The OKALOOSA TRANSIT COOPERATIVE MEETING MINUTES
West Florida Regional Planning Council (Designated staff)
Okaloosa County Board Chambers 1250 N. Eglin Parkway, Shalimar, FL 32579
January 24, 2019

Members attending:
Dick Rynearson  Fort Walton Beach Mayor
Jean Hood       Cinco Bayou Mayor
Elizabeth Roy   Crestview City Clerk
William Schaetzle Niceville Councilman

Others attending:
Greg Kisela      Okaloosa County
Booker Tyrone Parker Okaloosa County
Dennis Franklin  MV Transportation
Howard Vanselow  WFRPC Staff
Mary Beth Washnock WFRPC Staff
Rob Mahan        WFRPC Staff
Annie Walthall   WFRPC Staff
Jo Anne Donatella WFRPC Staff

I. CALL TO ORDER
Mayor Rynearson called the meeting to order in Commissioner Ketchel’s absence.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Mayor Hood moved to approve the agenda. Councilman Schaetzle seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

III. CONSENT AGENDA
1. Approval of the Attached November 29, 2018 Meeting Minutes
Mayor Hood moved to approve the November 29, 2018 minutes; Ms. Roy seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS
1. For those wishing to speak, please fill out a speaker request form and indicate the agenda item(s) you would like to address. You will be called by the Chairperson at the appropriate time. If you would like to address an item not on the agenda, there will be an opportunity at the end of the meeting.

V. ACTION ITEM
1. ENCLOSURE A-Consideration of Discounted Passes for Non-Profits - Mr. Tyrone Parker, Okaloosa County
The Co-op has discussed offering bus passes at a discounted price to community support agencies, such as Catholic Charities. At the November meeting, Mr. Tyrone Parker, Transit Manager, offered to present a list of agencies and criteria for eligibility for the discount at the January meeting. The Co-op may make a recommendation to the County if desired.
Mr. Parker shared a list of agencies and agency criteria for discounted passes (attached to official minutes). He said the list was based on agencies which had contacted the county or acquired passes over the past six months or had indicated interest in purchasing them. Prior to the new contract operator coming on board on January 1, former operator Maruti had been responsible for selling the passes through the drivers. With the transition to MV Transportation, the focus has shifted to safety. The county will now take over responsibility for selling the passes. Mr. Parker said the challenge has been implementing a payment program for the agencies, whether it be a purchase order or voucher program. Mr. Parker will bring more detailed information to the next scheduled meeting.

Ms. Roy asked if the single ride fare had been increased (which had been discussed at the last meeting). Mr. Parker said with the transition to the new operator, the fares have remained at the current rate ($1.50 per ride for fixed route). Mr. Parker will have more information at the next meeting regarding potential increase in fares and when they might be implemented. Ms. Roy suggested possible reduced fare schedules based on the number of passes being purchased i.e., 10% discount for purchase of 10 passes. Or, if fares are to be increased, an agency may opt to purchase at current prices before the price increase goes into effect. i.e., purchase $1.50/ride passes and the passes would be honored even when/if the price increases to $2.00. Even though it would be an initial cost of up front, the purchaser would benefit in the long run.

Ms. Roy suggested that no passes be sold to any agencies without payment up front or a purchase order in place. Mayor Hood said she was in favor of distributing discounted passes to One Hopeful Place and other homeless shelters in the winter, since the shelters are off the main thoroughfares and not easy to get to without the shuttle.

Councilman Schaetzle asked the county to bring back the proposed rate increases, and a proposed discount schedule for the non-profit agencies at the next meeting.

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS
1. EC Rider Updates – Mr. Tyrone Parker, Okaloosa County

Mr. Parker updated the board on the status of the 5 Ford Explorers that were acquired prior to the last meeting. Three of the Explorers have been reassigned to other county functions (airport, IT, Public Safety). Two have been kept as in-house service vehicles that staff can use, but they are not considered revenue vehicles.

Councilman Schaetzle asked if the 3 Ford Explorers that were transferred to other county departments were going to be replaced with other vehicles that will be ADA compliant for transit operation. Mr. Parker said the funds will be returned to the transit department and transit will be looking to purchase an ADA compliant fixed route vehicle. Mr. Parker explained that the Alexander Dennis bus that was on display a few months ago, is now accepted by FDOT on state contract. He said that if the board elected to purchase that style vehicle, the price would be between $225,000. Alternatively, the county is also looking at new Ford cutaways like the models that are currently in the fleet.

Mr. Parker gave a brief update about the Fort Walton Beach transfer station relocation. Mr. Parker said there are potential route changes/additions as well as transfer stations
being explored. The changes are still in the preliminary stages. More information will be available at the next meeting.

2. MV Transportation Updates – *Mr. Dennis Franklin, General Manager*

MV Transportation officially took over transit operations January 1. Mr. Franklin said that MV Transportation was able to retain 99% of Maruti staff during the transition. Ridership has increased per hour to between 1.59 – 1.6. Ontime performance has dropped a bit but will be one of the main focuses going forward. Mr. Franklin said that MV is looking at the fixed route side of operations. Getting people to transfer from demand response to fixed route has been a challenge, especially in the Crestview area. Many riders in Crestview cannot get to the bus stops due to its rural geography. MV Transportation will be researching increasing the number/frequency of Crestview-Ft. Walton bus routes. MV would like to put a circulator in Crestview that would pick up people and take them to a transfer point to get to Ft. Walton and alleviate demand response trips. The circulator should be up and running by the end of March. Mr. Franklin said he is looking at adding time to Route 14 early morning and late afternoon by the end of February.

Ms. Roy asked Mr. Franklin to meet with her regarding a route map that is available for the City of Crestview. The route hits all the main Crestview businesses, library, jail, and is about 30 minutes in duration and does not have any left turns across traffic.

Mr. Franklin did reach out to some dialysis centers to encourage scheduling patients that are near each other to maximize transportation efficiency and eliminate numerous trips to the same areas. Mr. Franklin said many patients/passengers prefer to ride alone, and it will be a process to educate them that the demand response system is a shared ride service. Some riders are opting to switch themselves to the fixed route and this needs to be encouraged. Riders that can use the fixed route system need to be identified and transferred from demand response system.

**VII. OTHER BUSINESS**

1. The next Okaloosa Transit Cooperative meeting is scheduled for *Thursday, March 28, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.*, in the Okaloosa County Board Chambers – 1250 N. Eglin Parkway, Shalimar, Florida.

**VIII. PUBLIC FORUM**

1. Public – For those wishing to speak, please fill out a speaker request form.

2. Any additional items for discussion – Co-op, Okaloosa County Staff, MV Transportation, WFRPC Staff

**IX. ADJOURNMENT 10:02 a.m.**
Approved by Okaloosa Transit Cooperative

DATE: 3/08/19
SIGNED: [Signature]