



Minutes

NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

SPECIAL CALLED EMERGENCY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 6, 2010

- I. **Call to Order:** The special called emergency meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Directors was held in the Music City Central meeting room, 400 Charlotte Avenue, on May 6, 2010. Present were: Gail Williams, Chair; Thomas F. O’Connell, Vice-Chair; Lewis Lavine, member; Marian Ott, member; Jeffrey Yarbro, member; Secretary Margaret Behm and CEO Paul J. Ballard. A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.
- II. The meeting was opened by Chair Gail Carr Williams. Chairman Williams commended Paul Ballard and the entire MTA team for their outstanding work during the flood crisis. She particularly noted the quick thinking that saved much of the fleet while avoiding physical harm to employees as well as the initiative and innovation to get service restored so quickly. The board members responded with a standing ovation for the staff.
- III. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.
- IV. **CEO’s Report:** Paul Ballard stated that he and key staff members would review the history of how we got here today, where we are and where we are going – all in reference to the 2010 Flood that happened on Saturday/Sunday, May 1st and 2nd.

On Saturday, MTA helped with some evacuation efforts in the city as the water came up around Nashville. On Sunday, MTA began regular Sunday service; and as the water began to rise on the Nestor Street property, all operable buses were moved out. The AccessRide vehicles were in the process of being moved but had to be stopped as the water began to quickly rise. Emergency rescue of the over fifty-five remaining employees had to be implemented.

The MTA staff has been working every day, some extremely long hours to help us get through this crisis. The Mayor and all departments have been very supportive. Regular Sunday service began today on 22 routes with the exception of the McFerrin which is still not accessible.

On Monday the plan is to begin Saturday service on all regular routes. The train will also be back in service on Monday as will be the MTA operated RTA bus route to Murfreesboro.

- V. **COO's Report:** Bob Baulsir reported that Dawn Distler began working with the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 1st and Paul Ballard relieved her at OEM on Sunday, May 2nd. On Saturday MTA moved several hundreds of people in rescue efforts with the police until we were impaired. At 8:15 a.m. Sunday service stopped. At 10:41 a.m. Sunday morning staff began removing buses from the lot. Some computer equipment was moved to the second floor and buses were put on the lifts available. There were seventy-nine (79) flooded privately owned cars on the property. (Twenty-nine were reported at the meeting. These minutes have been adjusted to show the correct number after a complete count was made.) Approximately four feet of water got into the building.

Our Human Resources department has been making calls to our employees and we know that eighteen (18) had minor home damage, three (3) had major home damage and three (3) lost their cars at their homes.

We have one hundred and five (105) buses ready to go and thirty (30) vans. Monday morning (May 3rd) key staff reported and we began assessing the status quo and where to go from here.

The AccessRide call center and reservations is at Allied Cab, our overflow provider. The AccessRide call center is taking all calls and are dispatching via Blackberry. We are operating with thirty (30) out of fifty-five (55) AccessRide vans.

Bus dispatch, buses and drivers are currently at the Fairgrounds. Buses are being dispatched by paper. Bus operations are at MNPS, 333 Woody Crest Avenue where they have fuel lanes.

Maintenance is being managed at Middle Tennessee Ford, 1319 Foster Avenue where they are allowing MTA to use a couple of their bays with our mechanics and buying parts from them.

Our goal is to have Saturday service start on Monday and non-medical AccessRide reservations will start tomorrow (Friday, May 7th).

There will be a salvage group at the Nestor Street location. Currently the power on Nestor shuts off underground and that is still under some water. There is mud on the floors and no water is available to clean at this time due to the request from Metro to conserve water.

Some questions were presented by the Board members at this time:

1. What is hardest to overcome for Saturday service to run?

- a. We are fleshing out those issues today. The bigger issues for weekday service will be refueling, parts, tires and uniforms.
- 2. Is someone journaling?
 - a. We are documenting through photos and the supervisor's daily reports.
- 3. Is Music City Center functional at 100%?
 - a. All but phones
- 4. What about fare recovery?
 - a. The system is automated and we hope to have it fully functional soon.

VI. Director of Planning's Report: Jim McAteer reported that he and his department had switched to the operational support mode. An all call was put out for buses across the state and regionally. Memphis responded with five (5) buses; Mid-Cumberland with twelve (12) Para-transit and staff cars; and, Cincinnati with twenty-five (25) vehicles. For now these will just be loans, but for up to one year.

Concerning funding, there are \$800,000 stimulus highway dollars available through MPO and we have asked that they reassign these dollars to MTA and it looks very favorable that they will. He is also working with the State to identify other available funds.

VII. Director of Communications and Marketing's Report: Patricia Harris-Morehead reported that she started early on Sunday with a call that service was being stopped. She contacted MTA IT Administrator Rob McElhaney and he began working to move the MTA servers to higher ground.

On Sunday (May 3rd) her department produced three (3) press releases and posted them to the web. She brought in Amber Thompson and Tom Wilson at 2:00 p.m. to work with the Customer Care Manager at Music City Central where they continued to work until 9:45 p.m. The last press release for this day was at 9:30 p.m. Amber helped with the Emma email notices of no train and no bus service on Monday.

Monday began with phone interviews with Channel 4. She reported to MCC and created two news release updates and an email flash.

Tuesday updates continued and Ms. Morehead worked with the Mayor's office.

Wednesday updates continued for customer and employees and internal support was given for the HR department. Her department worked on flyers for services. She arranged for the Metro and State photographers to photo journal MTA's property. Aerial shots were sent to the Board.

VIII. Director of Customer Care's Report: Lora Baulsir reported that phone service was lost on Sunday. Metro Southeast on Murfreesboro Road offered cubicle space for the customer care employees. We started out with five (5) and are now up to fifteen (15) cubicles being used. Rob McElhaney set these up for our employees.

The call center begins to receive calls at 4:00 a.m. and is open until midnight. Our regular call load for any given day averages eight hundred (800) and we are currently averaging 8,500 calls daily. Customers have been great and not complaining. They just need information when start up will be and questions concerning their pre-paid passes. All of the call center staff is at Metro Southeast except for two ticket windows.

IX. Chief Financial Officer's Report: Ed Oliphant reported that MTA is self insured with a high deductible of \$100,000 per vehicle. There is no vehicle flood insurance and recovery will have to come through FEMA and relief efforts.

The FTA in Atlanta has stated that the Secretary of Transportation wants updates on the train.

FEMA is at the property on Nestor today as well as General Services and they will coordinate the clean-up with the proper protocol.

He has been in touch with the offices of the legislatures.

He is working on the fare collection issues to get that up and running as soon as possible.

X. Chief Executive Officer's Report: Mr. Ballard presented the following for the Board's consideration:

a. Purchase of AccessRide Vehicles (Five Year Contract) A-10-007:

In March 2010 a Request for Proposal was issued for the purchase of up to twenty-four (24) paratransit buses the first year with the option to purchase 150 buses over the next four years. Four submitted proposals were reviewed and evaluated by a panel of five members based on a standard of criteria. These were ranked by points given and each proposer was interviewed. The panel determined that the Bus Group of College Park, GA offered the best responsive/responsible proposal and Best and Final Offer. The staff's recommendation is that the Board authorizes the CEO to enter into a five year contract to purchase up to one hundred and seventy-four (174) paratransit vans over the life of the contract and to immediately order up to thirty-five (35) paratransit buses from the Bus Group at a cost of \$99,898 each. Funding for twenty-five (25) of the vans will come from Metro Nashville Capital dollars and the other ten (10) vans will be purchased with MPO ARRA (stimulus)

funding once it becomes available. Motion was made and the vote of approval was unanimous.

At this time the Board then opened discussions about the present state of crisis resulting from the flood. It was the consensus of the Board that staff begins to look for other locations that could possibly house the whole operations of MTA. Mr. Ballard stated that two staff members had been assigned to that task. Discussion of the possible sale of the Nestor property and how that would align with FTA regulations was discussed. What could be expected from FEMA was also mentioned and at this time no one, including Metro, knows what to expect.

Freddie O'Connell asked if there would be a quantification of impact – ops vs. capital. Ed Oliphant stated that expenditures would be going down and that next week Bob would know more. Mr. Ballard stated that he does not anticipate a big hit. He believes that MTA will come close to budget and that the net effect will lower expenses.

Margaret Behm mentioned that employees who lost their cars would have coverage for flood if they had comprehensive coverage. She asked if MTA had comprehensive coverage and Ed Oliphant stated that they did not.

The Board was concerned about the employees – how many had lost personal vehicles, how many had lost their homes. Bob Baulsir stated that they were in the process of getting those details as employees were being contacted.

In conclusion, these points were reiterated:

1. Do the best we can to supplement employees loss of vehicles
2. Look seriously at other locations with costs of relocation factored in if away from downtown
3. Funding issues- FEMA
4. Next Board meeting , May 27th

XI. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.