



# Board of Directors – Full Board Meeting Minutes

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## Meeting Details

**Date:** Thursday, August 18, 2022

**Time:** 09:30 AM – 11:30 AM

**Location:** Webinar/Teleconference  
Transportation Highway Building  
NCDOT Board Room - 150  
1 S. Wilmington St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601

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## Attendance

### Members Present

Secretary Boyette, John Adcock, Sam Hunt, Montell Irvin, Dr. Pamela Senegal, Robert Teer (left meeting at 11:00 a.m.), Vice Chair James (Jim) Walker,

### Members Present via Webinar

Mary Clayton & Charles (Chuck) Travis

### Members Absent

None

# Call to Order, Declaration of Quorum, Ethics Statement Review

Secretary Boyette, Chair

## Discussion Summary

Chairman Secretary Boyette called the meeting of the Turnpike Authority Board of Directors to order at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, August 18, 2022, and Ms. Ann Dishong conducted a roll call.

Members Present: Secretary Boyette, John Adcock, Sam Hunt, Montell Irvin, Dr. Pamela Senegal, Robert Teer, Vice Chair James (Jim) Walker

Members present Via Webinar/Teleconference: Mary Clayton & Chuck Travis

Members Absent: None

Secretary Boyette declared a quorum with members present.

Secretary Boyette asked Ms. Ann Dishong, NCDOT Governance Program Director I, to read the Ethics Statement advising all members of the Board that may have any conflict of interest, or appearance of conflict, to refrain from participation in that particular item and to file the proper paperwork with Logann Perry, Secretary to the Board.

Ms. Dishong shared "In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, Executive Order No. 2 issued on January 12, 2009, and N. C. G. S. §143B-350, it is the duty of every Board member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict. "To comply with this statement and the State Ethics Law, I ask whether any Board member has a known conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the Board today."

"If so, please identify the conflict or appearance of conflict when the item appears on the agenda for consideration, refrain from any undue participation in the particular matter involved and sign before our notary the Declaration that has been provided to you for such purpose."

## Actions Taken

Information only, no action required.

# Approval of May 31, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Secretary Boyette, Chair

## Discussion Summary

Chairman Boyette stated that the May 31, 2022, meeting minutes were distributed prior to the meeting and if there were no questions, he would accept a motion. Mr. Robert Teer so moved, and the second was made by Mr. Sam Hunt.

### **Actions Taken**

Chairman Boyette, Vice Chair James Walker, Robb Teer, Montell Irvin, Sam Hunt, Mary Clayton, John Adcock, and Chuck Travis all stated yes or aye to the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

## **Opening Comments**

### **Secretary Boyette, Chair**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Secretary Boyette thanked all in attendance for the hard work they bring to the Department of Transportation.

Secretary Boyette shared the sad news that on Friday, August 12, 2022, Anna Bradshaw, a Division-4 Department of Transportation Employee (TW2) was killed while flagging traffic in a work zone. She was struck by a vehicle while on the side of the road. Secretary Boyette told the Board Members that he had spoken to the son of Mrs. Bradshaw. He mentioned that the family was doing well and that they were an incredible family - very faithful. He said that all employees are members of a big family, the Department's family, and that the NCDOT was supporting the Bradshaw family in many ways, including to continue to have them in our thoughts and prayers. Secretary Boyette asked all listening to remind their friends and neighbors to slow down and use caution in Work Zones. There was a moment of silence.

Secretary Boyette thanked everyone for their hard work on behalf of the NCDOT. He shared the good news of the budget recently signed by the Governor. It included \$600 million coming into the department in the next 3 or 4 years. It will be phased in at 2%, 4%, and 6%. Secretary Boyette thanked the many partners of the Department of Transportation and the General Assembly for its faith in the department to continue to improve transportation for the people of North Carolina.

Other good news shared by Secretary Boyette was a benefit to the State of North Carolina in the form of RAISE grants (The Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) totaling almost \$60 million. He explained that these funds would allow the Department to move forward with projects that had been shelved because of funding issues. The RAISE funds will be used to work on S-Line rail hub planning, replacement of 28 bridges, and work on an inter-mobile facility for the Port of Wilmington.

Secretary Boyette congratulated Mayor Chuck Travis for being reappointed to the NC Turnpike Authority Board. He thanked him for his support of the Authority. Mayor Travis said that he looked forward to working with the Secretary in the future.

### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## **Executive Director Comments**

### **J.J. Eden, Executive Director**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Mr. J.J. Eden updated the Board Members regarding recent staff news. He shared the happy news that Logann Perry is now the proud mother of a new baby, Zora Leigh. Mr. Eden showed a recent picture of Zora.

Rachel Ruiz has left Turnpike and is returning to be near family in South Florida. Mr. Eden said that she will be missed.

Mark Newsome is the new Deputy Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Newsome was previously a Forensic Accountant with the Department of Information Technology. He is a C.P.A. and is a welcome addition to the Finance Staff at NCTA.

Mr. Eden also discussed the successful Summer Internship Program. The six interns working with NCTA benefitted from the experience and brought many positive results to the table for the department. The interns gave presentations at the July Committee Meetings and shared the details of their completed NCTA projects.

The recent ATC (Advanced Technology Committee) presentation at the August 10, 2022, NCDOT committee meeting was discussed by Mr. Eden. An interesting presentation was given by Wejo. Wejo is a worldwide connected vehicle data exchange platform service provider. Their representatives provided the following presentation: *Improving Safety, Mobility & Equitable RUC through Connected Vehicle Data Analytics & Insights*.

In closing, Mr. Eden discussing the ongoing relationship between NCTA and HBCU students. This year HBCU students participated in an introductory presentation. Going forward the Turnpike will work directly with HBCU academic group members to coordinate interactive events structured for students.

### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## **Operations Committee Report**

### **Montell Irvin, P.E., Operations Committee Chair**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Mr. Montell Irvin updated the Board with a report on the Operations Committee meetings that have been held since the last Board of Directors meeting in May.

Since the last Full Board meeting, the Operations Committee met once, July 21st.

At the July 21st meeting the Operations Committee received four intern presentations, updates on Complete 540 Construction and Phase 2, I-485 Express Lanes, and an update on Tolling and ITS Infrastructure and Technology. Also included in the meeting were updates for the Customer Service Center (CSC) as well as the status of the new facility opening soon in Rocky Mount.

### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## **Finance Committee Report**

### **Robert Teer, Finance Committee Chair**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Mr. Robert Teer updated the Board with a report on the Finance Committee meetings that have been held since the last Board of Directors meeting in May.

Since the Board meeting, the Finance Committee has met once, July 20th.

At the July 20th meeting, the Finance Committee received the Complete 540 Construction Update, Complete 540 Spend Update, Complete 540 Phase 2 Update, FY 2023 Budget Overview, and Turnpike Intern Presentations.

### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## Finance and Budget Update

**Kim Medlin, Controller**

### Discussion Summary

Ms. Kim Medlin updated the Board on Turnpike Finance and Budget operations.

Ms. Kim Medlin presented an update on Revenue and Expenditures through year end 2022. She included information regarding the Triangle Expressway and the Monroe Expressway.

### Actions Taken

Information only, no action required.

## Chief Engineer's Update

**Dennis Jernigan, P.E., Interim Chief Engineer**

### Discussion Summary

Mr. Dennis Jernigan presented The Traffic Volume Statistics (year over year). He also shared reports for the Maintenance Rating Program (MRP) for both the Triangle Expressway and the Monroe Expressway.

Secretary Boyette mentioned that he had requested the new format of the presentation slides. He wanted to include additional information in the reports. Mr. Montell Irvin was appreciative of the new formats. He had a question regarding the pre-pandemic traffic and the subsequent traffic levels. Mr. Manish Chourey stated that the numbers are currently at the 2019 levels. Mr. J.J. Eden mentioned that traffic levels regarding capacity are once again being discussed. Secretary Boyette stated that the prior peak travel times (Morning and Evening) are becoming higher levels throughout the day. Mr. Eden added that there seems to be a trend with a new peak between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Mary Clayton continued the discussion by stating that for nationwide trends there is not necessarily a peak hour, but a constant level throughout the day. The conversation then turned to specific questions about when the normal peak times might return. She asked if projections were currently being made as to if and when that might happen. Or, she continued, was there expectation of more of a flattening of traffic levels, as discussed. A group discussion brought out the idea that workers have more flexibility regarding where and when they work, leading to some changes. Secretary Boyette said that this was something being studied and that the Department of Transportation was trying to get ahead of the trend for capacity and for

how it corresponds to economic development and safety. Mr. David Roy mentioned that the revenue is not impacted too much by the timing of the peaks, but that the revenue numbers are lower because of the low levels of pandemic traffic. The trend lines are very similar to 2019. Ms. Clayton noted that there is a great opportunity for using technology to solve problems with traffic usage patterns.

Mr. Jernigan offered to review the numbers in the MRP booklets individually with the Board Members, if needed.

**Actions Taken** Information only, no action required.

## I-485 Express Lanes Update

**Brett Canipe, P.E., Division Engineer – Division 10**

**Manish Chourey, Chief Technology Officer**

### Discussion Summary

Mr. Brett Canipe provided the Board with a General Construction Update by showing photos and videos of the current construction status along the I-485 Corridor.

Mr. Canipe was asked how long the project would be delayed because of supply chain issues. He said that supply chain issues affect material costs and scheduling timelines. He noted that it is affecting many projects. He also added that the substantial completion date of this project is December 2024. Early 2025 is the envisioned operational date. Mr. Robert Teer asked about Slide #25. He wanted to know what materials were being stored in the median. Mr. Canipe said that a lightweight fill material was being transported and stored in the white bags. Mr. Teer shared that the material manufactured in the past was called Fly Ash. Mr. Canipe said it is no longer used because of environmental impacts and risks associated with it.

Mayor Chuck Travis asked for definition of the scope of work planned after the December 2024 delivery date for asphalt. Mr. Canipe said that the asphalt work would be complete by then. The civil work should be constructed, in place, and ready by December 2024, but the implementation of the tolling systems and opening of the tolling lanes will be completed in 2025. Mayor Travis asked if some of those construction phases could be completed simultaneously. Mr. Canipe said that yes, it would be ongoing and that it was currently happening. Mr. Canipe shared that Mr. Manish Chourey planned to address the technology progress in his presentation. Mayor Travis stressed the importance of this project to those living in the Charlotte region. Mr. Jim Walker said that he had recently driven alongside this construction zone and was impressed with the progress being made. Mr. Dennis Jernigan mentioned that the scissor bridge being constructed in Charlotte was quite rare. The recent opening of the Durham Freeway to I-885, utilized this type of bridge.

Mr. Manish Chourey presented an update regarding Tolls and ITS (Intelligent Transportation System) construction progress.

Mr. Chourey discussed the cancellation of the I-485 Express Lanes Toll System Procurement. He announced that NCTA will release a new RFP (Request for Proposal) in early Fall 2022. This will be done in order to utilize newer technologies on an ongoing basis without the required RFPs for each new section. Mr. J. J. Eden said that NCTA is trying to 'future proof' as much as possible. He also referred to earlier questions about the timing of road completion. Mr. Eden stated that testing is a large part of the time component. Full access without the interruption of construction vehicles is necessary for testing. There was a question from Ms. Mary Clayton regarding the change in the term of the contracts (RFPs) going forward. Mr. Chourey stated that contracts would be the same length: 5-year terms with 3-year extensions. These are the standard contract terms. Within the contract multiple vendors would be selected.

### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## **Toll Technology & Operations Update**

### **Manish Chourey, Chief Technology Officer**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Mr. Chourey provided an update to the Board regarding the Roadside Assistance System, Backoffice System, and the applicable Technology Initiatives. He also reviewed the statistics for the last quarter of toll travel.

Mr. Robert Teer asked Mr. Dennis Jernigan a scheduling questions for C-540 Completion. Mr. Teer also asked about the 14 pieces of earth moving equipment that he had witnessed sitting idle during his summer visit to the job site. He wanted to know if the equipment was still unused due to staffing shortages. Mr. Jernigan affirmed that there are ongoing staffing shortages. The prime contractors are hiring and losing 3-7 operators a week. The Board Members discussed that this is the case throughout the state at all levels of employment. Mr. Teer asked about usual wage levels for the operators, and Mr. Jernigan stated that it is probably dependent on experience. The minimum wages that are required by the contractors are published in the back of each contract. Those amounts have not been attracting qualified workers at this time, per Mr. Jernigan. Secretary Boyette discussed how the highway department is working with organizations of young people in an effort to train them for these jobs, in effect filling the voids that now exist. Dr. Pamela Senegal stated that if the equipment were donated and the training was short term, then the Community Colleges could help to solve this problem statewide.



Mr. Robert Teer inquired about the shelf life of transponder batteries. Ms. Angela Queenland talked about the current shelf life of hard-cased transponders and sticker-tag data collection devices. Hard-cased transponder costs have gone down considerably for the consumers in recent years from \$26.50 each to about \$6 each. Mr. J.J. Eden said that the Tolling Industry is working to standardize the data collection system nationwide with EZ-Pass. The sticker-tags were originally \$12 each and now cost less than a dollar for procurement by NC QuickPass. There is now competition among transponder providers. Also mentioned by Mr. Eden was the trend towards in-car technology data collection. This will help Turnpike to turn away from lithium battery usage lowering costs and simplifying protocols.

### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## **Customer Service Update**

### **Angela Queenland, Manager of Customer Service**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Ms. Angela Queenland gave an update on the Customer Call Center statistics, renovation plans for the Morrisville Customer Service Center, and the plans for opening of the Rocky Mount Call Center.

Ms. Queenland introduced Mr. John Hertweck, the G.C. Services Project Manager of the Quick Pass Program. She stressed that he has a great deal of experience in the customer service and tolling industries. Mr. Hertweck thanked the Department and Board Members and spoke on behalf of G.C. Services and its 180 NC QuickPass Customer Service Employees. He mentioned the importance of improving customer service systems, the new back-office system, and the new Rocky Mount Customer Call Center that will be opening soon. He thanked Ms. Kathryn Lorbacher, who has been instrumental in regard to the expansion efforts in Rocky Mount.

Mr. John Adcock asked Ms. Queenland for clarification regarding the routing of calls to the overflow center in Rocky Mount. Ms. Queenland stated that the calls would be evenly distributed, and that the primary call center would be the Morrisville CSC. This will increase the capacity of the call intake numbers overall. Ms. Mary Clayton asked how the Rocky Mount location was chosen. Ms. Queenland shared that in a four to six-month period several locations were visited and analyzed. Rocky Mount is a DMV facility and as a sister agency it offers many needed resources and possibilities for the new CSC.

There were also questions from the group regarding the length of the lease (7 years).

#### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## **Communications & Marketing Update**

### **Logen Hodges, Communications Director**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Mr. Logen Hodges presented the Complete 540 Outreach Update, the work with HBCU Interns, and an overview of the recently completed Survey and Market Research study. Mr. Hodges was asked about the ability of NC QuickPass to work with DMV offices to sell transponders. He stated that work on this had begun, and he hoped that it could be part of the new BOS2 (Back-office System). There was discussion of the ongoing efforts of Mr. Manish Chourey and Mr. J.J. Eden to explore this possibility. Mr. Eden also mentioned the early stages of outreach efforts with retail establishments for the same purpose.

#### **Actions Taken**

Information only, no action required.

## **Closing Comments & Adjournment**

### **Secretary Boyette, Chair**

#### **Discussion Summary**

Secretary Boyette announced that the end of the agenda had been reached and asked if there was any further business. Mr. Dennis Jernigan had an answer to Mr. Robert Teer's question regarding the operator salaries. He stated that the starting salary range was \$19-25 an hour, depending on experience and training.

Secretary Boyette stated that the meeting was adjourned.

#### **Actions Taken**

Secretary Boyette adjourned the August 18, 2022, NC Turnpike Board of Directors meeting at 11:32 a.m.