



Minutes

NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

February 26, 2015

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Directors was held in the Music City Central Meeting Room, 400 Charlotte Avenue, on February 26, 2015. Present were: Marian Ott, Chair; Lewis Lavine, Vice-Chair; Janet Miller, member; Thomas F. O’Connell, member; Gail Carr Williams, member; Secretary Margaret Behm, and CEO Stephen G. Bland. A quorum was established and Chair Ott called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Chair Ott commented that the MTA Committee meetings were not held last week in deference to staff who had quite a bit to do to accommodate the emergency plan for the bad weather. Each of the committee chairs today will conduct an abbreviated meeting during the Board meeting. Those things that would entail longer conversations that are not decision making items for this month will be deferred to next month so that they can get appropriate attention.

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Proper motion was made to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2015 Board of Directors meeting. Mr. O’Connell noted one correction in Section IV, page 3, Transportation Committee. He asked that his name be corrected in the report. With that correction, the vote of approval was unanimous.
- III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Chair Ott reminded us that public comments are kept to three minutes. She then recognized the following members of the public:

Peter O’Connor of Nashville:

Mr. O’Connor reported a particular instance where a bus ran late on Rt. 12 Nolensville near Hickory Plaza. He never did see the earlier bus, but was able to ride on the following bus, which was also late, and he added that the driver of that bus had not seen the earlier bus when in route to Mr. O’Connor’s stop.

Steve Reiter of Nashville:

Mr. Reiter stated that Rt. 12 Nolensville really does have some problems with on time performance and he thinks it has a lot to do with the CSX crossing on 4th Avenue. He also stated that the cold weather bus card works fairly well but he did have a problem today when boarding near Vanderbilt University on the #7 Hillsboro, at 12:15, bus # 728. The fare box read his card as not valid. Mr. Reiter called the number given on the card to see if it was a valid day for use and it was (referencing outside

temperature). He noted that he doesn't know if this was a result of malfunction with the fare box or not, but he complimented the bus driver for allowing him to ride anyway.

Margo Chambers of Nashville:

Ms. Chambers thanked the Board for the excellent job on the communication to the public regarding the snow routes and the hard work that was done. She believes great improvement was made trying to reach out to people and she thinks the buses navigated the icy roads as well as possible.

Ms. Chambers noted that the parking garage (at MCC) now charges \$10.00, up from \$3.00, to park. Ms. Chambers requested a parking pass be issued for all the participants at the MTA Board meetings as is done for the public attending the Metro Council meetings.

Continuing, Ms. Chambers stated that she has made several open requests for DTO documents recently; and, she would like to know from the Board the official IRS status of the Davidson Transit Organization (DTO). Is it a 501C3, or did the IRS make a final determination that the DTO is a private foundation? She noted that this will affect the financial estimate submitted to Metro. Ms. Chambers also submitted an open record request to find out DTO officer names and contacts. She received an undated sheet of paper that did not list the DTO treasurer and who the person is that is in charge of negotiating the collective bargaining agreements. This is something that will also affect the financials and the audits that will be due in June.

There were no other public comments.

- IV. TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE:** Committee Chair O'Connell invited Communications and Marketing Director Patricia Harris-Morehead to review the highlights of the Customer Care reports for the Board. It was the consensus of the committee and the Board that the other reports that had been prepared for the committee would be brought back to the committee in March so that there could be adequate time for conversation.

Ms. Morehead reported that the Customer Care staff exceeded goal answering 98% of their nearly 25,000 calls during the month of January. Ms. Morehead stated that out of that nearly 25,000 calls received, 185 of those had comments or complaints. She noted that while this is a very small percentage of the call volume, these calls are important; they are worth researching, reporting, investigating, and responding to the customer.

In response to Ms. Miller's question last month concerning the goals for passengers carried per complaint, Ms. Morehead reported that their goal for bus is one complaint for every 10,000 passengers carried and for AccessRide, it is one complaint for every 1,750 passengers carried. To put all of this in perspective, Ms. Morehead added, our drivers had interactions with over 822,000 passengers for the month of January and a similar number for the month of December. We did hear from customers in those 185 calls and we will continue to research those and respond appropriately to the customers.

Highlighting just a few of the activities of the Marketing and Communications department, Ms. Morehead stated that they worked with the Tennessean Editorial Board to hold one of their meetings on the #12 Nolensville route. During that meeting with Mr. Bland and Chair Ott, the bus did get behind schedule. That is why we chose that particular route because we wanted to see for ourselves some of the issues that our customers are facing. We are hopeful services for our customers along that corridor will improve later this year with the planned service changes along that corridor.

Earlier this week, Ms. Morehead continued, our marketing specialist, Cary Foust-Street, met with the team of photographers and video photographers and staff with the Tennessean to work on a promotional video that will feature one of our buses as a backdrop. The Tennessean is launching a new campaign to promote their new editorial editor and he asked if he could do that shoot on one of our buses.

Committee Chair O'Connell thanked Ms. Morehead for her report. He noted that in next month's Transportation Committee report he would like to see the AccessRide Survey, the Road Call Performance Review, the AVL Update, and the Driver Recruitment report which have all been deferred this month.

- V. **FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Chair Williams called on CFO Ed Oliphant to provide the financial reforecast report.
- a. **Financial Reforecast Report FY 2015 Update(I-15-001):** Mr. Oliphant reviewed the reforecast through December 2014 included in today's Board book. He stated that we are in very good shape. He noted that driver shortage has caused us to incur more overtime than had been anticipated as well as more use of taxi cab overflow service for AccessRide than had been anticipated. Passenger fares remain favorable and we expect that to continue. Through December we were \$325,000 favorable on fuel due to the lower prices. Mr. Oliphant stated that he will incorporate this reforecast into the monthly financial statements presented to the Board so that can they then see the comparison of actuals to the reforecast for the rest of the year.
- VI. **PLANNING AND MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT:** Chair Lavine invited Planning Director Felix Castrodad to share any highlights from his monthly report prior to presenting the Spring 2015 Service Improvements. Mr. Castrodad reported that ridership was up 7% compared to the same month last year and that year to date ridership was up 3%.
- a. **Spring 2015 Service Improvements (A-15-001):** Mr. Castrodad reported that we conduct service changes twice a year, in the spring and in the fall. This gives us an opportunity to take a comprehensive look at the system and see how we can make improvements for the overall system. For the spring several changes are proposed, the majority of those are minor changes where we tweak some time points and we increase the mid-day frequency on some routes. The most significant change for this spring is the introduction of the BRT lite service on the

Charlotte Pike Corridor, Route 50. This will follow the success of some of the other corridors where we have the same type of service – Gallatin Pike BRT Lite and Murfreesboro Pike BRT Lite. Those routes have seen considerable increase in ridership since their implementation.

For the Charlotte BRT, we are proposing direct service between downtown and Walmart at the end of the line off River Road (West of I-40). Service will be every 15 minutes on weekdays and every 30 minutes on nights and weekends. The route will have 27 stations located every half or three quarter mile. As we did with the other services, we will keep the local Route 10 with some proposed changes. The local service will be every 40 to 45 minutes on weekdays and hourly at nights and on weekends. Also, associated with that will be some changes to two loops that the Route 10 does currently.

Additionally, Mr. Castrodad noted, we are proposing to run the Blue and the Green Circuit on Sundays between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. This will be contingent upon Metro agreeing to pay for this service. The ballpark will be opening soon and there is going to be more demand for this service.

Mr. Castrodad reported that for these proposed service changes, five public meetings were held, with two of them more focused on the Charlotte BRT Lite service. These meetings were held at the Oasis Center, the West Police Precinct, and MCC. There were a total of 86 attendees and many other comments, emails, and forms were received. As a part of the BRT Lite meetings, participants were handed surveys to provide feedback on the naming of the stations along the corridor and that information was utilized for that. Overall, the comments were in support of the changes, especially the BRT Lite service.

Concluding, Mr. Castrodad stated that staff recommends that we implement these services that will go into effect on March 29, 2015. The budget for this has been identified through FY 2015 and is included in the budget that we received from Metro.

Chair Ott noted that in addition to the public meetings that were held, staff reached out to key stakeholders ahead of time. Mr. Castrodad concurred and stated that they called on business owners along the corridor to let them know what was coming and about the location of the stations; and they also contacted councilmembers were to let them know of the meetings and the proposed plans. Ms. Ott commended staff for their effort.

Proper motion was made and seconded. There was no discussion and the vote of approval was unanimous.

Concerning the strategic plan, Mr. Castrodad summarized on the technical analysis side that these reports had been completed: State of the System; Individual Route Profiles; Pier Review; and Market Analysis. He added that they are about to start Park and Ride Needs Analysis. On the outreach side, the project advisory committee has been finalized. This will be a broad based committee representing different spectrums and opinions of this area including the business

community, social services, faith based, educational, and others. A meeting is planned for next week. Target dates have been identified in early April for kick-off with the public. The project website is being finalized, it is in beta and we are testing it and adding some information. It should be completed soon. Committee Chair Lavine asked about a time line for the project and Mr. Castrodad said they would have that next month.

- VII. CHAIR'S REPORT:** Chair Ott applauded the staff for their good work last week in the winter weather. Ms. Ott stated that it is very exciting to be moving forward with new service and at the same time to be moving forward on a strategic plan. The strategic plan is important work that we are doing and something that we look forward to working with the new mayor in implementing it.

Concerning the strategic plan, she noted that the advisory committee will provide important input, but there is also going to be many other opportunities for many kinds of input, all of which will be important to us. We want to get the right information to be able to make a good decision about the strategic direction. Ms. Ott encourages everyone to take advantage of those avenues to provide us input.

- VIII. CEO'S REPORT:** CEO Steve Bland reported that yesterday we hosted some of the Transportation Security Administration's staff to do a table top exercise in preparedness with some of our key operations safety security people as well as other first responders, Metro Police, Metro Fire, and State Emergency Management.

Mr. Bland thanked staff who worked the weather (ice and snow) last week. He noted that the operations staff and customer service representatives really did a remarkable job. He encouraged staff to get a couple of days rest and take notes, then they would get together in a couple of weeks to review and see how they can improve the planning for future like events.

With the weather conditions last week, Mr. Bland reported that we carried about 45% of our total ridership. He extended his thanks to Zeda's team; we had a real challenge getting folks into work. They were working short staffed, had four times as many calls and answered three times as many calls as they normally do. Board member O'Connell stated he appreciated the series of updates that were received on the service. While there were some service disruptions that were weather related, we were providing our best effort to ensure that the disruptions were minimal and were restored when we could and people knew that. Thank you.

- IX. Other Business:** There was no other business to come before this Board.

- X. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:09 p.m.