



Minutes

NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 28, 2010

- I. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Directors was held in the MTA Board Room, 130 Nestor Street, on January 28, 2010. Present were: Gail Williams, Chair; Thomas F. O'Connell, Vice-Chair; Lewis Lavine, member; Marian Ott, member; Jeffrey Yarbrow, member; Secretary Margaret Behm and CEO Paul J. Ballard. A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m.
- II. The meeting was opened by Chair Gail Carr Williams.
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2009 Board of Directors meeting. The vote of approval was unanimous and the minutes were adopted.
- IV. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.
- V. **Transportation Committee Report:** Committee Member Jeff Yarbrow reported that some decline in the year to year and passenger to passenger revenue continues to be seen and he stated that this is reflective of the current economy. He noted that these reports are still comparing year to year trends to a year when gas prices sky-rocketed and resulted in the highest record of ridership in the history of MTA. Consequently, longer term trend data was requested over the most recent five years. In reviewing that data with the 2008 anomaly removed, Mr. Yarbrow reported that ridership continues at a steady increase. All other committee reports were at or very close to goals. In conclusion, Mr. Yarbrow noted that a change had been put in place within the monthly Customer Survey that will separate remarks on cleanliness to either the outside or the inside of the bus.
 - a. **Planning and Marketing Report:** Chair Lewis Lavine reported that the committee had received their first quarterly report on the status of the master plan and its implementation. He asked the Board Chair if these reports could be included in the minutes on a quarterly basis. It was agreed that this would be done. (This report follows at the end of these minutes.)
 - b. **Service Improvements Proposed for March 2010 (A-10-001):** Mr. Lavine reported that the changes contained within this item are recommended by the committee to the Board for adoption with one amendment. The amendment is that the headways for the downtown circular routes be changed so that they could be more frequent during the lunch peak hours. Mr. Ballard confirmed that between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, the downtown circulator

will have ten minute headways as requested. Some light discussion about the marketing details ensued with Board and staff. With discussion completed, motion was made and seconded and the vote of approval was unanimous.

VI. Finance Report: Chair Marian Ott reported on the following items:

a. Metro Short-Term Loan Request (A-10-002): Ms. Ott reported that it is the committee's recommendation that the Board enter into an Intra-Governmental Note Agreement with the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County to allow MTA to borrow up to \$5 million. The intent is to borrow up to \$5,000,000 to be received as needed and to be repaid in full once federal funding is available. This will allow MTA to continue operating and allow time for the grant monies to be received. Motion was made and seconded, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

VII. Chair's Report: Ms. Williams stated that she was pleased with the quarterly report on the Strategic Master Plan and found it very helpful. She also noted how gratifying it is to make the system changes based on the feedback from ridership.

VIII. Chief Executive Officer's Report: Paul Ballard reported that the budget kick-off for Metro was today. He stated that Ed and his staff are preparing and representatives from his department are there today taking notes. Reporting on the RTA, he noted that train ridership has really spiked and is now up to and sometimes surpassing 900 in daily ridership.

IX. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

BACKGROUND

Along with the adoption of the Nashville MTA Strategic Transit Master Plan on August 27, 2008, the MTA Board requested that staff provide a quarterly review of the Plan priorities and projects during the first year of implementation.

Strategic Master Plan Priorities and Projects

The role of the Plan was to identify both a process to assist in prioritizing projects as well as illustrate potential projects for implementation. For prioritizing future improvements, the plan identified five key areas where MTA should focus attention and these are listed below. When funding is available for improvements, the objective is to ensure that service changes make progress in all of the key areas rather than focusing on one or two.

Five Priority Areas for Transit Investment

- More Buses More Often (increase frequency of buses)
- Faster transit trips (fewer bus stops, traffic signal priority, avoid going downtown to transfer)
- Serve new or un-served areas (connect to areas that do not have service today)
- Make service easier to use (signage, better access to information, “How to Ride” training, simpler schedules, simple fare payment methods)
- Improve the image of transit (marketing, nicer buses, nicer shelters & benches at stops)

The first three priority areas identified above are specific to providing bus service and are closely tied with MTA’s bi-annual service change process. The remaining two priorities are areas where improvements can be made outside of that process and are on-going elements of MTA’s regular activities. Over the past quarter several projects have been completed in these areas and are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Progress on Non-Service Improvement Priorities

Priority Area	Projects Completed During Quarter
Make service easier to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Google Transit Implementation
Improve the image of transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● All gray plastic benches removed● Replacement and new benches are fixed in place● Replacement or removal of several older “mushroom” style shelters● New solar-powered lighted shelters installed in several locations● Joint promotion with Miller-Lite for Halloween● Joint promotion with McDonalds● Joint promotion with Transit Now at Live on the Green● Transit Now MTA Video Contest

In addition, the plan identified and recommended several discrete projects which could be implemented in the short, mid, and long-term. These projects are shown in Table 2 with a short description of the project and it's current status.

Table 2 - Summary Table of Potential Projects (also continued on following page)

Short Term Actions (2009-2015)	Project Status
Adopt a Service Delivery Policy	Completed
Pursue a dedicated funding source for public transportation	MTA is an active member of the Transit Alliance which has been tasked by the Mayor to identify dedicated funding for transit
Implement 'green' building practices and continue to acquire hybrid buses	14 Hybrid Articulated buses on order
Implement BRT on Gallatin Road	Phase 1 - Service and Transit Signal Priority Infrastructure implemented Fall 2009; Phase 2 is underway with shelters and real-time electronic displays to be completed Spring 2010
Increase frequencies on eleven routes to bring them up to minimum standards	Proposed Service Changes for Spring 2010 will improve Headway on RT 37X Tusculum/McMurray Express
Implement a downtown circulator	Proposed Circulator to begin service Spring 2010
Provide service to a new or un-served neighborhood	Proposed Service to 100 Oaks and Vine Hill community to begin Spring 2010
Provide a budget for increased marketing to help non-users learn how to use the MTA service. Provide a targeted marketing campaign for the Gallatin BRT.	Phase I of BRT marketing completed, Phase II in planning stages for BRT Infrastructure completion Spring 2010
Mid Term Actions (2016-2025)	
Reallocate service using trip by trip ridership data from the Automatic Passenger Counters (APC)	APC equipment installed on fixed route vehicles, demand response fleet on-going; Work continues on tuning the equipment and data collection and reporting
Extend the Gallatin Road BRT from the Music City Central to West End/Vanderbilt	Future project
Improve night service on routes currently paired routes: (Routes 4 Shelby and 20 Scott, 28 Meridan and 30 McFerrin, 2 Belmont and 7 Hillsboro, and 19 Herman and 29 Jefferson.)	Future project
Institute mini-hubs on Clarksville Pike and Gallatin Road to serve multiple routes	Proposed Service extension of Rt 20 Scott to Gallatin Road to begin Spring 2010

Implement BRT service elements such as fewer and nicer stops, traffic signal priority, better buses and increased service on Murfreesboro Road, Dickerson Road and Nolensville Road.	Future project
Expand park and ride capacity for Route 35X Rivergate Express near Kmart-Goodlettsville. Add park and ride capacity to Route 41 Golden Valley. Provide and improve park and ride service to Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson and Davidson Counties.	Proposed Service to Lennox Village and Establishment of new PnR on Rt 33 Hickory Hollow Express
Expand the Madison Bus Link northward to Anderson Lane. Add fixed or flexible service from the Hillsboro-West End area to connect to the Mall at Green Hills. Add fixed or flexible service from the Glenclyff and Woodbine neighborhoods to 100 Oaks Mall.	Future Project
Revise downtown system map to clarify routes in the downtown. Provide a targeted marketing campaign for new and improved services.	Future Project
Long Term Actions (2026-2035)	
Extend Route 23, Dickerson, to reach employment areas north of the current service area.	Future Project Depending on Development Patterns
Extend Route 6 Lebanon Road to developing communities and Summit Medical Center	Future Project Depending on Development Patters
Further improve transit capacity between downtown Nashville and the West End with dedicated or queue jump lanes or streetcar service	Future Project
Provide high capacity service (BRT with queue jumps, light rail or commuter rail) to Rutherford, Sumner and Williamson Counties).	Future Project
Provide Frequent service to developing neighborhoods served by Route 37X Tusculum/McMurray Express and route 38X Antioch Express.	Future Project
Institute a mini-hub at 100 Oaks.	Future Project

Summary

Since the adoption of the Plan in late August, staff has had several months to work with the Plan and used it to assist in developing the upcoming service change recommendations. Overall, the Plan has proved to be a strong guiding document and helped staff focus on specific service opportunities. Depending on the amount of funding available for improvements we have noted that it can be difficult to achieve success in all of the five key priority areas, however, we have followed the plan approach and believe it will result in a balanced improvement of our services.

CONCLUSION

In the first few months of working with the Nashville MTA Strategic Transit Master Plan staff has adhered to the principals of the plan and has utilized it successfully to develop project proposals as well as implemented several specific projects.