

MINUTES

Concord Kannapolis Area Transit Commission

August 2, 2023, 8:30 am

Rider Transit Center

MEMBERS:

Mayor Darrell Hinnant-City of Kannapolis
Dianne Berry- City of Kannapolis
Darrell Jackson- City of Kannapolis
Betty Stocks-City of Concord

OTHERS:

Jessica Castrodale-Atrium Health
Andy Christy- Rider Transit
Phil Conrad- CRMPO
Barbara Gorman-Passenger
Craig Meeks-Rider Transit
Wilmer Melton- City of Kannapolis
Obdulio Oden-Transdev
Paige Tamaro-City of Concord
Jaime Tippet Poe- Rider Transit
L.J. Weslowski- Rider Transit

Call to Order, Quorum, and Approval of Minutes

Mayor Hinnant called the meeting to order at 8:30 am, declared a quorum.

No individuals present for public comment.

Mayor Hinnant requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Concord Kannapolis Area Transit Commission meeting from 3/23/2023, 5/9/2023, and 6/20/2023.

Ms. Stocks made a motion to approve; Mr. Jackson second. Minutes approved unanimously as presented.

Dream Center & Mobile Clinic Access

Using a PowerPoint, Ms. Castrodale presented Dream Center Transit with information including partners located at the Cabarrus Dream Center, current service to/from the Dream Center, a request for a shuttle to/from Dream Center to/from Rider Transit Center, another option for service, and follow-up steps that will be done.

Mr. Jackson asked what ridership is at this stop.

Ms. Tippet Poe stated that the highest ridership at this stop is 5 passengers.

Mr. Weslowski stated that this is likely due to the inefficient service.

Ms. Castrodale stated that a passenger can cross Concord Parkway without a protected crosswalk.

Mr. Melton has asked about adding pedestrian controls.

Ms. Castrodale stated that she has spoken with Barbi Jones regarding NCDOT installing a protected crosswalk including pedestrian controls.

Mayor Hinnant asked if this is designed to get individuals across Hwy 29 safely.

Mr. Weslowski stated that the purple route stop is at the Pizza Hut on Cabarrus Avenue, but does not have the time to enter the Cabarrus Dream Center Parking lot.

Ms. Stocks asked if there is a vehicle available for the shuttle.

Mr. Weslowski stated in the short term, we could make our current fleet and staffing work, but if we went longer than the pilot, we may need to find another option.

Ms. Berry asked about passengers paying a fare just like they would on the fixed route vehicle.

Mr. Weslowski stated that it is completely up to the Transit Commission, but the smaller vehicles do not have fare boxes onboard. It may be beneficial for the pilot to provide the service free of charge.

Ms. Berry asked where the shuttle will go to and from

Mr. Weslowski stated that the shuttle would go from the Rider Transit Center to and from the Cabarrus Dream Center. Mr. Weslowski stated that this allows for coverage with a non-CDL vehicle and operator at this time.

Mayor Hinnant asked if we moved past the pilot, we would need to find funding for the vehicle.

Mr. Weslowski stated we would need to find funding to pay for the service and the vehicle if the pilot was effective. If this pilot provides useful, it may be more beneficial and cost effective to add the second bus to the CCX to go up and down Hwy 29.

Mayor Hinnant asked what size vehicle we use of CCX.

Mr. Weslowski stated we use a full-size bus because the connection to Charlotte.

Mayor Hinnant asked if we are not looking at doubling the CCX capacity is because we do not have an additional bus.

Mayor Hinnant stated if the CCX is doubled, we would serve more than just the Cabarrus Dream Center.

Mr. Weslowski stated that is correct and if in the long run the direct connection can be provided by the CCX, but we do not have an extra full-size bus.

Mayor Hinnant asked about doubling the CCX and the impact with the Eli Lilly and Red Bull effort?

Mr. Weslowski stated that it definitely would.

Mayor Hinnant asked what would really be improved to double the CCX. There may be a bigger question than just providing better service to the Cabarrus Dream Center. It could really be a better solution than the shuttle.

Mr. Weslowski stated that the shuttle pilot would provide data for both councils to see the improved ridership with improved service.

Mayor Hinnant asked what cost of full-time operation and a new bus for doubling of the CCX service.

Mr. Weslowski stated that he will get the exact calculation to the Transit Commission by noon, but anticipate that it will cost approximately \$375,000-\$400,000 annually to operate. We will need to check our reserves to see if we have the funding in reserve for another vehicle or if we would need to find funding.

Mayor Hinnant stated that once we have that financial impact, we could meet with Eli Lilly and Red Bull to see if they will invest in the cost of the route.

Mr. Weslowski stated that that would be an excellent opportunity to expand those partnerships.

Ms. Stocks stated that she likes the big picture and we have looked at additional options to that area in the past.

Mr. Jackson stated that he feels it is a reasonable request.

Mayor Hinnant stated that based on initial conversations with Eli Lilly, it seemed like they may be willing to assist with the financial impact.

Mr. Weslowski stated that we will not be able to serve Eli Lilly because of their anticipated 12-hour work schedule. We would need to run 16-hours per day to meet their needs, but this is a practical need and we do need to grow service and hours as the community grows.

Mr. Melton stated that staff needs to bring back a budget to look at total project cost including the protected pedestrian crosswalk.

Mr. Weslowski stated that this would also need to be included at the Eli Lilly/Red Bull locations due to the speed and size of the highway.

Mr. Melton stated that it would need to be a part of the equation.

Mayor Hinnant asked if we are back to the shuttle request or looking beyond that and how we can increase ridership including total cost of that. He also asked if we can get the bigger picture or the real solution, but if the financial impact is too much at this time, then we could go back to the shuttle pilot.

Ms. Berry asked how we would know that the passengers are truly going to the Cabarrus Dream Center versus going to somewhere else.

Mr. Weslowski stated that in a pilot it is unlikely that passengers would figure that out, but if this were run for long-term, it is possible.

Mayor Hinnant asked about just Rider Transit passengers vs. Countywide ridership going to the Cabarrus Dream Center.

Mr. Weslowski stated there is a larger discussion of county-wide microtransit that would bring passengers to the closest bus stop. This is part of our long-range plan.

Mayor Hinnant stated this would only assist the Cabarrus Dream Center.

Mr. Weslowski stated that this is correct, but it would allow us to fill the gaps.

Mayor Hinnant asked about bringing the financial impact in a week or so.

Mr. Weslowski stated that he will provide that information.

Recommendation/Action: Staff to return with financial impact of doubling CCX service to accommodate the Cabarrus Dream Center and other companies along Hwy 29 including Eli Lilly and Red Bull. Will address this versus the shuttle pilot at next Concord Kannapolis Transit Commission Meeting.

Rider/CCTS Customer Satisfaction Program Plan

Using a PowerPoint, Mr. Weslowski presented. Discussion of proposed Public Transit Customer Satisfaction Program Plan project.

- There has never been a formal, consistent assessment of transit service customer satisfaction.
- Currently rely on customer complaints and occasional comments/suggestions. Likely incomplete picture.
- Staff desires to build a customer service satisfaction program to assess current operations and then monitor on an intentional/regular basis moving forward.
- Task order issued earlier this spring to On Call partners. HDR - \$150,936; Benesch \$74,780.
- As discussed at the March Transit Commission meeting, there is \$150,000 in the FY 23-24 budget for this project.

Staff recommend Benesch as our planning partner for this task

- Two surveys to establish ongoing program-to track the trend of satisfaction
 - Baseline survey (Fall '23)

- Validation survey (Spring '24)
- Rider Transit & CCTS both included
- Short questionnaire-20-25 questions
- Initial 2 surveys will target:
 - 200 Rider fixed route users
 - 25 Rider paratransit users
 - 25 CCTS demand-response users
- Multiple collection methods (phone, technology, onboard, intercept)
- Goal is replicability
- Two cycles to set up program
- Ongoing surveys every 24 months
- Track satisfaction levels to ensure quality care & services

Ms. Berry asked if \$74,780 is for two surveys and that we are only getting 200 surveys.

Mr. Weslowski stated that that is correct and we often have difficulty getting 200 surveys completed when we do any type of customer input.

Mr. Jackson stated that this is good information to have and it is always good to listen to your customers.

Mr. Weslowski stated that it will be presented fully to the Transit Commission so that we can all focus on what we should focus on to improve experience.

Ms. Berry asked what happens if we can not fix what they are asking, for example faster service.

Mr. Weslowski stated that those would have to come in through the comments section, those are not the questions we will be asking.

Mr. Melton asked if we already have the list of questions.

Mr. Weslowski stated that we do not yet have that. We plan to work with Benesch to come up with questions that are applicable to us that can be repeated with each survey.

Recommendation/Action: Review and consider approval of Benesch to complete the Rider/CCTS Customer Satisfaction Program Plan.

Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve Benesch to complete the Rider/CCTS Customer Satisfaction Program Plan. Ms. Stocks second. Unanimous.

Rider Bus Stop Amenity Project Update

Mr. Christy provided an update on the Bus Stop Amenity Project.

266 total physical stops

- Currently 27 Rider Transit bus stop shelters in place (10.15% of stops amenitized)

The construction IFB for Phase 1 of the Bus Stop Amenity Program was released 6/23/23.

- Additional 6 shelters, 13 Simme-Seats (3 shelters/11 seats in Concord and 3 shelters/2 seats in Kannapolis)
- 17.29% of stops amenitized upon completion
- Engineer's cost estimate: \$470,000

Upcoming second phase of construction (pending ROW acquisition) is already underway

- Up to an additional 29 sites improved
- Includes 18 shelters, 10 Simme-Seats, 1 site improved but no amenity (12 shelters/5 seats in Concord and 6 shelters/5 seats, 1 improved in

Kannapolis)

- Easement agreements being drafted currently
- Phase 2 may have one or more construction projects, depending on the speed and success of the ROW acquisition process

Mr. Weslowski stated that this topic was on the Kannapolis City Council consent agenda. Due to not having bids we were not able to move forward. We are requesting to move forward with the lowest responsible bid when received as not to lose more time until the next Concord. Kannapolis Transit Commission Meeting in October 2023. Grant funding is already in place for this project.

Mr. Jackson asked if we are requesting 10% from each community.

Mr. Weslowski stated that is correct, which based on the engineer's estimate it will be \$47,000. Mayor Hinnant asked if Rider staff is asking to move forward with the lowest responsible bid up to the Engineers estimate.

Mr. Weslowski stated we are asking to move forward with the lowest responsible bidder and allow Concord City Council to have the approval for moving forward with the project.

Mr. Jackson asked if there is a cap on this project.

Mr. Melton stated that if it is over that amount, Kannapolis will need to do a budget amendment and it would need to go back before Kannapolis City Council.

Ms. Stocks asked if staff is asking the Concord Kannapolis Transit Commission to approve up to \$470,000 at this time.

Mr. Weslowski stated that is not correct, we are requesting to move forward with the lowest responsible bid, which could be over that estimate.

Mayor Hinnant stated that he hears that the Concord Kannapolis Transit Commission would like to create a cap on what the amount will be. If the bids come in higher than \$470,000, staff will have to go back to Kannapolis City Council for approval.

Mr. Weslowski asked if we can move back to both Kannapolis and Concord City Council versus coming back to the Concord Kannapolis Transit Commission first.

Mayor Hinnant stated that that is correct and Commission members agree.

Recommendation/Action: Consider approval of up to the Engineer's cost estimate of \$470,000.

Ms. Berry made a motion to approve up to \$470,000. Anything above will need to come back to Kannapolis and Concord City Councils for approval. Ms. Stocks second. Unanimous.

Hybrid Bus Replacement

Using a PowerPoint, Mr. Weslowski presented.

- Competing for discretionary grant funds can be challenging.
 - National need is 8x-13x available funding annually.
 - Forced to wait until vehicles are PAST Useful Life threshold to submit.
 - May need multiple grants to gather enough funding.
- Per vehicle cost continues to climb currently month over month ~\$10,000.
 - \$217,000 overall increase since 10/2020 quote.
- Replacement parts for both aging and new vehicles proving challenging.
 - Maintenance and Operational stress.
 - Negative impacts on services due to in service breakdowns or vehicles out of service for extended periods.
- Surplus grant funding in hand.
 - Replace as close to Useful Life as we can.

- Lowest cost possible based on recent trends.
 - > waiting a year could result in \$240,000 increased cost.
- Maintain fleet in 100% Good Repair status.
- The FTA funds will cover 85% of the cost of the two vehicles (\$1,596,803). The remaining 15% (\$281,789) will be split 50/50 between Kannapolis and Concord (\$140,894.50 each).

Mayor Hinnant asked of Mr. Melton if the Kannapolis City Council approved \$140,894.50 and Mr. Melton concurred.

Recommendation/Action: Review and consider approval of Rider Transit Hybrid Bus Replacement plan.

Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve purchase of Hybrid Bus replacement. Ms. Stocks second. Unanimous.

Consolidation Implementation Study Update

Mr. Weslowski presented the option to do both models of Transit Authority and Municipal consolidation model built by Benesch. We are paying with 5303 MPO transit planning funds, and we have additional funds to pay the additional \$18,000 in planning funds to utilize.

Recommendation/Action: Review and consider approval of the proposed study completion plan.

Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve additional \$18,000 to build both Transit Authority and Municipal consolidation models. Ms. Stocks second. Unanimous.

Cabarrus Health Alliance Pass Purchases Request

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Tippet Poe presented.

CHA is currently purchasing and providing 31-Day passes to individuals upon release to assist their re-entry into the community, RISE clinic participants, and others in ongoing care at CHA. CHA staff plan, manage, and reload the cards online.

Request:

- Offer the passes at a reduced fare rate (\$20 for a 31-day pass)
- Accommodate/remove the initial card price of \$2/card

Recommendation/Action: Review and consider approval of CHA's request to purchase reduce fare passes and accommodate the card price.

Ms. Stocks made a motion to approve of CHA's request to purchase reduce fare passes and accommodate the card price. Mr. Jackson second. Unanimous.

Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)

Ms. Tippet Poe provided an update on the annual review of the Rider Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, required by the Federal Transit Administration for all public transit agencies.

- The PTASP final rule (49 C.F.R. Part 673) intends to improve public transportation safety by guiding transit agencies to more effectively and proactively manage safety risks in their systems. It requires certain recipients and sub-recipients of FTA grants that operate public transportation to develop and implement safety plans that establish processes and procedures to support the implementation of Safety Management Systems (SMS).
- Requires approval from Accountable Executive, Concord Kannapolis Transit Commission, Concord City Council, and Cabarrus Rowan MPO for annual reviews.
- Minor changes to language to update staffing and account for new safety targets, in order to remain in compliance with PTASP final rule

Recommendation/Action: Annual review of the Rider Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, required by the Federal Transit Administration for all public transit agencies.

Ms. Berry made a motion to approve 2023 Rider Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan. Ms. Stocks second. Unanimous.

Reports/Other Business

- RideCo Microtransit Update-Mr. Weslowski stated that we are moving forward with RideCo to serve the citizens that were affected by the Orange Route Lincoln Street bridge closure with microtransit virtual stops. Money was budgeted for new service that will be utilized for this project. This will begin on September 5th, 2023. Will provide an update after the first 6 months.
Ms. Stocks asked how this will be promoted.
Mr. Weslowski stated that we will post information at stops and on buses, post on Facebook and our website, and work with Lindsay in the City of Concord to send out information.
- Cabarrus County Transit System led, with Rider Transit as a partner, an effort for a county wide Microtransit study funding grant (100%) through NCDOT and we will participate. This will give more information about the need in the community and current services.
- Next Meeting – Thursday, 10/26/23, 8:30am Rider Transit Center

Mayor Hinnant requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Berry made a motion; Ms. Stocks second. Unanimous. With no additional discussion or items on agenda, meeting adjourned at 9:57 am.