



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), Kai 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.



- 58 • Orientate and educate board members. APTA has board member training.
- 59 • Build board capacity by encouraging professional development.
- 60 • Appoint committee members and make suggestions regarding committee structure.
- 61 • Recognize board member achievements.
- 62 • Lead process for setting performance targets and self-assessments.
- 63 • Facilitate Board meetings and ensure all materials are at hand.
- 64 • Participate in prominent community forums and media interviews.
- 65

66 There is a question of whether Board should be involved in the processes to shape the final product or enact staff
67 recommendations. The Board should sometimes say "no" to staff requests. Request more information or ask staff to explore
68 alternative ideas. An example of board saying "no" was displayed in the proposed changes to routes 504 and 508 where
69 staff asked to come back with an alternative solution.
70

71 Discuss goals, budget and Board advocacy roles. The TDP is what should be used when setting goals. Routes in TDP are
72 conceptual routes. We have to update TDP in five years. Some elements missing in the TDP. It is a framework. Need to
73 address demand response.
74

75 GTA Board Member Self-Assessment Results (Nicole McAden)

76

77 A Self-Assessment tool for Board members to evaluate the effectiveness of the Greenville Transit Authority was sent to each
78 Board member to complete. Results were discussed to examine how the board can improve. Scores are on a 1-5 scale, with 1
79 meaning the Board members strongly disagree with the statement and 5 demonstrating that Board members strongly agree
80 with the statement.
81

82 **Board sets policy and board members not involved in day-to-day management: Score: 4.14**

- 83 - Discussion: It's not appropriate to bring up specific management, personnel, or service issues in public meetings.

84 **Board devotes time for fulfilling responsibilities: Score: 3**

- 85 - Discussion: How can staff help? Do board members reach out to community leaders? Are board packets being
86 reviewed prior to meetings? Board requested more advance notice for community meetings.

87 **Board attends meeting prepared to participate fully: Score: 3.71**

88 **Board works cohesively to minimize miscommunication and confusion: Score: 4.28**

- 89 - Discussion: Need communication with each other. Legally barred from meeting together. Three can have lunch.
90 Develop a calendar of what to bring to committee of the whole meetings. When meetings are cancelled, get
91 together in smaller groups.

92 **There is an orientation process for new board members: Score: 4.71**

- 93 - Discussion: Have one-on-one meetings with director.

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

95 **Board regularly communicates with staff: Score: 4.14**

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

97 **Authority board maintains for itself is clearly defined: Score: 3.42**

- 98 - Discussion: If want more power, need to do better job of advocacy. Has to be strong dedicated funding source. If a
99 direct funding source went into the GTA, staff would require more operational approval from Board. Advocacy has
100 to be in line with goals and objectives.

101 **Board maintains flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances: Score: 3.42**

- 102 - Discussion: Relying on City and County budget cycles diminishes flexibility.

103 **Chairman assumes responsibility for ensuring development of leadership: Score: 3.28**

- 104 - Discussion: What does board want from chair? What does a leadership pipeline look like? Are board members
105 being prepared for leadership roles? Need to define this and see who wants to be involved. Need to discuss what
106 positions Board members are interested in.

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

108 **Board creates and communicates strategic direction: Score: 3.29**

- 109 - Discussion: The Transit Development Plan is different from a strategic plan.

110 **Programs are consistent with the mission: Score: 3.57**

- 111 - Discussion: Board would like to re-write the mission statement.

112 **Board uses talents and skills of board members: Score: 3.57**

- 113 - Discussion: Need a list of everyone's skills.

114 **Promotes planning for leadership transitions: Score: 3.29**



- 115 - Discussion: Should the chair make phone calls to all board members to discuss leadership interest?
116 **Board provides effective monitoring of fiscal responsibility: Score: 4**
117 **Board supports code of conduct and ethical practices: Score: 4.29**
118 - Discussion: Conflict of interest statements should be re-submitted annually. Board will need to revise the conflict of
119 interest statement.
120 **The board approves annual operating and capital goals and budgets: Score: 4.71**
121 **Board members do not reveal sensitive and confidential information: Score: 4.57**
122 **The board sets measurable objectives that permit monitoring of agency performance: Score: 3.57**
123 - Discussion: Need to discuss goals in detail with staff. Assigning staff liaisons could be an opportunity to get a better
124 understanding of staff and department goals and initiatives.
125 **The board has processes for making effective decisions regarding new business proposals, and for reviewing existing**
126 **practices: Score: 3.43**
127 - Discussion: Board members are not confident in process. Where can improvements happen? Need processes for
128 advocating.
129 **Implements diversity programs for agency: Score: 3.43**
130 - Discussion: Board needs recruitment program. Does GTA reflect ridership? We have not done demographic survey in
131 a few years to fully understand rider demographics.
132 **Board Chair and CEO meet regularly: Score: 4**
133 **Board assumes active advocacy role promoting transit: Score: 3.43**
134 - Discussion: Need to improve. Need tools to attend meetings.
135 **Board takes note of how public views system: Score: 4.14**

136 **Self-Assessment Conclusions:**

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

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

151 **Benefits of transit put out by APTA (useful with funding discussions):**

- 152 • Eases traffic congestions
- 153 • Creates and sustains jobs
- 154 • Provides access to jobs
- 155 • Stimulates economic development
- 156 • More livable communities
- 157 • Transportation for seniors
- 158 • Improves air quality

159 **Innovative Funding**

160 New funding streams identified by APTA include:

161 **Emerging opportunities**

- 162 • Broad based fees rarely used for transit but offer significant yields: Employer and payroll taxes, rental car fees,
163 corporate franchise taxes, mortgage fees, hotel/motel taxes



- 169 Market based user fees
- 170 • Tolling, congestion pricing, Vehicle miles traveled fees, etc.
- 171
- 172 Develop strategic plan. How do we plan?
- 173 • Board take lead in defining, mission, core values, challenges, opportunities, long-term and short term goals, policies,
- 174 objectives and processes etc. to help justify the need for increased funding.
- 175

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis

STRENGTHS

- 179 Committed, dedicated, engaged board members – 3
- 180 Diversity in board representation, expertise, and skills – 3
- 181 Open minds
- 182 Open culture, willingness to speak up
- 183 Respect for one another
- 184 TDP created a good framework for advocacy
- 185

WEAKNESSES

- 187 Lack of board, public, and business engagement – 3
- 188 Weak interpersonal relationships with other GTA board members – 2
- 189 Lack of dedicated funding – 2
- 190 Lack of succession planning
- 191 Negative public perception ("welfare wagon")
- 192 Lack of cohesive messaging
- 193

OPPORTUNITIES

- 195 Increase engagement with the public and businesses – 3
- 196 Continued advocacy and strategic organization of efforts – 2
- 197 Develop a mission, vision, values, and clearly defined goals – 2
- 198 To grow and expand service – 2
- 199 Ability to navigate hard decisions
- 200 Identify possible funding solutions
- 201

THREATS

- 203 Lack of funding or changes in federal appropriations – 6
- 204 County Council's lack of priority – 3
- 205 City of Greenville – 2
- 206 Managing expectations – creating realistic timelines – 2
- 207 Change in GTA Board
- 208 Decreasing ridership
- 209 Lack of public understanding
- 210 The 2020 Census
- 211

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

214
215 Ms. Addy Matney made a motion to adjournment. Mr. David Mitchell seconded the motion. There is no opposition. The
216 motion carries.

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218
219
220

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

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