

MINUTES
ORANGE UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION BOARD
FEBRUARY 19, 2014

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Guthrie, Chapel Hill Township; Alex Castro, Bingham Township; Donald Wollum, Eno Township; Sam Lasris, Cedar Grove Township; Ted Triebel, Little River Township; Amy Cole, Transit Advocate; Gary Saunders, CFE Representative; Andrea Rohrbacher, Planning Board Representative; Brantley Wells, Hillsborough Township Representative;

MEMBERS ABSENT: Pedestrian Access & Safety Advocate - Vacant; Cheeks Township - Vacant; Economic Development Advocate - Vacant

STAFF PRESENT: Abigaile Pittman, Transportation/Land Use Planner; Bret Martin, Transportation Planner; Tina Love, Administrative Assistant II

OTHERS PRESENT: Lance Hendrix, Mobility Manager, Orange County Department on Aging

AGENDA ITEM I: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

AGENDA ITEM II: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 18, 2013

Jeff Charles: I had a couple of minor grammatical word changes that I have given to Tina. They did not change the meaning in any way.

Paul Guthrie: On line 183, there is an "and includes curb cuts that were never put back in place". I don't remember saying that.

Tina Love: I will go back and check that.

The December 18, 2013 OUTBoard Minutes were approved with corrections by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM III: CONSIDERATIONS OF ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Jeff Charles: I would like to give an update on the Chapel Hill Committees that advise the Town Council; they are creating a much larger transportation board.

Abigaile Pittman: Can we put that in the section of the upcoming agenda items on other regional transit?

Jeff Charles: That will be fine.

AGENDA ITEM IV: REGULAR AGENDA

Draft OPT System Goals Five-Year Bus Service Expansion Program Recommendations
OUTBoard Action: To make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on the Draft OPT System Goals Five-Year Bus Service Expansion Program Recommendations

Abigaile Pittman reviewed the background.

55 Paul Guthrie: Could we put a footnote on those maps? I think it is important in the long run for your equitable
56 argument and that it is known that it excludes areas in parts of the southwest and southeast county that are not being
57 addressed by Chapel Hill.

58
59 Abigaile Pittman: When you have limited funds you have to choose which area you will start with.

60
61 Paul Guthrie: Let's not forget that those areas in the southwest and southeast are a major county concern but not
62 necessarily under the jurisdiction.

63
64 Jeff Charles: How much money are they projecting to come in? Aren't they spending \$30 million dollars to do the
65 initial research for the light rail system and Orange County's share of that is \$5 to \$8 million dollars? I want to
66 understand the cash flow over that period of time and how much is available for buses.

67
68 Abigaile Pittman: We were going to work on the goals and then get into the program details. *Continued*
69 *presentation.*

70
71 Sam Lasris: In my experience with destinations and services that lots of people are taking public transit are using it
72 to get to other transportation systems.

73
74 Jeff Charles: Have they considered the new development that is supposedly going to overwhelm Pittsboro? All of
75 those people will come through Orange County. They are talking 60,000 people, which is equivalent to what we have
76 in the county.

77
78 Paul Guthrie: I think the short answer is that it is so far on the horizon it hasn't really been calculated in.

79
80 Bret Martin: *Continued presentation.*

81
82 Don Wollum: Is there a mile limit?

83
84 Bret Martin: Not with this. This is rural general public demand response service. There will be buses for 12 to 18
85 passengers.

86
87 Sam Lasris: The destinations are fixed. Where is there a pick-up to get to the RDU airport?

88
89 Bret Martin: One of the connections is the US 70 mid-day route that will continue on to Durham. There will be other
90 routes that connect to where this is going.

91
92 Amy Cole: Is there a route where they can connect to a TTA route? Why do you never include a stop on Eubanks
93 Road where people can connect to a TTA route?

94
95 Bret Martin: Eubanks Road is served by Chapel Hill Transit.

96
97 Amy Cole: My point is that people could connect to the TTA.

98
99 Paul Guthrie: Is there a way to build more on the interlinked places to feed that abundance of transit that you
100 showed on the Chapel Hill-Carrboro planning area?

101
102 Bret Martin: If people are using transit on Eubanks Road, their ultimate destination is not going to be Eubanks Road.

103
104 Gary Saunders: The TTA at Eubanks Road is limited to the CRX and that runs in the morning and afternoon, so
105 there is no mid-day service on Eubanks Road.

106
107 Bret Martin: We are going to a lot of the same destinations but they are not serving the same origins. *(Continued*
108 *presentation).*

109

110 Lance Hendrix: Are these fixed stops or a door-to-door service?

111
112 Bret Martin: The concept is for it to be curb-to-curb. My recommendation will be curb-to-curb.

113
114 Alex Castro: These figures are just operating cost?

115
116 Bret Martin: Yes. Capital is not factored into this budget because Triangle Transit is handling it differently. I have
117 been working through the MPO, TARPO and NCDOT to get the necessary capital to make this happen.

118
119 Jeff Charles: What percentage of the sales tax that is being collected annually in 2015 is going to this bus service for
120 Orange County versus our share of the \$6 million dollars for the studies necessary for light rail?

121
122 Bret Martin: Of the amount being made available OPT is getting 12%. How much of that is the total that is coming
123 in? I don't have the budget, but I would estimate 15%.

124
125 Paul Guthrie: You can get a good idea on the first chart by the number of transit miles. I would suggest you send
126 that information via email.

127
128 Jeff Charles: I am going back to the population chart without the students; there are more people in Orange County
129 than Chapel Hill.

130
131 Bret Martin: Part of the revenue is not even sales tax but vehicle registration fees. There is more vehicle registration
132 in unincorporated Orange County than there is in Chapel Hill.

133
134 Ted Triebel: Does the fare-free idea come from the top down?

135
136 Jeff Charles: They are paying for it with the half-cent sales tax.

137
138 Bret Martin: Also, the scale of service being provided costs more to manage than it is worth to collect fares. It also
139 slows down service. The BOCC has leaned in that direction because we are serving transit-dependent populations,
140 which are typically lower income household without vehicles.

141
142 Jeff Charles: Are the expansions limited by the amount of access the county has to the percentage of the half-cent
143 sales tax? Would you be adding more if you were given more money?

144
145 Bret Martin: On Attachment 4, in the far right column a certain amount of money available is noted. In time, more
146 money will be made available.

147
148 Jeff Charles: Because you are collecting more revenue, or the percentage of the revenue that is going to buses is
149 increasing?

150
151 Bret Martin: The latter.

152
153 Jeff Charles: So we have to pay the \$6 million dollar share on the chance that we get federal funding and if we don't
154 because the density is not there to support a light rail system, that \$30 million dollars goes down the drain.

155
156 Paul Guthrie: One of the problems with your analysis is that all transit at some in time needs advanced planning.
157 Under the analysis you just gave, you would not do that until you have the money in your hand ready to build the
158 whole system. Your point is well taken with regard to whether it is an appropriate sharing of funds, but I don't think it
159 is a good idea to say we will never share funds if we have to front-end the cost.

160
161 Jeff Charles: I am not saying that.

162
163 Alex Castro: I agree with Jeff. The money has to be expended in order to get to the approval stage but if you look at
164 what has happened to Raleigh and Washington, the likelihood of the LRT, which has failed in the past, is a lot less

165 than it was when it previously failed. The state has changed their prioritization of projects for transportation money
166 with Strategic Transportation investments. It is a new strategic approach geared to economic development, not what
167 the LRT would do. State money is not likely. If Federal money is also not likely, the project is probably a no-go. If
168 they are both not likely, which I think is going to be the case, then it is definitely a no-go. We are going to throw this
169 money out and my perspective, coming from the senior population; we will not see a single rider until the whole
170 system is built out.

171
172 Bret Martin: There is a whole lot of upfront cost that goes into project development and planning before you even
173 know if the project is going to get funded, so if it doesn't get funded that was a waste and that is true.

174
175 Jeff Charles: I want to see a light rail here eventually but I am wondering whether the timetable that has been
176 established, that front loads the \$30 million, if that could be made 20 or 30 percent longer to free up additional funds
177 for what we really need now, which is this stuff (bus routes).

178
179 Bret Martin: I am working with what I have got.

180
181 Abigaille Pittman: We are tied to this implementation agreement that was agreed to by all the parties. We have to
182 implement what is under the agreement.

183
184 Jeff Charles: We are being asked to approve a resolution. Does the plan you presented provide an equitable use of
185 the half-cent sales tax mentioned two paragraphs above? And the seven-dollar registration tax?

186
187 Bret Martin: The OC BRIP is the financial plan per the law.

188
189 Alex Castro: Is it stipulated that it has to be distributed according to the formula and TTA cannot apply them for
190 something else?

191
192 Jeff Charles: They have already planned to fund the \$6 million dollars over x number of years. One hundred percent
193 of excess funds accumulated should be passed through to the county for the bus system or other uses.

194
195 Bret Martin: The Orange County Bus and Rail Investment Plan is the overarching policy guide for all this and this bus
196 expansion program is specific to OPT implementation details. It is true that the assumption was changed that the
197 revenue projections would not grow by 3.6% per year. It was revised upward to 4.4% per year, which creates
198 additional revenue beyond what was originally projected. That difference creates a total of \$60 million extra funds.
199 On the other side the expenditures have changed. The plan originally called for the capital purchases of buses,
200 amenities, park and rides, etc. and for there to be an 80% federal share and 10% state share. That was a dangerous
201 assumption. That figure has been revised to 30% federal and 5% state. The idea is that the additional revenue
202 would be soaked up by the fact that more local expenditures would be used to pay for the capital purchases. I
203 calculated the capital purchases will only cost (with the 30% federal 5% state shares) about \$18 million dollars.
204 There is \$42 million dollars unaccounted for by TTA. We need to know where the rest of the money will be spent.

205
206 Jeff Charles: Don't we need that information to talk about this resolution.

207
208 Abigail Pittman: This is the initial years with the initial money.

209
210 Paul Guthrie: Why do you need this resolution now?

211
212 Bret Martin: The BOCC will see this in March and will be asked to approve the program in April or early May and
213 they would like a recommendation.

214
215 Paul Guthrie: I have many of the same questions about the resolution. On one hand, I think we could come to
216 agreement on the concept of these routes. Whether that is an equitable distribution of the proceeds to TTA or not, I
217 am not sure we have enough information to know that and yet this resolution basically slams the door on that
218 discussion.

219

220 Bret Martin: You are reading that in a recital of the resolution?
221

222 Abigaile Pittman: You need to read the rest of that sentence and the use of the word equitable as applied to transit
223 dependent populations, not in the sense of the TTA funding and sales tax.
224

225 Jeff Charles: I still think the outstanding issue is what percentage of that funding is going to Orange County versus
226 Chapel Hill. I am uncomfortable. Bret; I think you have done a wonderful job with the amount of the funding you
227 have been given. As an advisory committee we have to be careful what we are recommending. I am not
228 comfortable with this resolution at all as written.
229

230 Bret Martin: My intent for being here is to get a recommendation on the program.
231

232 Paul Guthrie: What would be the ability to put a simple resolution together that says something about this program
233 you have just described telling the BOCC what we think about it. It is a good thing we can support. And then put a
234 paragraph about the other issues that have come up that need further study and examination and then come back to
235 what you think is absolutely necessary to move this forward.
236

237 Alex Castro: The point I am concerned about is the changed parameters. You told us the assumptions that were
238 made about Federal and State funding percentages have changed. I suggest to the Board we see if we have any
239 problems with what we have been briefed on and say we agree with this part but we feel that we need to point out the
240 changes and our concerns.
241

242 Bret Martin: This resolution is only working within what resources are being made available through OPT. This
243 resolution is not changing anything at a policy level, at the OC BRIP level, as to what will happen with the money.
244

245 Alex Castro: I think it is important that we show concerns about changes in the parameters on the Federal and State
246 level and to point out the parameters outlined in these new directions that come from Washington and Raleigh and
247 that the funding that comes from them will be allocated differently, and to point out to the BOCC that this needs to be
248 reviewed.
249

250 Bret Martin: The BOCC is getting this because they are a party to the implementation plan.
251

252 Jeff Charles: We represent the community. The reason we are part of an advisory committee is because they want
253 to hear from their constituents and this is a focus group of that and we need to get that opinion across to them if the
254 majority feels that way.
255

256 Paul Guthrie: What do you need from us tonight?
257

258 Abigaile Pittman: I'd like to get a decision from the Board on the goals first and then you could vote on
259 recommended bus expansion program, either by considering each individual route or by considering the whole
260 package. You don't have to do anything with the resolution.
261

262 Sam Lasris: We can resolve to support the goals but be skeptical of the funding.
263

264 Alex Castro: I would put it in the context that, whereas the federal government has implemented Map 21 and the
265 State of North Carolina has implemented Strategic Mobility Formula plan, and indicate the changes from the prior
266 assumed funding percentages, that this has great implications for the county. We have concerns that what is
267 proposed will not get the allocations from the State or Federal government that were anticipated.
268

269 Paul Guthrie: I am going to have to leave so I am asking Jeff (Charles) to begin chairing. My suggestion is that we
270 don't deal with the resolution as a whole but look at the goals and then get a strategy how we can get some of these
271 other issues to the front and center.
272

273 Abigaile Pittman: I would like the Board to consider the goals first, then the proposed bus routes, and then you can
274 provide statement(s) on your other issues of concern.

275
276 Bret Martin: (Continued presentation).
277
278 Alex Castro: The Advisory Board on Aging has provided recommendations on bus service expansion routes in a
279 written letter to the BOCC.
280
281 Bret Martin: (Continued presentation).
282
283 Abigaile Pittman: I need to know if you support these goals and address the order because the order reflects priority.
284
285 Amy Cole: I am in support of all the goals because they have come directly from the evidence of the surveys,
286 indicating what we are in need of. As far the order of the goals, I would like to know percentage-wise which would
287 serve the most people and then order these according to the greatest population being served.
288
289 Ted Triebel: I am on the same track as Amy. I would suggest we swap number one and two. The number one
290 priority, when you look at page 17, this is where most of the people are being affected. We didn't mention
291 environmental concerns. This is the greatest volume of people and that is why I would be in favor of Amy's objective.
292
293 **Motion** made by Ted Triebel that the OUTBoard supports the four goals with prioritization being goal #2 and then #1,
294 then the remainder in the order they are presented. Sam Lasris seconded.
295 **Vote:** 9:1 (Gary Saunders) (*Gary Saunders did not provide a reason for his vote in opposition.*)
296
297 Amy Cole: I am suggesting that we serve the majority of the population that needs to be served first and working our
298 way down the list.
299
300 Abigaile Pittman: That comes in the next vote.
301
302 Jeff Charles: Attachments 3, 4 and 5.
303
304 Abigaile Pittman: Amy's concern is that Later Senior Routes are being implemented too late.
305
306 Amy Cole: I thought it should be higher on the list.
307
308 Alex Castro: That service is not scheduled to come on until July, 2016 and the Department on Aging feels that it
309 should be brought into service much sooner.
310
311 Abigaile Pittman: We are entering into the county's budget discussion for the next fiscal year. There might also be a
312 discussion of additional funds to go toward something else but that is unknown at this time.
313
314 Bret Martin: Going through the budget process, the only thing changing is to get rid of \$3 co pay for medical
315 appointments and to stop collecting fares on the 420 route.
316
317 Jeff Charles: There is not a clear swap. For the first year, it is basically \$56,000 so where will you get the funds to
318 swap it out to have it occur in 2016 instead of 2017?
319
320 Bret Martin: What would naturally come out would be northern zone routes that could be implemented later. The US
321 70 route could possibly be pushed back because it will be sensitive to when Triangle Transit begins service.
322
323 Alex Castro: The 420 route is a midday substitution by OPT of what TTA runs rush hour morning and evening. TTA
324 charges for that route and are we saying we want OPT to run the same route but because they are doing it midday
325 we are not going to charge? I don't see the trade-off.
326
327 Bret Martin: Triangle Transit is trying to focus on employment commuters. OPT service is primarily local.
328

329 Jeff Charles: If you are concerned about seniors they are the least likely to be able to pay that fee so I think it would
330 be important to not charge. Could we go with a recommendation to bring it back to Bret and you reorganize it and do
331 what Amy is suggesting?
332

333 Bret Martin: I would move it earlier and keep everything else in the same order and it would be presented to the
334 BOCC as the OUTBoard's recommendation.
335

336 Ted Triebel: In the Attachments 3, 4 and 5, I don't see any statement that we should be gathering data on ridership
337 so that there will be a re-examination of routes that should be made and not just this is the way it is. Shouldn't there
338 be something in there that after a certain period we should rearrange a route or two? That would be a worthwhile
339 comment to make.
340

341 Bret Martin: That will be in the program and we have already developed service standards.
342

343 Ted Triebel: I only like this if at the one year mark, we will take a look at it and make sure we have what we need.
344

345 Bret Martin: There will be service standards in the program that will address that.
346

347 Jeff Charles: Can I get a motion to approve Attachments 3, 4 and 5 with the changes of the senior service getting a
348 higher priority and including a footnote comment that Ted is suggesting?
349

350 **Motion** made by Alex Castro to approve Attachments 3, 4 and 5 with changes that the senior services get higher
351 priority and include a footnote that that new bus routes be reviewed annually according to program service standards.
352 Seconded by Don.
353

354 **Vote:** Unanimous
355

356 Abigaile Pittman: In March and April the program will be presented to the BOCC with your recommendation and
357 comments. In April and May they will approve some type of bus program for the first five years, and in May and June
358 there is a group looking at making revisions to the OC BRIP because facts have changed with regard to funding and
359 project timing.
360

361 Jeff Charles: We need one more motion with respect to the equitable use of funding.
362

363 Alex Castro: Our concern is that prior transportation planning and allocation of funding has been adversely impacted
364 by the newly implemented Federal Map 21 program and the State Strategic Mobility Funding Plan, and that the
365 changes in Washington DC and Raleigh have changed priorities and the allocation of funding.
366

367 Bret Martin: Nothing changed in Washington DC. Triangle Transit changed the percentages because the
368 assumptions they made originally were not correct.
369

370 Alex Castro: There needs to be a correction to the planning allocations of funding made by Triangle Transit which
371 were not correct as to Federal funding, and then there needs to be an assessment of the impact of the new thrust
372 from Raleigh under the Strategic Mobility Formula plan which has changed the methodology for the prioritization and
373 funding of projects.
374

375 Jeff Charles: The OUTBoard is asking for additional information to assist them in understanding the procedure with
376 respect to changes to the OCbRIP (potentially, as Alex discussed), and also how the increased revenue is going to
377 be split. Tell the BOCC that If you want the OUTBoard to be able to continue to comment they need additional
378 information. The OUTBoard has concerns about its understanding of the revenue stream in light of the changing
379 landscape.
380

381 Ted Triebel: The OUTBoard does not have the appropriate data.
382

383 Abigaile Pittman: Our BOCC also does not yet have clarity regarding the most current funding projections from
Triangle Transit.

384
385 Jeff Charles: Abigaile, could you draft the language for this comment and send it to Paul and I for approval?
386

387 Abigaile Pittman: Yes. I can refine what you have said and make sure it reflects what you have discussed.
388 *(The comment appears in the Abstract for the April 15, 2014 BOCC meeting.)*
389

390 Alex Castro: I think we should institute that as a process.
391

392 Abigaile Pittman: Due to the late hour, the remainder of the agenda will be deferred to the Board's March 19th
393 meeting.
394

395
396 **AGENDA ITEM V: STAFF UPDATES**
397 a. Work Group for Outlining Rural and Central Orange Public Transit Needs
398 b. Status of State, RPO and MPO Project Prioritization
399 c. DCHC MPO, BG MPO, and TARPO activities
400 **OUTBoard Action:** Receive updates
401

402
403 **AGENDA ITEM VI: UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS OF INTEREST ON OTHER REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION RELATED**
404 **BOARD AGENDAS**
405 **OUTBoard Action:** Receive information
406

407
408 **AGENDA ITEM VII: BOARD COMMENTS**
409 **OUTBoard Action:** Receive comments
410

411
412 **AGENDA ITEM VIII: ADJOURNMENT**
413

414 The meeting was adjourned by consensus.
415

Paul Guthrie, Chair