GTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNUAL MEETING
United Way of Greenville, Edinburgh Court, Greenville, SC 29601
8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

MINUTES
February 11, 2020

Members Present: Mr. George Campbell (Board Chair), Ms. Addy Matney (Treasurer), Mr. David Mitchell, Ms. Inez Morris, Mr. Dick O’Neill (Chairman), Mr. Darren Scott Ms. Amanda Warren (Vice Chair)

Greenlink Staff: Jasmin Curtis (Safety & Training Officer), James Keel (Transit Director), Nicole McAden (Marketing and Public Affairs Manager), Jason Sanders (Fleet Manager), Kayleigh Sullivan (Transit Planning Manager)

Other City Staff: Karen Crawford (Comptroller), Kal Nelson (OMB Director), Micah Snead (Senior Accountant)

A PowerPoint developed from the American Public Transportation Association Board Member handbook was reviewed. Board member responsibilities covered.

Meeting Objectives: Clarify roles of board and staff. Will discuss funding. Conduct a SWOT analysis.

The role of Staff is to support functions of board. Staff posts meeting announcements, arranges public comment, planning sessions, professional development, records board meetings, facilitates orientation, makes travel arrangements, maintain rosters of assignments and calendars, manage operations, prioritizes fleet maintenance and safety, and oversee personnel matters. Planning efforts include evaluating route network, assessing capital needs, identifying grant funding sources, reporting, and making recommendations to the board. Staff does not have to have board approval to apply for grants. Staff should preserve and develop Greenlink reputation, speak positively about Greenlink, and know and express the goals of the Authority.

GTA Roles & Responsibilities:
- Modify and implement fare structure, operational changes, and contracts. There are operational changes the board is responsible for and operational changes the board is not responsible for. Changes to 504 and 508 are an example of operational changes the Board is responsible for. Scheduling overtime for drivers is an example of operational changes the Board is not responsible for.
- System innovation and providing strategic guidance to organizational change such as COA and TDP.
- Oversight of legal matters, performance goals, and fiduciary examinations such as audits.
- The GTA Board represents all customers and citizens and not just the appointing authorities. Responsibility is to the customer. Consider what users need, build customer base and expand broader regional support. Board needs to attend meetings such as Chamber of Commerce and Council meetings that affect transit since the Director represents the City of Greenville. It is important for Board members to communicate with one another to ensure representation at meetings.

Board Development:
- Strengthen board member knowledge. Support of staff with public initiatives.
- Preserve and develop positive impression of Greenlink.
- Effective board members are committed to long-term innovation and regard the board as an important asset to Greenlink.

Board Member effectiveness:
- Actively lead in developing GTAs governing capacity.
- Help secure support of key constituents. Maintains and develops working relationships with elected and community leaders. Relationships are important.
- Advocate for public transit and expanded services. The Board needs to cohesively advocate.

Chair responsibility:
- Build a productive professional working relationship with the Director.
• Orientate and educate board members. APTA has board member training.
• Build board capacity by encouraging professional development.
• Appoint committee members and make suggestions regarding committee structure.
• Recognize board member achievements.
• Lead process for setting performance targets and self-assessments.
• Facilitate Board meetings and ensure all materials are at hand.
• Participate in prominent community forums and media interviews.

There is a question of whether Board should be involved in the processes to shape the final product or enact staff recommendations. The Board should sometimes say “no” to staff requests. Request more information or ask staff to explore alternative ideas. An example of board saying “no” was displayed in the proposed changes to routes 504 and 508 where staff asked to come back with an alternative solution.

Discuss goals, budget and Board advocacy roles. The TDP is what should be used when setting goals. Routes in TDP are conceptual routes. We have to update TDP in five years. Some elements missing in the TDP. It is a framework. Need to address demand response.

GTA Board Member Self-Assessment Results (Nicole McAden)

A Self-Assessment tool for Board members to evaluate the effectiveness of the Greenville Transit Authority was sent to each Board member to complete. Results were discussed to examine how the board can improve. Scores are on a 1-5 scale, with 1 meaning the Board members strongly disagree with the statement and 5 demonstrating that Board members strongly agree with the statement.

Board sets policy and board members not involved in day-to-day management: Score: 4.14
- Discussion: It’s not appropriate to bring up specific management, personnel, or service issues in public meetings.

Board devotes time for fulfilling responsibilities: Score: 3
- Discussion: How can staff help? Do board members reach out to community leaders? Are board packets being reviewed prior to meetings? Board requested more advance notice for community meetings.

Board attends meeting prepared to participate fully: Score: 3.71

Board works cohesively to minimize miscommunication and confusion: Score: 4.28
- Discussion: Need communication with each other. Legally barred from meeting together. Three can have lunch. Develop a calendar of what to bring to committee of the whole meetings. When meetings are cancelled, get together in smaller groups.

There is a willingness for new board members: Score: 4.71
- Discussion: Have one-on-one meetings with director.

Board knows the difference between policy and management: Score: 3.71

Board regularly communicates with staff: Score: 4.14

Board committee structures are streamlined for decision-making: Score: 4.28

Authority board maintains for itself is clearly defined: Score: 3.42
- Discussion: If want more power, need to do better job of advocacy. Has to be strong dedicated funding source. If a direct funding source went into the GTA, staff would require more operational approval from Board. Advocacy has to be in line with goals and objectives.

Board maintains flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances: Score: 3.42
- Discussion: Relying on City and County budget cycles diminishes flexibility.

Chairman assumes responsibility for ensuring development of leadership: Score: 3.28
- Discussion: What does board want from chair? What does a leadership pipeline look like? Are board members being prepared for leadership roles? Need to define this and see who wants to be involved. Need to discuss what positions Board members are interested in.

Appropriate level of staff support for the board: Score: 4.14

Board creates and communicates strategic direction: Score: 3.29
- Discussion: The Transit Development Plan is different from a strategic plan.

Programs are consistent with the mission: Score: 3.57
- Discussion: Board would like to re-write the mission statement.

Board uses talents and skills of board members: Score: 3.57
- Discussion: Need a list of everyone’s skills.

Promotes planning for leadership transitions: Score: 3.29

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Board provides effective monitoring of fiscal responsibility: Score: 4
- Discussion: Should the chair make phone calls to all board members to discuss leadership interest?

Board supports code of conduct and ethical practices: Score: 4.29
- Discussion: Conflict of interest statements should be re-submitted annually. Board will need to revise the conflict of interest statement.

The board approves annual operating and capital goals and budgets: Score: 4.71

Board members do not reveal sensitive and confidential information: Score: 4.57

The board sets measurable objectives that permit monitoring of agency performance: Score: 3.57
- Discussion: Need to discuss goals in detail with staff. Assigning staff liaisons could be an opportunity to get a better understanding of staff and department goals and initiatives.

The board has processes for making effective decisions regarding new business proposals, and for reviewing existing practices: Score: 3.43
- Discussion: Board members are not confident in process. Where can improvements happen? Need processes for advocating.

Implements diversity programs for agency: Score: 3.43
- Discussion: Board needs recruitment program. Does GTA reflect ridership? We have not done demographic survey in a few years to fully understand rider demographics.

Board Chair and CEO meet regularly: Score: 4

Board assumes active advocacy role promoting transit: Score: 3.43
- Discussion: Need to improve. Need tools to attend meetings.

Board takes note of how public views system: Score: 4.14

Self-Assessment Conclusions:
- Board Members need to focus on cohesion and get on the same page.
- Do board member know what they’re trying to achieve?
- How do we ensure Board members are prepared to participate in meetings?
- Funding can feel like an issue that’s too big for the Board. What is a cohesive strategy we can implement?
- In board meetings, board members sense cohesion, but not outside of board meetings. Everybody needs to be on same page.
- Do board members trust each other? Yes, but do not know each other. Set up coffee time with different members. First step is for everyone to have sense of belonging. Someone needs to take the first step.
- Does board seek better ways of doing things? Feel too much reliance on staff. Felt grew the most by being educated to take information back to their respective communities.
- Goals for next year: Funding mentioned by five respondents. Maintenance facility mentioned three. Revenue and maintenance facility ranked highest. Good place to start on strategic goals.

Advocacy — look at funding as investment. Must understand why investment is important. Know your audience. Have talking points. Attend community meetings. Need to pick out things of value to group presenting to.

Benefits of transit put out by APTA (useful with funding discussions):
- Eases traffic congestion
- Creates and sustains jobs
- Provides access to jobs
- Stimulates economic development
- More livable communities
- Transportation for seniors
- Improves air quality

Innovative Funding
New funding streams identified by APTA include:

Emerging opportunities
- Broad based fees rarely used for transit but offer significant yields: Employer and payroll taxes, rental car fees, corporate franchise taxes, mortgage fees, hotel/motel taxes
Market based user fees
- Tolling, congestion pricing, Vehicle miles traveled fees, etc.

Develop strategic plan. How do we plan?
- Board take lead in defining, mission, core values, challenges, opportunities, long-term and short term goals, policies, objectives and processes etc. to help justify the need for increased funding.

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis

STRENGTHS
- Committed, dedicated, engaged board members - 3
- Diversity in board representation, expertise, and skills - 3
- Open minds
- Open culture, willingness to speak up
- Respect for one another
- TDP created a good framework for advocacy

WEAKNESSES
- Lack of board, public, and business engagement - 3
- Weak interpersonal relationships with other GTA board members - 2
- Lack of dedicated funding - 2
- Lack of succession planning
- Negative public perception ("welfare wagon")
- Lack of cohesive messaging

OPPORTUNITIES
- Increase engagement with the public and businesses - 3
- Continued advocacy and strategic organization of efforts - 2
- Develop a mission, vision, values, and clearly defined goals - 2
- To grow and expand service - 2
- Ability to navigate hard decisions
- Identify possible funding solutions

THREATS
- Lack of funding or changes in federal appropriations - 6
- County Council's lack of priority - 3
- City of Greenville - 2
- Managing expectations - creating realistic timelines - 2
- Change in GTA Board
- Decreasing ridership
- Lack of public understanding
- The 2020 Census

Board should work together to develop elevator speeches. Strategic plan needs to happen. Strategic discussion needs to be by someone not on staff.

Ms. Addy Mainey made a motion to adjournment. Mr. David Mitchell seconded the motion. There is no opposition. The motion carries.

Prepared by: Lottie Brown, Board Secretary
Date: 4/23/2020

Approved by: Dick O'Neill, Chairman
Date: 4/23/2020

2-11-20 GTA Board of Directors Work Session