



## Minutes

### NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

September 24, 2015

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- 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 September 24, 2015. Present were: Marian Ott, Chair; Lewis Lavine, Vice-Chair; Janet Miller, Member; Gail Carr Williams, Member; Acting Secretary Harlan Dodson, and CEO Stephen G. Bland. A quorum was established and Chair Ott called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Proper motion was made to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2015 Board of Directors meeting. There were no additions or corrections and 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:

**James Thomas of Nashville:**

Mr. Thomas noted that most of the buses he has caught this month have been on time, but one bus on September 17<sup>th</sup>, Rt. 12 Nolensville, Wallace Road loop, at 12:18 p.m. was really late.

**John Bull of Nashville:**

Mr. Bull made the following comments:

1. He thinks it is great that the Mega Bus has been pulling in recently on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
2. He is glad that the data loss issue on the fareboxes that was brought up at the committee meetings last week is being addressed. We need hard figures for scheduling.
3. For Rt. 21, especially at the intersection of 31<sup>st</sup> and West End where traffic is so dense, he suggests that we try to persuade Vanderbilt to use their security there during peak hours since it is so close to their jurisdiction.

**Margo Chambers of Nashville:**

Ms. Chambers had the following comments:

1. She asked that we please keep in mind the needs of riders who have no transit choice as we go forward. The most vulnerable of our community need this service the most. She asks that we consider the needs of the very young and the very old before those who have a transit choice.

2. Regarding the new board vacancy, she asks that we please appoint a neighborhood advocate, preferably an advocate who rides the transit system, who has no choice in that matter.
3. She asks that we redo our bylaws so that no board member serves more than five years and to stagger those terms so that not everyone leaves at once.
4. She also asks that we redo our bylaws so that the Board does respond to public input in these meetings.
5. She is interested in the cost of the free bus service being provided tomorrow for the Mayoral Inauguration ceremonies. She would like to have a cost estimate presented on how much that cost.

**Steve Riter of Nashville:**

Mr. Riter made the following comments:

1. He appreciates the free rides tomorrow. He doesn't know the cost, but feels that it can be absorbed into the budget without any real problem.
2. He is interested with what John Bull had to say about the Mega Bus. He thinks it is a great service and if we are all advocates for transportation, we will stand by Mega Bus. We want transit for everyone.
3. He attended one of the outreach meetings that was well attended but noticed that not many of those were transit dependent. This concerns him because the people who really ride the bus are really most concerned about more frequent service and longer daily hours of service. He would like to see these people have more input about the service needs.

There were no other public comments.

- IV. TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE:** Interim Committee Chair Marian Ott reported that the most significant conversation at the meeting was about ridership. We discovered that our ridership numbers have not been correct. There is an issue with the fareboxes. We are collecting the money, but the ridership counting piece of the software has not been functioning properly. There had to be a software upgrade recently in order for us to respond to the demands of the city to have all these fare categories and the passes, but in that software upgrade, something didn't click and it has been a process to adjust it. Chair Ott asked Chief Operating Officer India Birdsong to please give the Board an update on the process.

Ms. Birdsong reported that the vendor has been in Nashville with two engineers and have determined it is a tactical issue. They are going through the process of elimination and upgrading our voltage to rule out any power issues to the farebox. They haven't seen this issue before in transit agencies with this particular upgrade that we had. Our goal is to get this fixed as quickly as we can. We are working with our Finance Department in order to estimate the rides on those routes where we are not sure about the actual data collection, but we are sure about the revenue. Chair Ott noted her appreciation of the urgency being placed on this.

- V. FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Chair Gail Carr Williams reported that they reviewed the Statement of Operations with CFO Ed Oliphant and all things seem to be on track. The Committee also looked at the Balance Sheet and she noted that the note payable balance was zero. The Committee spent some time reviewing the budget process and historical trends of how our dollars are being spent and our streams of revenue. This

effort allows the Board to be more informed as they make decisions on what they want in the future.

Ms. Williams then presented the following action item for the Board's consideration:

- a. **Transit Signal Priority Project Consulting Services (A-15-016)**: The Nashville MTA was awarded a \$10 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) V Discretionary Grant from the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) administered through the Federal Transit Agency (FTA) for the implementation of the Transit Signal Priority (TSP) project. The TIGER V grant program enables the USDOT to invest in critical national objectives for transportation infrastructure. The program has five long-term outcomes: safety, economic competitiveness, state of good repair, livability, and environmental sustainability.

On February 18, 2015, Request for Qualifications (RFQ) 2015538 was issued to solicit statements of qualifications from qualified consulting professionals to provide Project Support, Engineering Design and Pre-Construction Services for Implementation of Transit Signal Priority System on the Murfreesboro Pike Corridor.

Nashville MTA's TIGER V grant project will be managed jointly by the Nashville MTA and the Metro Public Works (MPW). In summary, the grant award will be utilized for Project Support, Engineering Design, and Pre-Construction Services, and for the purchase and deployment of a new central Software Solution for Metro MPW that will allow the implementation of TSP throughout the Nashville area. This specific project also includes funding for the installation of TSP equipment on all MTA buses and specifically at all signalized intersections on the Murfreesboro Pike Corridor to give buses signal priority.

The RFQ solicitation release and notification was published on Nashville MTA's website and in the Transit Intelligence online publication. Four (4) proposals were received and three (3) proposals were accepted and reviewed as being responsive and responsible.

The following firms submitted proposals on or before the March 31, 2015 due date:

1. Gresham, Smith and Partners
2. HDR | ICA
3. Kimley Horn

An evaluation committee composed of project stakeholders from Nashville MTA and MPW reviewed and scored the responses. Kimley Horn received the top scores.

Based upon results of the statements of qualification and evaluation processes, the Finance Committee recommends to the Board to give the CEO authority to enter into a contract with Kimley Horn for a four (4) year term at a cost not to exceed \$1.7 million. The committee recommendation was approved unanimously.

VI. **PLANNING AND MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT:** Chair Lavine reported that the committee heard a digital communications report and while the numbers are still going up, it is still more of a select audience.

a. **Fareless Friday: Black Friday Free-Ride Day (A-15-017):** Chair Lavine stated that we received a request from the Mayor-Elect's office that we consider having a free fare day, which is now tomorrow, their inauguration day. What had been previously on the Committee's agenda was that we would have our annual Fareless Friday the day after Thanksgiving. The committee actually thought this would be better to have it not occur on a day that was virtually a holiday for so many people.

The Committee voted to recommend to the Board that we have a fare-less Friday on September 25 with the additional cost expected to be about \$20,000 beyond what our usual fare-less Friday would cost in lieu of a free fare day on Friday, November 27, 2015.

Chair Ott noted that we are running ahead of budget on our operating revenues and can absorb this additional expense and that this is a wonderful way to get people to ride the bus tomorrow. This recommendation was unanimously approved.

b. **Adoption of Service Design Guidance Principles (A-15-018):** As a component of the Strategic Plan, staff and the Board have been reviewing a set of design guidance principles. If you don't know what one's principles are, then it will be hard for us to make decisions among competing opportunities. Staff, over time with a lot of input from a number of sources around the community, has put together a set of principles that relate to: connect, enhance, simplify, and sustain. These principles in full are listed below:

**CONNECT – CONNECT PEOPLE TO LIFE IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE.**

- Provide desirable, reliable, and affordable transit choices for Middle Tennesseans.
- Focus additional resources on improving service quality in the highest demand transit markets.
- Develop new partnerships and improved service models to better serve markets where fixed route service is impractical.

**ENHANCE – MAKE TRANSIT A COMPETITIVE TRAVEL CHOICE FOR MORE MIDDLE TENNESSEANS.**

- Make transit travel times in key corridors competitive with the private automobile.
- Improve service frequencies and spans in strong transit markets to a level attractive to consumers.
- Work with outside partners to improve the reliability of transit trips.

**SIMPLIFY – MAKE TRANSIT EASY TO USE.**

- Provide service designs that are easy for potential users to understand.
- Adopt technologies that make travel easier.
- Improve access to, and the quality of, transit stops and stations.

**SUSTAIN – DEVELOP A TRANSIT SYSTEM THAT COMPLEMENTS AND ADVANCES BROADER REGIONAL GOALS AND IS FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE OVER THE LONG-TERM.**

- Improve the accessibility of fixed-route services for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.
- Develop and monitor performance measures with respect to service and adjust as necessary.
- Create a seamless menu of options among transit services, operators and other modes for travelers.
- Develop reliable and predictable revenue streams that grow with the economy of the region.

The service design guidance principles will provide the policy basis for the strategic plan recommendations and will be key to meet community objectives as part of the process. Based on this, the Planning and Marketing Committee recommends to the Board the adoption of the nMotion Service Design Guidance Principles as presented. This recommendation was unanimously approved.

- VII. CHAIR’S REPORT:** Chair Ott stated that the Board is looking forward to working with our soon-to-be Mayor Barry and is excited that as part of the inaugural activities that transit was part of the discussion.

On another note, Chair Ott stated that while the farebox issue is frustrating, it will get addressed. This underlines the importance that while planning is important and needs to move forward, we can’t stop focusing on excellent execution of our services.

- VIII. CEO’S REPORT:** CEO Steve Bland:

- We recently participated with several other Metro departments in a Vision Zero webinar. Vision Zero is the idea of getting pedestrian fatalities in urban areas down to zero.
- Several of us, including Chair Ott, were really pleased to participate on September 15<sup>th</sup> to give Mayor Dean one last transit send off with a sneak preview of our electric buses on the Music City Circuit. They were extremely well received.
- He has been speaking to a variety of groups on nMotion and people from all walks are really interested in regional mobility in general. Eric Beyer has been very helpful in setting up meetings with our incoming council people to get them acquainted with Nashville MTA.
- We now have a beta test version of our real time information app. It is working very well and we think it will be very well received.
- We had the highest turnout in recent history for our annual roadeo. The first place winners in each category who will represent us in the national roadeo are:

- Adrell Stringer, 40' Bus
- Jerome Horton, 35' Bus and Paratransit Vehicle
- Troy Willis, Maintenance

We are really proud of what they have done, not just what they did at our rodeo, but this is evidence of the professionalism they bring with them every day. Mr. Bland added his appreciation to everyone who contributed their time to make this such a great event.

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

**X. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.