OKALOOSA TRANSIT COOPERATIVE MEETING MINUTES
West Florida Regional Planning Council (Designated staff)
Okaloosa County Board Chambers 1250 N. Eglin Parkway, Shalimar, FL 32579
November 29, 2018

Members attending:
Carolyn Ketchel, Chair
Dick Rynearson
Jean Hood
Elizabeth Roy
William Schaetzle
Skip Overdier

Okaloosa County Commissioner
Fort Walton Beach Mayor
Cinco Bayou Mayor
Crestview City Clerk
Niceville Councilman
Destin Councilman

Others attending:
Greg Kisela
Booker Tyrone Parker
Howard Vanselow
Mary Beth Washnock
Rob Mahan
Annie Walthall
Jo Anne Donatella

Okaloosa County
Okaloosa County
WFRPC
WFRPC
WFRPC Staff
WFRPC Staff
WFRPC Staff

I. CALL TO ORDER
Commissioner Ketchel called the meeting to order.

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

III. CONSENT AGENDA
1. Approval of the Attached September 27, 2018 Meeting Minutes
Mayor Hood moved to approve the September 27, 2018 minutes, Councilman Overdier 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 Meeting Schedule for 2019 - Mr. Rob Mahan, WFRPC
The correct date for the November 2019 meeting is November 21, 2019. Motion by Councilman Overdier to approve the schedule with the noted change; seconded by Mayor Rynearson. After discussion confirming the date change in November, the motion was passed.
VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

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

Mr. Parker gave a brief overview of his approximate 8 weeks on the job and some highlights, including Hurricane Michael.

a. FDOT’s intent to award medium-duty bus contract. The bus is an Alexander Dennis Enviro200, ranging in price from $325-$400,000 depending on specifications/add-ons. The bus seats about 32 passengers; with wheelchair positions it can then seat 24-26 passengers. Mr. Parker said that Okaloosa County ridership may not warrant that size of vehicle right now, but as the county transit system will grow, it makes sense to look at this size transit vehicle for the future. With the intent to award there is now an option on FDOT’s TRIPS (Transit-Research-Inspection-Procurement Services) website. Commissioner Ketchel asked Mr. Parker his opinion on this bus and he relayed that he preferred Gillig brand models. Commissioner Ketchel asked if he could bring their reps in to speak to this body and Mr. Parker agreed to reach out to them and set up a meeting/presentation. Mayor Hood asked about more specifications on the Alexander Dennis model and whether it was manufactured in the United States. Mr. Parker will bring that information to the next meeting. Mr. Overdier asked for clarification on the procurement process. Mr. Parker explained that under the FDOT’s TRIPS procurement process, vehicles that are offered are already FDOT approved and this shortens the procurement time. Commissioner Ketchel asked if we chose the Gillig over the Alexander Dennis, could the county still purchase with FDOT’s shortened procurement time. Mr. Parker said the Gillig is not currently FDOT approved, therefore procurement would have to come from another source such as a consortium by piggybacking on another agency’s contract – this could require a fee. More detailed information will be provided to the committee.

b. FDOT’s draft Preventive Maintenance Minimum Standards Manual. Minimum requirement standards for preventive maintenance throughout transit agencies across the state is currently in draft mode. Mr. Parker gave a brief overview of what types of certifications and schedules might be required to keep consistent maintenance practices.

c. Transit’s new vehicle acquisition. Mr. Parker explained that under the capital replacement plan, 5 Ford Explorers have been acquired to replace 5 older demand response revenue vehicles. Mr. Parker had thought these would be service vehicles (for directors, supervisors, etc.). The Explorers have been in the fleet for 3 weeks and still need decals and cameras. Commissioner Ketchel questioned the acquisition of these vehicles and asked what vehicles they were replacing. Going forward Mr. Parker would suggest replacing with like vehicles. These will go into revenue service even though they are not ADA accessible. Commissioner Ketchel requested information on who was responsible for this purchase and why the vehicles were accepted. Councilman Overdier asked what vehicle these Explorers replaced. Mr. Parker said they were to replace ADA accessible paratransit vehicles.

Mr. Kisela approached the podium and said that under the procurement process, he was assured that these explorers would be ADA accessible. Mr. Kisela will get answers and whether there is any recourse to this purchase.
Mr. Parker reported that one Ford Transit cutaway was obtained this week. It is ADA accessible and will be added to the fleet.

Councilman Schaetzle asked if there will be a gap in service if the 5 Ford Explorers that are replacing vehicles that are out of service and not ADA accessible. Mr. Parker reported that there are some existing vehicles in the fleet that are being repaired before procuring other new vehicles. These repairs may add a year or more to their service life. So, there should not be a gap in service.

Mayor Hood said there should be a standard in Okaloosa County that no county dollars should be used for purchase of vehicles that are not ADA accessible if they are to be used in paratransit.

Commissioner Ketchel tabled this item until more answers are forthcoming.

d. SEON camera system installation. Ms. Roy suggested holding off on installing cameras in the 5 Ford Explorers while their status is still in question.

e. EC Rider building security door access system. Mr. Parker reported that security access for employees is underway at the transit facility. GSC is facilitating installation and uploading security software. Employees will have badges and photo I.D.’s with restricted access based on work schedules.

Follow up item from last meeting. Offering discounted passes for non-profit agencies. Mr. Parker said he would like to develop the criteria and list of identified agencies requesting discounted passes. He said he’s already received 3-4 requests from Catholic Charities. He suggested the agencies could be given ten 31-day passes (for example) and the county would bill them. The agency would then pay for those passes at a discounted rate. Mr. Parker stated that the county would like to begin issuing the discounted passes to Catholic Charities. Commissioner Ketchel supported this but wanted to be sure the agencies reimburse the county in a timely manner.

2. Maruti Updates – Not present

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

1. The next Okaloosa Transit Cooperative meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 24, 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, Maruti, WFRPC Staff

Mr. Kisela offered a big picture overview of the economics of the transit system in preparation for the upcoming Invitation to Negotiate meeting. He said the county went
to market based on current Levels of Service of 30,000 hours a year of fixed route and 60,000 hours/year on paratransit. After responses to proposals were received it was obvious, the county could not afford that LOS with current available resources. The providers were requested to provide estimates with a reduction of paratransit hours to 50,000. Fixed route hours remained at 30,000. The transit system incurs about $3.6 million in expenses including the service contract (expenses include approximately $450,000 fuel cost; overhead, etc.) There is a gap. A fare increase will be required to cover the additional expenses with the new contract. The most modest increase is 10%, the most expensive would be 40%. There are currently inequities in the rates between paratransit and fixed routes. Paratransit fare (copay) is $1.00; fixed route fare is $1.50.

This creates challenges because if a rider eligible for paratransit is adjacent to a fixed route, the rider will use paratransit because it is cheaper. Increasing the paratransit rate to $1.50 would bring in another $120-$130,000/year. Mr. Kisela said the transit system would need at least that amount, plus additional revenues, to keep the level at the 80,000 hours as it was priced out. Otherwise, other revenue streams would need to be identified. Increasing on-time performance to 90% will increase ridership per hour to 1.7 and would work in transit’s favor. Better managing cancellations and no-shows would be very beneficial.

Councilman Overdier asked what happens when the budgeted hours are exceeded. Once those hours are met, EC Rider declines trips.

There was discussion about fare increases and level of service. Commissioner Ketchel asked the board their feelings on raising fares. The Board seemed to agree that raising the fares is more attractive/reasonable if the LOS increases to at least 90%. Councilman Schaetzle asked about any grants/resources that might be available to help operate the transit system. Mr. Kisela explained if there is a fare increase there is more money available. More state and federal dollars are available when the county invests more. He said right now there is approximately $100,000 county ad valorem tax dollars in the program, program income from advertising, fares, and then state and federal grants and that is where the $3.6 million comes from. For every dollar the county invests in the program, it can apply for state & federal grants.

Ms. Roy asked if transit staff had reached out to doctors’ offices/clinics to try to coordinate scheduling patients that are near each other to maximize transportation efficiency and eliminate numerous trips to the same areas. Mrs. Kisela said there has been some dialogue to work with providers to get more timely and efficient delivery.

Mayor Rynearson asked about an update to the Ft. Walton transfer station relocation. Mr. Kisela said some preliminary research had been done but would have more information at the next meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT 10:37 a.m.
Approved by Okaloosa Transit Cooperative

DATE: 1-24-19

SIGNED: [Signature]