for the Mount Olive Connector and Circulator services. Discussion followed among Board members. Rob Dingess noted that it was important for the Mount Olive services to become more productive if continued grant funding is to be expected. Dingess stated he was aware of innovative methods that are now starting to be employed in other parts of the country. An example was ESRI using "AI" for story boards to help agencies become more accessible to the public. Dingess suggested that Director work with Town of Mount Olive to plan for an outreach and education event, perhaps held at the Library. Town staff could assist with engaging key members of the community, including employers such as the Mount Olive Pickle plant. Steve Wiggins agreed and shared additional ideas for the outreach event. Board members expressed support and directed Willis to follow up to assist with planning the event. Following discussion, Rob Dingess made a motion to set a public hearing for the September meeting in order to timely complete the Community Transportation Program grant application process. Hiawatha Jones seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Director returned to the report regarding upcoming grant opportunities. GWTA is expecting also to be able to apply for both urban SMAP and rural ROAP funds for the current fiscal year soon. 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 at the last meeting that GWTA had submitted 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 noted that QCA plans to attend the September Board of Directors meeting to make the annual report and to seek feedback from the Board of Directors on work efforts planned. Director noted that QCA is entering into the fifth and final year of their contract, and that an RFP process would need to occur to select a partner to continue this work next year. The process is led by the Director who facilitates but does not vote on the successful vendor. The review panel would include representatives from the Board, from Goldsboro, and also from agencies the GWTA serves. Director noted that earlier in the meeting there was interest expressed that innovative approaches could be used to improve public accessibility, outreach and feedback. Director noted that the criteria for selecting a partner for this work going forward can include different weighted factors, including the proposed innovative approaches. Director noted the Board would be asked to review and bless the process. Returning to the report, Director noted that GWTA is working with QCA to update bus stops sign graphics to be consistent with those planned for the new urban buses in production. GWTA also began work with QCA to develop a new calendar for 2024. GWTA has asked QCA to review options for new integrated bus stop signs and seats. Dependent on costs, some of these new products may be deployed in key areas to gauge public reaction.

**Year End Service Statistics**

Director provided a hand out to compare the trends in service for the rural program over the last several years, going back to the last year before the impacts of COVID. Prior to COVID, Director noted GWTA was one of the few transit programs that was experiencing continued growth for both rural and urban services. Director shared trends in Miles driven, Hours of service provided, and also Trips performed. In addition certain key benchmarks for performance was shared including Trips per Hour. The report shows that COVID has significantly depressed services and efficiency in recent years. However, during this last year GWTA services and efficiency has returned very near to the levels prior to COVID. Board members discussed and

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were encouraged to see GWTA is returning to service levels similar to before. Director noted workforce challenges continues, and that the whole GWTA team had really stepped up to make this happen.

***Outreach and Activities***

Director participated virtually in a meeting with broker ModivCare to discuss trip assignments and potential pilot program. Director met with business owner to discuss concerns with location of a bus stop on August 14th. Director participated in monthly conference call with NC Division of Health Benefits to discuss progress with brokers on August 15th. Director participated virtually in monthly call with NCDOT/IMD to discuss reporting, upcoming grant, and emerging issues on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Director participates in working group with NCDOT/IMD and statewide peers to discuss planned enhancements to grant processes for fy26 grants. Director to participate virtually in NCDOT/IMD meeting with statewide peers to discuss enhancements to the Locally Coordinated Planning (LCP) process on August 24<sup>th</sup>.

***Training***

GWTA employees received Emergency Procedure and Accident reporting refresher training at the August meeting.

***Other Items***

Director Willis noted there had been some interest expressed about responsibilities for keeping areas around the bus stops mowed. GWTA will be following up to assure this happens at the areas noted. In some cases the state takes the lead, in other places the City takes the lead on these responsibilities. GWTA also works to assure the stops are presentable and will take actions anywhere needed.

Director noted a business owner had expressed concerns about the location of a bus stop. There have been several conversations, and Director noted he had asked the business owner to provide a written request to be clear what was being requested.

Finally, Director noted GWTA Board member and Chair of the County Board of Commissioner, Barbara Aycock had asked for Director to be involved in future meetings regarding potential uses for Opioid funds and whether/how GWTA could be supportive. Director plans to attend meetings going forward.

Hearing no further business, Chairman Berry Gray adjourned the meeting at 11:11am.

Submitted by: Don C. Willis