



Minutes

NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 14, 2017

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) Board of Directors was held in the Music City Central (MCC) Meeting Room, 400 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee on December 14, 2017. Present were: Gail Carr Williams, Chair; Janet Miller, Vice Chair; Glenn Farnar, Member; Hannah Paramore Breen, Member; Walter Searcy, Member; Secretary Margaret Behm; and Chief Executive Officer Stephen G. Bland. A quorum was established, and Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Proper motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2017 Board of Directors meeting. There were no additions or corrections, and the vote of approval was unanimous.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Chair Williams opened the floor for public comments. The public was reminded that comments are limited to three minutes. The following members of the public addressed the Board:

Darius Knight, Madison, TN had these comments:

- Mr. Knight stated that based on a conversation he had with one of the Nashville MTA bus operators, he was concerned that the operators were not receiving enough training on the new buses before they began operating them. He cited an incident when he was on a bus and the operator did not understand how to operate that particular bus.
- Mr. Knight recommended that when the bi-annual system changes happen and operators pick up a different route with a bus that is different from what they have been driving for the last six months, that the operator be trained on that bus before they begin driving the new route.
- Mr. Knight complained that some buses continued to have problems with their destination signs not working properly.

James Thomas, a frequent rider, Nashville, TN had these comments:

- Mr. Thomas reported that on November 21 when he recently rode the Meridian bus there were 20 people waiting at that stop with grocery bags, which can be overwhelming for some operators. On the 28th, there were 30 people waiting with grocery bags and some small shopping carts. He suggested that Nashville MTA consider a shuttle bus to the transit station from the Bridge and work with that director to alleviate some of the issues with the Meridian bus to take some of the stress off of the Meridian bus driver.

- Mr. Thomas reported that the #52 (Nolensville Pike) bus continued to run late. Patrick Green, President Local #1235 Amalgamated Transit Union:
- Mr. Green thanked Chief Operating Officer India Birdsong for the candlelight vigil that was held recently for the unfortunate incident on the bus and for the driver of that bus.
- Mr. Green stated that he would like to see the Nashville MTA Board take a leadership role as it related to training. He was concerned that many dollars were being spent on equipment and not enough on training. He offered to come back in January or February or whenever would be convenient for the Board and present to them what was available out there in training and what it would cost and ask the Board if they would commit to training some of the employees.

Chair Williams asked Mr. Green to clarify for the Board to what type of training he was referring – for operators or mechanics? He answered that his concern was for the maintenance department.

On a separate note, Chair Williams noted that the driver for that incident had been deep in their prayers and their thoughts, and at the most appropriate time, the Board would want to honor her heroism at one of their meetings.

Board member Farner asked, from an information standpoint, if it would be possible at one of the upcoming committee meetings for the Board to receive more detailed information about the specific types of training that is done at Nashville MTA. CEO Steve Bland confirmed that staff would do that.

There were no other public comments at this time.

IV. OPERATIONS & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Committee Chair Searcy wished everyone a happy holiday season.

V. NEW INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT: Committee Chair Miller reported the committee received three informational presentations. Trey Walker, MTA’s new Director of Engineering and Project Management, gave a great summary of the shelter project, including how many had been installed, what some of the issues were, what was called for, and what Nashville MTA has projected.

Continuing, Chair Miller reported that the second report from Dan Freudberg, Director of Service Quality; Marilyn Yokley, AccessRide Manager; and Katie Hildreth, Scheduling and Service Planning Manager had to do with two mobility-on-demand pilot projects. One pilot offered a premium service option to Nashville MTA’s AccessRide passengers. A business model and technical platform had been established that allowed specially trained and vetted Lyft drivers to provide service to the Americans with Disabilities Act community. Features that would differentiate those service options from current AccessRide service included same-day scheduling and direct, point-to-point (non-shared) trips.

The other pilot was for demand-response service areas that would better serve Nashville MTA’s customers who might not be in immediate proximity of a transit line or stop. It would use repurposed AccessRide vans and technology platforms. These demand-response zones would incorporate dynamic routing and automated dispatching to create first-mile/last-mile connections to the Nashville MTA and the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) services, as well as neighborhood connections within each zone. Customers would be able to book their trips online, via smartphone, and through a call-in number.

Concluding, Chair Miller reported that the third report was from CEO Bland who gave an overview of Nashville Mayor Megan Barry’s *Let’s Move Nashville* transit improvement program. It was very helpful and included the key dates with the upcoming referendum on May 1. CEO Bland included key participants; he went over the program elements and the routes; and, he took a look at some of the capital costs and the implementation schedule. The comment from the Committee was that they need to know this inside and out both as Board members and also as concerned citizens.

- VI. NASHVILLE MTA COMMITTEE AND BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE 2018 (A-17-025):** Chief Administrative Officer Rita Roberts-Turner presented the proposed meeting schedule for 2018 to the Board (below). Motion was made and seconded, and the meeting schedule was adopted.

**Nashville MTA 2018
Recommended Committee & Board Meeting Dates**

| | |
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| January | 25 |
| February | 22 |
| March | 22 |
| April | 26 |
| May | 17* |
| June | 28 |
| July | 26** |
| August | 23 |
| September | 27 |
| October | 25 |
| November | 15* |
| December | 13* |

*Committee Meetings meet consecutively beginning at 1:30 p.m.
Board Meetings begin at 2:30 p.m.*

*These dates are not the fourth Thursday of the month.
**MTA Board traditionally holds an abbreviated meeting in July.

- VII. CHAIR’S REPORT:** Chair Williams reported that she had received a letter from the United States Federal Transit Administration (FTA) stating that it had completed its Triennial Review of Nashville MTA and everything went exceptionally well. The FTA reported on a couple of things that they had observed a couple of years ago which have now been corrected. She congratulated staff on their efforts and that good report.

Continuing, Chair Williams noted that Nashville MTA has a lot of great plans, but we must not lose sight of the great things that are done day-to-day. She spoke of how proud she was of India's team and how they responded to the tragedy, not only to the riders, but also to the operators in a way that was very meaningful to them.

In closing, Chair Williams stated that it was always important to remember that Nashville MTA staff was out there working and that things come to them that they don't always have control over, but that they respond well and she was grateful to be a part of Nashville MTA. She wished everyone a very happy holiday season.

VIII. CEO'S REPORT: CEO Bland had the following comments:

- November 22 Shooting on the Bus – This was a very tragic and difficult situation involving a domestic dispute. He praised the driver for how she handled the incident under such extreme pressure. Literally within a minute and a half of the incident happening, emergency responders were notified and within four minutes of the incident they were on-site. This driver always had the customers and the safety of the system in her heart. CEO Bland added that they were so proud of her actions under such unimaginable pressure.
- Fare Collection System – Nashville MTA has been working with Metro IT to finalize recommendations on the new fare collecting system. Recently, Nashville MTA's IT Manager Rob McElhaney and Mr. Freudberg along with Metro's IT member John Griffey viewed what would be the preferred vendor in Portland, Oregon. They came away very impressed with the technology of this very comprehensive system. CEO Bland anticipates that they will be recommending a contract award to the Board in January.
- Transit and Affordability Task Force – The work of this Mayor's committee will wrap up over the next month or so. He noted his appreciation to Julie Navarrete, Chief Development Officer, who had represented him on this committee as a lot of other conflicts had come up and he had only been able to attend two sessions.
- FY 2019 Budget – Nashville MTA's Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant and Controller Shelly McElhaney have been actively working with Nashville MTA staff to put together the FY2019 budget information for the Board. If not January, certainly by February, they will be talking about next year's budget. He added that similar to last year, they will probably be pursuing two parallel tracks – the track Nashville MTA will pursue and then the downside track.
- Jefferson's United Merchants Partnership (JUMP) 21st Annual Celebration – CEO Bland thanked Nashville MTA Board member Searcy and his wife Joyce for joining him and a number of Nashville MTA staff members at JUMP's celebration at Meharry Medical College recently. He reported that it was a great event, and Nashville MTA was well represented.
- EasyRide Program – CFO Oliphant, Director of Community and Legislative Relations Eric Beyer, and a number of others have worked with Nashville MTA's EasyRide customers on restructuring that program since the fare restructure in August.
- RTA Sunset Audit – RTA recently had their Sunset Audit with the State Comptroller's Office and there were a number of observations and

recommendations made with respect to the EasyRide program in an effort to try to help us make it more effective. CFO Oliphant and Mr. Beyer have been busy on that.

- Let's Move Nashville Program – One of the initiatives the Mayor put in that proposal was if it were to go through, money would be set aside to provide free fare transit for people meeting low income thresholds. In advance of that availability, Nashville MTA has already had a couple of meetings with various Metro Nashville Departments on how might the mechanics of that might work.
- Sobro Hub Concept – Nashville MTA has had some very encouraging meetings with Metro and a private developer who owns some of the land that is being considered and is very interested in developing it as a joint development project.
- RTA –
 - The Mt. Juliet Council this week passed their final actions to support RTA funding and the Music City Star. CAO Roberts-Turner has been working on the MOU between the RTA and Mt. Juliet. CDO Navarrete has been working with our engineering team on designing expansion of the Park & Ride lot at the Mt. Juliet location.
 - Staff has been working with the RTA Board on some governance issues that came out of the sunset audit.
 - The Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency, RTA, and Penrose Developers, who the RTA Board selected as development partner at Donelson Station, have been working through the State's designated Transit-Oriented Development district process. That is another piece that will be working its way through Metro Council.

CEO Bland wished the Board members, Nashville MTA staff, visitors, and customers the very best for the holiday season. He noted that the New Year's Eve service will be operating as it has in the past and encouraged everyone if they were coming downtown for the New Year's Eve festivities to come down on Nashville MTA.

CEO Bland asked if anyone had any questions and Board member Searcy asked what the governance issues with the RTA were in the Sunset Audit. CEO Bland replied that the RTA has a huge board of 39 members, and while they have never had an issue with meeting a quorum, one of the things the Comptroller's office picked up on was that there are a number of members who have not had stellar attendance records. RTA Chair and Clarksville Mayor Kim McMillan appointed Sumner County Executive Anthony Holt to chair an Ad Hoc Committee on Governance oversight. They will be making some adjustments in the bylaws and will probably adopt an Executive Committee structure.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS: There was no other business to come before the Board.

X. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m.