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## **BATS MEETING MINUTES**

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### **Brunswick Area Transportation Study Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting**

Monday, January 10, 2022– 4:00 P.M.

Via Teleconference

#### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks (James Gilligan)
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item
  - a. Minutes from CAC meeting held on November 8, 2021.
3. BATS FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Information
4. BATS Administrative Updates
  - a. GAMPO Special PL Funding Application
5. Agency Updates
  - a. Glynn County Airport Commission
  - b. Glynn County School Board
  - c. Glynn County
  - d. City of Brunswick
  - e. GDOT District 5
  - f. Jekyll Island Authority
  - g. Transit Agencies
  - h. Other Items
  - i. Public Comment
6. Adjourn

**Brunswick Area Transportation Study**  
**Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday January 10, 2021 – 4:00 P.M.  
Via Teleconference

**ATTENDEES**

Committee Members

James Gilligan (Chairman)  
Melinda Ennis-Roughton  
Neil Ligon  
Ed Farley  
Myrna Scott-Amos  
Lance Sabbe  
Dylan Lukitsch  
Roxanne George  
Darren West

Others

Vishanya Forbes, Transportation Planner, RS&H  
Rachel Hatcher, Senior Planner, RS&H  
Chris Cary, Glynn County

## **1. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Mr. James Gilligan, Chairman of the BATS CAC.

## **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item**

### **a. Minutes from CAC meeting held on November 8, 2021**

Mr. Gilligan asked for comments or corrections to the November 8<sup>th</sup> CAC meeting minutes presented. There were no comments or w=questions from the committee on meeting minutes. He then called for a motion to approve the minutes from the CAC meeting held on November 8, 2021. Mr. Farley made a motion, the motion was seconded by Mr. West. The motion passed unanimously.

## **3. BATS FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Information**

Ms. Forbes presented this agenda item. She reminded those on the call that BATS staff has been discussing this item since the start of the fiscal year in July when the comment forms were sent out for feedback. At the Policy Committee in December, action was taken to release for a 30-day public comment period. The public comment period on the draft UPWP started on December 13, and will be closed on Wednesday, January 12. Once the public comment period ends, BATS staff will review and incorporate comments into the final draft to be presented to the CAC in the spring for action and then to the PC in May for final adoption.

Ms. Forbes showed the BATS draft FY 2023 UPWP budget table and reminded those on the call that these numbers still show the FY 2022 allocation of funds. She mentioned that BATS staff coordinated with GDOT as recently as the morning of January 10, and GDOT advised BATS staff members that GDOT still does not have the numbers for FY 2023 allocation. Once these numbers become available, staff will update/slightly adjust the table to reflect the amount of funding BATS will receive for FY 2023.

Ms. Forbes reviewed the draft FY 2023 UPWP Fact Sheet and reminded those on the call that this was a request from the CAC at the last meeting to make a more digestible format of the UPWP's information. This was developed in November and presented to the PC in December and was released with the draft document for the 30-day public comment period. She mentioned that this

was helped by Maurice Postal to print these and distribute at different offices in the County. This is available on the website, and it was emailed out to all committee members for distributions

Ms. Forbes stated that there was coordination between staff and FHWA on feedback regarding the Draft FY 2023 UPWP and BATS staff is working to incorporate FHWA's feedback into the document where applicable. She mentioned that Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs) were issued on January 5, 2022 and the focus areas include equity and environmental justice in transportation planning, which have been prioritized already as a priority in 2023. Other PEAs include resiliency, climate change, complete streets, and freight. She added that if those on the call are interested in further reading on these PEAs, that she would send out a link.

She reminded committee members that the public comment period will end on January 12 and the fact sheet and comment form are on the planning tab on the MPOs website and can be sent out to members of the public. After the comment period closes, BATS staff will review these comments, pull them into the final draft and present to the CAC in the March meeting for action to recommend to the Policy Committee. There were no questions or comments.

#### **4. BATS Administrative Updates**

##### **a. GAMPO Special PL Funding Application**

Ms. Forbes reminded those on the call that the Policy Committee submitted the application to approve and submit the Sea Island Road @ Dunbar Creek Corridor Study to the GAMPO committee. This occurred at the Glynn County Board of Commissioners meeting held on January 6, 2022, to approve the resolution for the 20% local match and sponsorship. The next step will be to pull this into the draft UPWP and submit to GAMPO during the spring meeting. This should be wrapped up by the end of the fiscal year as well.

#### **5. Agency Updates**

##### **a. Glynn County Airport Commission**

Ms. Forbes stated that Mr. Vernon Bessing provided the update and mentioned that the compass calibration pad is now complete, and all markings have been put down.

**b. Glynn County School Board**

Ms. Forbes stated that Mr. Marty Simmons provided the update and mentioned that the School Board is finishing up last items to be completed at the Altama School and are hoping to get feedback from anyone concerning the three school zones at Altama. She said that if anyone has any questions for the schoolboard that they can reach out to BATS staff or to the School Board directly.

**c. Glynn County**

Ms. Forbes showed the county project update sheet and stated that Mr. Austin provided the update that the Old Jesup and Canal Road intersection improvement's construction started on January 10, 2022. It is a gravel eyebrow that will become an asphalt and drainage fixtures will be addressed as well.

**d. City of Brunswick**

Ms. Forbes gave updates from Mr. Alberson for the City of Brunswick. Fieldwork is beginning today, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022, on the early stages of the boardwalk trail between Overlook Park and the St. Simons Causeway. Mr. Alberson also mentioned that the last segment of the MLK Trail along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue is currently out to bid and that the city is hoping to get the project completed in the late Spring of 2022. Ms. Forbes mentioned that Mr. Alberson also presented that the city is putting together a paving/resurfacing project that is approximately \$1 Million from ARPA money which should be getting started later this Spring, and that the city is beginning Phase II of the Magnolia Park Project.

**e. GDOT District 5**

Ms. Forbes stated that Ms. Proctor presented the circulated GDOT District 5 project updated sheet. Ms. Forbes continued by saying that the update was a reutterance of the project sheet and if anyone has any questions on these projects to please reach out.

**f. Jekyll Island Authority**

Ms. Forbes stated that there was not a representative from Jekyll Island Authority on the TCC call earlier today.

**g. Transit Agencies**

Ms. Forbes said that representatives from both the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC) and City of Brunswick were on the TCC meeting call earlier today. Mr. John Hunter presented for the city and Mr. David Dantzler presented for the CRC. Though the CRC did not have any updates, the City of Brunswick mentioned that they had a good presentation to the City Commission in December and put forward how to structure the transit program. They are now waiting on negotiations in Spring/Summer of this year to occur.

**h. Other Items**

Mr. Gilligan mentioned that there was updated information from the city of Brunswick regarding the Transit Service since the November presentation focusing on changes of where the transit service is supposed to operate one of which is a fixed route from the city of Brunswick to St. Simons Island terminating at the Wynn Dixie. This was posted in the Brunswick News. The rest of the service areas proposed are for on-call/on-demand service. He added the city's website may have more information on this and that these updates were incorporated after the CAC's previous November meeting.

Mr. Gilligan than acknowledged Ms. George on the call and her idea of the fact sheet of the UPWP. He mentioned that this was a very good idea presented at the PC meeting and was quite well-received.

There were no questions or comments.

**i. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public on this meeting and no public comment.

## **6. Adjourn**

Mr. Gilligan stated to those who joined the meeting late, that he and Mr. Farley will continue being the Chair and Co-Chair of the committee until the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Forbes added that Mr. Farley's application expires at the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Gilligan expressed his hope that Mr. Farley will apply for the next fiscal year. He reminded those on the call that the next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee will be March 14, 2022, from 4 – 5 PM. He mentioned that the best place to find the calendar of future meetings is on the MPO website, and the calendar is right above meeting materials on the website. He also asked for confirmation of continuing in the virtual environment. Ms. Forbes confirmed that this is the case.

Mr. Ligon asked about partnering with the CRC about transit, as another meeting he was in revealed that they are having driver shortages due to COVID-19 outbreaks. They were supposed to be a back-up to the CAT program in the Savannah area and they weren't able to serve as they are short on drivers. He asked if this would impact transit options in the Brunswick area from feedback from the CRC on moving forward. Ms. Forbes mentioned that they did not have any update on this but that she can reach out to Mr. Dantzler to get an update on this and report back to Mr. Ligon.

Ms. Hatcher mentioned that this is an issue at the global level and that there are shortages in every Georgia transit agency. Many transit agencies need to reduce service or shut down service on certain routes. Many general managers are even driving the busses themselves. Some are driving vehicles previously not authorized for transporting passengers and working with DOT on this. By time service would be implemented in the BATS area she hopes the Omicron variant will not be as much of a threat and headway made with guidance from DOT. She continued by mentioning that they are increasing non-local match required funds for salary increases to bring in more folks to be transit operators to be a first choice and attract new talent. Ms. Hatcher continued by mentioning that she

hopes to see some support from the federal government from the newly passed Build Back Better Bill.

Ms. Hatcher stated that this is a global issue in the transit industry and that she doesn't think that the CRC will be exempt from. Mr. Gilligan reiterated Ms. Hatcher's points and mentioned that he knows that this is happening on all levels of transit agencies, the lack of operators and maintenance staff, and across both the private and public sectors.

Mr. Ligon stated that this is heavily discussed in other meetings he has been attending and that there are two fears occurring: one is the risk of exposure and the second is actual exposure to the Omicron variant. He pointed out that there are seven drivers in the CAT system for 300 pick-ups at the moment. He added that people are also leaving based on exposure and salary and that this would be a headwind that this committee will face going forward. He continued by adding that if anyone is interested in an advocacy effort, those in Savannah are putting an advocacy effort to representatives for more funding in the transportation budget at the state and regional level. He mentioned that we are witnessing generational underfunding "coming home to roost" with COVID eliminating the pool of drivers available. He stated that there is a combination effort centered around citizen effort that can really move the needle forward on this issue. Mr. Gilligan affirmed Mr. Ligon's concerns and stated that if there is anything further to share with the committee members that he can send to Ms. Forbes, and she can send it on the distribution list.

Mr. Gilligan reminded committee members to send any comments or questions on the Brunswick Transit System to Mr. Hunter and asked Ms. Forbes to confirm. Ms. Forbes responded that they should send any comments or questions to her, and she will forward them to Mr. Hunter, and she will get the response from him. She mentioned that she will invite him to the March meeting as well.

Mr. Gilligan asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ligon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Farley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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BATS CAC Chairman

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Date