

Executive Director Board Report – October 2020

I am sad to report that Gary Parkhurst, brother of our board chairman Charlie Parkhurst, past away this week and his funeral is today, which is why Charlie is not able to attend. We have a card and will send that on to Charlie with the board's sympathies.

Things are going pretty well. Covid continues to cause disruptions, but I think we are coping well. To date we have had 3 drivers with confirmed cases, all have recovered, and one office staff member, who has recovered. I would say that at any given time, there is at least one employee out awaiting test results for one reason or another. Recently we had the first instance of a housing contractor who was confirmed positive, but in working with public health we were able to assist them with contract tracing and the homeowners have been cleared as not being considered close contacts.

Biggest things that I have been working on recently involve staffing. Partially because of Covid, we have a greater need to have someone closely monitoring the needs of drivers as well as our current fleet availability. Because of this we have created a fleet manager position, and Kelly Davis, a 27 year veteran in transit, is going to take on that role. Biggest difference is that he will not be actively dispatching trips, but will focus on making sure we have the drivers and vehicles we need to provide service. In total there are several staffing updates:

Kristen Templeton—has accepted the Transit Coordinator position, taking over for Kelly. She will run the transit dispatch office and her primary responsibility will be ensuring that we are doing the best job we can efficiently providing trips and ensuring excellent customer service.

Teresa Wright—has accepted the new position of Finance Specialist. She will work in the administrative services department. She will retain the primary responsibility for transit billing, but she will also work on other finance projects, including agency accounts payable.

As you may have seen, we are actively recruiting for a new dispatcher as well. Please spread the word about this position as the deadline to apply is approaching.

Until the new dispatcher is hired and trained, we probably won't see a big immediate change in the work people are currently doing, but we hope that won't take long.

Also, today we hired a grant funded Covid Recovery Specialist. Kristine Stokes, AICP, is a planner and grant writer who is currently in the process of moving back to our area from many years in South Carolina. She's spent over 20 years working as a planner and as the city of North Myrtle Beach's grant writer for all agency grant applications. She'll start on or about November 23, as she is in the process of moving now.

This is an exciting time, and will be a hectic time. People will shuffle around. The transit office will be renovated, as will the old conference room office space.