

**Citizens Advisory Committee  
Calvert County Board of Education  
February 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

**Members Attended**

Steve Nowicki  
Will Miller  
Andrew Clark  
Claire Hill  
Greg Cooper  
Kristina Nicely  
Felicia Sorrells  
J.C. Hooker  
Amanda Pullen-McGrath  
James Arthur  
Emma Nowack  
Rama Latin

**Board Members**

Lisa Grenis

**C.C.P.S. Staff**

Karen Maxey  
Susan Johnson  
Tony Navarro

**Presenters**

Kevin Hook, Acting Director of Transportation

**Documents for the Record**

- Each member was provided with an agenda sheet for the current meeting. Minutes from November and January's meetings were provided as well.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Nowicki called the meeting to order at 6:02, and took a vote to approve the previous meeting minutes, which passed. Mr. Hook, the acting Director of Transportation, was introduced as the primary presenter.

**Presentation**

- Mr. Hook began his presentation by offering several figures to the committee—namely Calvert County’s current dealings with 21 separate contractors, 214 buses in total, and further detailed the specific usage of this equipment. Buses are currently inspected four times yearly, and an estimated 18.5 million dollars is projected to be spent on current bus routes, not including the use allotted for extracurricular activities.
- Buses in Calvert County are currently equipped with Angel Trax camera systems, a system that is need of upgrading due to antiquated recording software. Additionally, buses are equipped with the Traversa app that mitigates routing/roster issues and Synovia, which is a live GPS application. However, no live cameras are currently available on buses.
- Mr. Hook detailed that issues with transport this year is primarily due to updates on tracking/roster software; as a positive result of these updates, bus routes are continuously being perfected more efficiently.
- Upcoming trends in the transportation department include the installation of seatbelts on buses, updated GPS capabilities, and updated camera equipment. Mr. Hook expounded that seatbelts may be legally required by the state in the near future, which may impact the total number of passengers allowed on each bus. The committee was advised that Calvert County cannot receive grants towards these updates as no buses are currently owned by the county, only contracted—this includes grant initiatives for electric buses. SMECO has communicated to local departments that it cannot currently accommodate the transition to electric vehicles. Should Calvert County alternatively invest in the purchase of county-owned buses, current audits project roughly 8-10 years before a return on this investment would be procured. This change could also have potentially detrimental effects in the community at large, as it would break traditional and generational business/community ties.
- At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Hook invited the committee’s questions. Main concerns from the committee were in regards to behavioral issues on buses, as well as recent driver strikes and safety protocols. In response, the committee was advised that there are currently no cameras equipped on the outside of buses, which makes driving infractions difficult for law enforcement to investigate. The committee was encouraged to forward any further questions or concerns to Mr. Hook directly, who was very receptive to individualized and specific concerns/transportation issues.

### **Questions with the Board**

At 7pm, the committee was given the opportunity to ask questions in a free-form style of the board member present, Ms. Lisa Grenis. An allotment of the designated meeting time was dedicated to this opportunity, and a collaborative conversation ensued. Of particular note was a focus on budget concerns and issues regarding current funding projections.

### **Conclusion/Meeting Adjourn**

Ms. Maxey concluded the meeting at approximately 7:20pm. Committee members were encouraged to forward any further questions or comments to Ms. Maxey or other speakers, and asked to complete the ongoing website survey in the area of the Department of Transportation before the next meeting.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Secretary Kristina Nicely.*