AGENDA OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority (WPRTA) Board of Directors
Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.
Greenway Conference Room, 1459 Robinwood Rd, Newton, NC 28658

Members Present: Ben Faulkenberry (Alexander County) - Karen Dickerson (Chair) - Tom Hart (City of Conover) - Alan Glines (Burke County) - (Wayne Rash Caldwell County) - Bradley Kirkley (Burke County)

Others Present: Casey Fullbright (Clerk) – Michael Bowman (Executive Dir.) – Scott Cook (Finance Dir.) – Patrick Nelson (HR Dir.) – Jesse Allan (Maintenance Dir.) - Amanda Safrit – (Funding & Grants Mgr.) - Kaylan Kelly (Mobility Mgr.) Randy Bowen (Logistics Mgr.) – Terry M Taylor (Attorney)

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Dickerson called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM and announced a quorum was present.

2. **Additions/Deletions/Changes to Agenda:** None

3. **Public Comment:** None

4. **Burke Flex Route Presentation:** Mr. Bowman presented the updated Burke County flex routes. The routes were redesigned to address logistical challenges and service overlap between the two routes operating in the Morganton area. The revised routes eliminate deviations and ensure all stops are included across both routes. These changes are intended to improve scheduling efficiency, reduce overlap, and allow drivers to maintain reasonable break periods between routes. The information will be released for public comment and is anticipated to be submitted for board approval in February or March of this year.

5. **Micro Transit App**: Mr. Bowman presented information regarding the selection of Spare as the microtransit application vendor. The service will initially operate as a microtransit program, providing same-day service. The initial proposed program includes approximately 10–12 vehicles, with a proposed contract not to exceed $100,000. Upon a Motion made by Mr. Hart and seconded by Mr. Glines, the Board unanimously approved authorization to enter into contract as approved by the attorney with Spare for microtransit services, with a contract amount not to exceed $100,000.

6. **Adverse Weather Policy Changes:** Mr. Nelson presented a proposed adverse weather policy, noting that the organization previously did not have a formal policy in place. The policy provides for up to eight hours of administrative leave for employees when operations are suspended, eliminating the need to use vacation or annual leave during that period. Office staff may be permitted to work remotely when conditions are unfavorable. Any closure or delay extending beyond eight hours would require employees to use annual or sick leave. Upon a Motion made by Mr. Faulkenberry and seconded by Mr. Hart, the Board unanimously approved the Adverse Weather Policy attached hereto.

7. **Finance Report:** Mr. Cook presented the finance report and budget-to-date spreadsheet through December 31, noting that approximately 45 percent of the annual operating budget has been expended to date and that federal grant expenditures typically lag, with roughly 20 percent currently reflected. He reported that ROPE funding must now be utilized within individual counties rather than across all four counties, and staff are evaluating whether transfers between counties may be permitted. Alexander County funding may be reduced by up to 50 percent due to lower utilization, as only $18,000 of the $70,000 budgeted was received through state allocation, while Caldwell County remains fully utilized and Catawba County has experienced a slight decline in rural population. Overall funding levels remain based on ridership trends and FTA allocations received through the state. Upon a Motion made by Mr. Hart and seconded by Mr. Glines, the Board unanimously approved the finance report as presented.

8.

   a. **Executive Director/Department Updates:** Mr. Bowman reported the completion of the FY26 ROAP and SMAP applications and the submission of the FY27 UGA application to NCDOT, which

is currently awaiting public hearing documentation. FY25 state claims have been finalized, and staff are working on first-quarter FY26 reimbursements. He also noted meetings with Burke County officials to discuss local match requirements and upcoming FY27 budget considerations.

b. **Finance:** Mr. Cook reported that routine finance department activities continue, including invoice processing and budget monitoring. A new payroll accountant has been onboarded and is receiving training, and preparations for the annual audit are underway with auditors on site in early October. He noted potential impacts from a proposed Medicaid funding reduction and higher-than-anticipated state health insurance costs, including a retroactive fee that may require a future budget amendment for Board consideration.

c. **Operations:** Mrs. Nelson reported that Fixed Route service continues to operate on a Saturday schedule, and staff are actively tracking performance data across Flex, Microtransit, and Fixed Route services. Ongoing efforts include coordination with NCDOT and IMD on vehicle and camera contracts, research into service delivery software and equipment options, and preparation for PTASP target approvals. Safety statistics reflected low incident and mechanical failure rates, and required safety reports have been submitted.

d. **HR:** Mr. Nelson reported that Human Resources continues daily operations while preparing for open enrollment, the leadership retreat, and ACA reporting requirements. Recruitment efforts remain active through job fairs, and staff morale initiatives are ongoing. Several positions across counties and service types have been filled, along with recent new hires and separations noted for the reporting period.

e. **Fleet:** Mr. Allen reported that fleet operations remain above 70 percent preventative maintenance compliance, with continued training of new maintenance staff. Security system installations and internet upgrades at the Transit Center have been completed, and work continues at the Newton Maintenance Facility, including ADA-related improvements. Additional vehicle orders and pending deliveries were also reviewed.

f. **Mobility:** Mrs. Kelly reported continued mobility efforts including travel training, community outreach, and participation in local meetings and events throughout the service area. Staff are coordinating with Long View on public transportation strategies and planning expanded outreach through upcoming resource fairs and community engagement activities.

9. **Consent Agenda:** Chair Dickerson presented the Consent Agenda for board consideration. Upon a motion made by Mr. Hart and seconded by Mr. Faulkenberry, the board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda as presented.
   a. Board Meeting Minutes, December 11, 2025

10. **Discussion of Items removed from the Consent Agenda:** None

11. **Other Business:** None

12. **Adjournment:** Upon a motion made by Mr. Hart and seconded by Mr. Glines, Chair Dickerson adjourned the meeting at 10:40 AM.

Next board meeting: Thursday, February 19 , 2026 at 10:00 AM.
WPRTA Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM

Respectfully Submitted,

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Clerk Karen Dickerson , Chairman