

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**March 18, 2021**

**Members Present:** Autumn Radcliff – Henderson County Planning Director, Bernard Clark – NCDOT Transportation Planner, Emily Scott-Cruz – Regional Transportation Planner, Hope Prather – Production Coordinator, Jimmie Brissie – Director Henderson County Emergency Management, Kat Nevel – Council On Aging - Director, Sammy Williams Senior Center, Noah Rose – Retired DHS, WCCA Board Secretary, Terri D’Avanzo – Rehabilitation Counselor, and Victoria Cortez – Henderson County Emergency Management Planner

**Members Absent:** Jacki Hawkins – Director of Practice Operations, Janna Peterson – Henderson County Planner III, Tim Jones – Vice President/Chief Operations Officer, Tim McFalls – Henderson County Emergency Management Logistics Officer, and Trina Stokes – Blue Ridge Community Health Major Gifts Officer/Foundation

**WCCA Staff Present:** Jeff Roper – Transportation Program Manager, Felicia Sanchez – Transportation Program Assistant Manager, David White – WCCA CEO, and Kim Hall – WCCA Executive Assistant

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Jeff Roper opened the meeting at 10:00 am by welcoming everyone. Jeff announced that Suzanne Sherrill will no longer be a TAB member and that Noah Rose will now be the board chair.

**Noah Rose** thanked Jeff for the welcome and gave a brief bio for herself.

**Minutes of Transportation Advisory Board Meeting:**

Noah called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2020 meeting of the Transportation Advisory Board. Hope Prather moved to approve the minutes. Terri D’Avanzo seconded the motion. The minutes are approved as submitted.

**Update from NCDOT, Bernard Clark reported:**

- American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding: CARES Act funding covered operational expenses. We are hoping to use some of this funding for Capital improvements without a state match but are still sorting out the details.
- ROAP funding stopped last year. Keep on legislators to get this reinstated. We are working for that to help our rural systems as many used it for their federal match.
- Vaccinations: As eligibility levels increase, we expect the vaccination trips to increase.
- We feel like as summer weather prompts people to get outside again transportation systems will be able to call laid off drivers back to work.

***Update from French Broad River MPO, Emily Scott-Cruz reported:***

- January saw the following planning work projects approved for FY22. This includes: The City of Asheville Reed Creek Greenway feasibility study, the Haywood County Hellbender Regional Drain way study and the Buncombe County Multi-Modal Comprehensive Plan.
- Approved Job Access Reverse Commute Program (JARC) – funds trailblazer and route 170 in Asheville
- 5310 – Elder & Disabled mobility funds – we were able to fund all of the projects submitted for operations. Haywood County received CRISA funds.
- Second round of public engagement for Regional feasibility study kicks off Monday, March 22, 2021. It runs through April 22, 2021. A link will be sent for the public survey to all TAB members, please distributed. We are trying to understand where regional routes would best serve the community.
- Some TIP amendments were passed to reflect delays and cost increases due to reduced capacity at NCDOT.

***Update from Henderson County, Autumn Radcliff, reported:***

- We have new busses on the road. The purchase of automatic passenger counters was approved at yesterday's meeting. We do not have plans for automatic or card payments at this time.

***Update from Apple Country, Jeff Roper, reported:***

- Our big focus is the increase in vaccination trips. Fortunately, we have not had to turn anyone away. Even for Saturday requests.
- We are gearing up to take Medicaid/Medicare patients on July 1<sup>st</sup>
- We are getting a new software called Trip Master. It is one of the best transportation scheduling systems available and it is compatible with Medicaid.
- Our new busses have clear fare collection boxes. The driver can verify what is dropped into the box and then they “flush” it down into a collection box. Drivers do not have to touch the fair money.
- It is great news to hear that an “auto passenger count system” is coming.

***TAB Member News:***

***Jimmie Brissie*** introduced Victoria Cortez. She comes onboard as an Emergency Management Planner for Henderson County. Jimmie thanked Apple County for all their support with Covid transports that have not required ambulances. It has been very beneficial. He is thankful for vaccine transportation as eligibility opens for new groups. Schools are going back into session next week. The vaccine clinic at East Henderson High School will be moved to a new location.

***Hope Prather*** reported that Vocational Solutions is running as normally as possible but is in need workers. We are working to maintain social distancing.

**Terri D'Avano** reported that Vocational Rehab is still working via mail, phone and computer to keep all services going. She let everyone know that vaccine clinics can be found at [www.nc.gov/covid-19.us.shot](http://www.nc.gov/covid-19.us.shot).

**Kat Nevel** introduced herself and gave us a brief bio. She is thankful for the opportunity to participate in the board.

**Noah Rose** has been using Apple County Paratransit to get back and forth to physical therapy after a fall. It has been a lifesaver. The drivers are great and always on time.

**David White** reported:

- WCCA has opened “Bargain Hendo Thrift Store” at 201 North King Street in Hendersonville. We are in need of volunteers and donations. Please stop by and shop.
- We are working on Medicaid/Medicare transportation contracts.
- WCCA / Apple County are very appreciative of the new vans from the county. Our old vehicles were leased from Asheville and they will surplus sale them.
- Sisters of Mercy approved a grant request for a new non-emergency vehicle
- WCCA was awarded a new Head Start Expansion Grant. This will allow us to serve an additional 100 children over the next 5 years. Services will be provided in Rutherford, Polk, Henderson and Transylvania Counties. We are really excited about this.

**Next Meeting Date:**

The next meeting date was set for Monday, May 10, 2021 at 10:00 AM. We will meet virtually until further notice.

**Adjourn:** Noah called for any other business. With no further business, Noah call for a motion to adjourn. Hope Prather so motioned. Terri D'Avanzo seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM.

*Noah Rose*