

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**May 20, 2021**

**Members Present:** Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County Planning Director), Bernard Clark (NCDOT Transportation Planner), Emily Scott-Cruz (Regional Transportation Planner), Jacki Hawkins (Director of Practice Operations), Janna Peterson Bianculli (Henderson County Planner III), Jimmie Brissie (Director Henderson County Emergency Management), Kat Nevel (Director, Sammy Williams Senior Center), Noah Rose (Retired DHS, WCCA Board Secretary), Terri D'Avanzo (Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor), Tim Jones (Hendersonville Rescue Mission, Vice President/Chief Operations Officer), and Trina Stokes (Blue Ridge Community Health Major Gifts Officer/Foundation)

**Members Absent:** Hope Prather (Vocational Solutions Production Coordinator), Tim McFalls (Henderson County Emergency Management Logistics Officer), and Victoria Cortez (Henderson County Emergency Management Planner).

**WCCA Staff Present:** Jeff Roper (Transportation Program Manager), Felicia Sanchez (Transportation Program Assistant Manager), and Kim Hall (Executive Assistant)

***Welcome and Introductions:***

Jeff Roper opened the meeting at 10:03 am by welcoming everyone. He then turned the meeting over to committee chair, Noah Rose.

**Noah Rose** welcomed everyone to today's meeting and thanked Jeff for the welcome.

***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. Janna Peterson Bianculli moved to approve the minutes. Trina Stokes seconded the motion. The minutes are approved as submitted.

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

- There are still funds available for Covid vaccination transportation.
- NCDOT will have \$3.5B available over the next few years. They are currently working through how these funds can be spent. They are hoping ROAP funds will be reinstated soon. They are hopeful that some of the funds can be used for matching on 5310 and 5311 grants for local vehicle purchases. They anticipate guidance being available within the next six to nine months.

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

- The Regional Transit Feasibility study is complete. There were over 200 participants. The consultants are working on the results and a potential governance structure.
- City of Hendersonville is applying for NCDOT funding to update their pedestrian plan. Applications are due by the end of June. I have been helping with that.

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

- The board of commissioners has approved the FY22 budget. It was fully funded for public transit. New projects will start July 1, 2021. The bus stop signs will be evaluated and replaced or updated as needed. We anticipate adding three bus shelters over the next year at existing stops.
- We are working on the automatic passenger count contract. We anticipate it being ready by July 1, 2021.

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

- ACT is still working through the contract process with Medicaid brokers. We have signed a contract with ModivCare, and are negotiating another with One Call.
- We are in the research stage of upgrading the Camera Systems on our vehicles. We can use this for training, incident reports, and customer service and safety.

***TAB Member News:***

- Jimmie Brissie
  - Henderson County is leading the pack with community impacts for Covid. We are the only “green” county in the state. We have seen a slow-down in vaccine demand, a stop really. There is plenty of vaccine available for anyone who wants it. We are starting to scale back duties to pre-Covid but we remain diligent.
  - We will be sun setting our emergency isolation/quarantine housing program, funded by FEMA, based on the decrease in demand. We will be turning the borrowed van back over to WCCA next week.
- Tina Stokes
  - Advent Health - The hospital is back to pre-pandemic status. Masks are still required inside.
  - Partnership for Health is working to reach the younger demographics to encourage folks to get educated and thus vaccinated over the next couple of months.
- Terri D’Avanzo
  - Vocational Rehab is continuing to provide services to disabled clients who want to work. Statewide there has been a 30% decrease in service applications.
  - Still doing intakes both virtually and by mail. We hope participation increases as folks get back to “normal”.
- Tim Jones
  - The mission has worked with Blue Ridge Community Health to get both our team and clients vaccinated. This has allowed us to increase our capacity, double meals served and open our day center. There has been a little hesitancy to take the vaccine.
  - We have about 200 volunteers. 70% of those are over 65 and they have a high rate of vaccination. This has been a great help to us.

- The Day Center is at 628 – 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and has been open about a month. The bottom floor is now two spaces. A medical clinic and the day center which is an old warehouse that connects to it. The center has male and female shower facilities. The day labor pick up is just outside. People can come in use the bathroom, charge their phone or just get in out of the weather. When possible, we bring other service providers in to help with other needs as well.
- Kat Nevel
  - The Sammy Williams Center is now open to fully vaccinated clients. The numbers are increasing daily. We are working to get the news out. Apple County has been a great help with this.
  - The Council is busy with Meals on Wheels.
- Noah Rose
  - I have taken advantage of the Paratransit service several times to get to the doctor. I was impressed with the cleanliness and promptness of the busses and drivers. If case you do not know, if you live within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of any bus stop and cannot drive you can sign up for paratransit services to get to medical appointments for \$1.50 each way.
- Jackie Hawkins
  - We have seen a decline in the interest in the Covid vaccine. As a result, we are no longer holding mass vaccination events in the community. Folks are coming straight to our office now.
  - The vaccine is now available for anyone 12 years and older.
  - We are so happy to see the way our community has come together to get through this pandemic.

Noah called for any other business. None was proffered.

**Adjourn:** Noah call for a motion to adjourn. Janna Peterson Bianculli so motioned. Kat Nevel seconded. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:54 am.

**Next Meeting Date:**

The next meeting date was set for Thursday, August 19, 2021 at 10:00 AM. We will meet virtually until further notice.

*Noah Rose*