

MINUTES
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION & PARKING COMMISSION
May 18, 2011

The Public Transportation and Parking Commission met on the above date at 9:15 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Public Works Facility.

Members Present: Mr. Warren Daniels, Mr. Ronald Dunbar, Mr. Eric Foushee and Mr. Neil Edwards.

Staff Present: Mr. Thom Moton, Assistant City Manager; Mr. Wes Anderson, Director of Public Works; Ms. Nancy Harrington, Transit Manager; Ms. Stacey Pigford, Engineer I; and Ms. Geraldine Teel, Secretary.

WELCOME: Ms. Geraldine Teel, Secretary, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ms. Teel stated that a quorum was established; however, due to the absence of Ms. Lisa Simmons, Chairperson and Ms. Marsha Wyly, Vice-Chairperson, a member should be appointed to conduct the meeting. Mr. Ronald Dunbar volunteered to conduct the meeting of May 18, 2011.

AGENDA: The agenda for the May 18, 2011 meeting was approved with two additions, 1) Appoint an acting Chairperson to conduct the meeting and 2) Tour of a new hybrid bus.

MINUTES: Mr. Neil Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2011 meeting. This was seconded by Mr. Warren Daniels. The motion carried unanimously.

INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER UPDATE: Mr. Thom Moton gave a brief update on the ITC project. He stated the Environment Assessment Report was made available for public comments from April 11, 2011 thru May 11, 2011. He advised that one written comment was received and that a written response was made to that comment. Mr. Moton said that the primary focus at this point is to complete the Environment Assessment (EA) so that staff can do all the work necessary to secure the grant that will be expiring in September. Mr. Moton stated that staff has been communicating with the property owners and residents regularly to keep them up to date on the project. He also noted that during the EA public comment period staff mailed letters to adjacent property owners to keep them informed. Mr. Moton encouraged everyone to visit the website, www.great.com for updates on the project. Mr. Moton stated that ads have been placed in the paper concerning the EA and the website has been updated to keep everyone informed. Mr. Moton stated that the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is the final document that clears the way for acquisition to begin. He noted that the FONSI is expected to be completed soon and will be submitted to the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) for approval. Mr. Moton noted that staff will soon issue a Request for Proposals for appraisal and legal services. In addition, he further stated that all property owners are encouraged to have an independent appraisal performed on their property as a point of reference. Ms. Nancy Harrington added that a Real Estate Acquisition Management Plan (RAMP) has to be prepared for FTA review and approval prior to any property acquisition.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments at this time.

POTENTIAL MERGER WITH ECU: Mr. Wes Anderson gave a brief report on the potential merger with ECU. He stated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will allow the City and ECU to do an inter-agency agreement to begin the process of merging the systems. Mr. Anderson stated that over the past year staff has been looking at the possibility of taking over two of ECU's routes, one from main campus to the University Medical School and the shopping route. He stated that a preliminary analysis has been completed and that insurance coverage is still being addressed. Mr. Anderson stated that this issue will not be resolved until a higher level of officials representing the two entities becomes more involved. Mr. Anderson plans to have more information by the August meeting if possible.

PARKING UPDATE: Ms. Stacey Pigford gave a brief update on parking. She stated that at the last meeting she reported that a study was being conducted on all the downtown public parking lots. She stated that she has received information from the study and will prepare a chart to show the results. Ms. Pigford intends to have the information available for the June 15th meeting of the Commission.

APPROVAL OF NEW BUS ROUTE: Ms. Nancy Harrington gave an update on the new bus routes. She stated that Route 4 will not be extended to Sugg Parkway at this time because it is outside the City limit; however, she noted that Route 4 has been extended to the Oak Grove area. She said that a bus shelter will be placed in that neighborhood. Ms. Harrington said that the West Meadowbrook area will be served and that residents are very excited about the service. She also stated that Route 4 will no longer serve the hospital area as it will concentrate on service north of the river. Ms. Harrington stated that Route 3 has the highest ridership and for that reason, the new route structure was designed to take some of the load off Route 3. Route 6 and Route 3 will both serve Pitt Community College as well as the Kristin Drive area. A discussion was held and a motion was made by Mr. Eric Foushee to approve the Routes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Neil Edwards. The motion carried unanimously.

GREAT DATA & RGP SERVICE REPORT: Ms. Nancy Harrington stated that ridership continues to increase. She noted that the tour bus ridership is down slightly. She said that the County's Rural General Public (RGP) service has increased slightly. Ms. Harrington reported that GREAT's total expenses are higher as compared to this time last year and that fuel costs continue to rise. Ms. Harrington stated that revenues show an increase also.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2011 at 9:15 a.m. in Public Works Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Geraldine Teel, Secretary
Public Transportation & Parking Commission