



Minutes

NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 28, 2018

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) Board of Directors was held at the Metro Nashville Police Department West Precinct, 5500 Charlotte Pike, Nashville, Tennessee 37209 on May 17, 2018. Present were: Janet Miller, Vice Chair; Glenn Farnar, Member; Walter Searcy, Member; Secretary Margaret Behm; and Chief Executive Officer Stephen G. Bland. A quorum was established, and Vice Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 2:41 p.m.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Proper motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2018 Board of Directors meeting. There were no additions or corrections, and the vote of approval was unanimous.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Vice Chair Miller opened the floor for public comments. The public was reminded that comments were limited to three minutes. The following members of the public addressed the Board with these comments:

John Bull, a frequent rider, Nashville, TN:

- Mr. Bull noted his appreciation for Nashville MTA's Code of Conduct that gives operators the authority to speak to issues including that of crated pets riding on the bus.
- He noted his appreciation for the way the construction process at Music City Central was being handled. In particular, he appreciated the security on the streets and the availability of personnel to give directions to the riders. He further noted his concern that there was no place provided for a baby changing station and wondered if the restrooms on the second floor of the building just outside the elevator might have those; and if so, if the public could be allowed to use them.

Glen Allen Graham

- Mr. Graham was glad to hear that Nashville MTA was going to discontinue bus wrap advertising. He didn't think that it looked good, and it made it appear that the buses belonged to the company that was advertising and not to the city.
- Mr. Graham then read the following letter, which he stated he had posted on social media and asked that it be included in these minutes:

Monday, 11 June 2018

Nashville MTA

When I moved from San Antonio to Nashville in 2008, I left behind almost seven pleasant years of using San Antonio's VIA - the best MTA in the USA in my opinion. I speedily found fault with Nashville's public transit and evaluated it as notably inferior to San Antonio's. But over the years Nashville's city bus service has improved some, for which I was very grateful. In early May of this year I spent a few days back in San Antonio enjoying the city's Tricentennial celebration, and using VIA again to get around the city. After my return and again riding Nashville MTA I actually judged that this public transit was nearing San Antonio's in quality.

This all evaporated the morning of Monday, 11 June. Nashville MTA is in the midst of major construction projects in its downtown bus depot. Yet this edifice is less than a decade old! When I rode the Route 4 bus to the depot I found out to my dismay that from that day and for two months at least, the lower level of the depot is closed for construction. There will be no usage of this level for buses or for pedestrians. Buses like the one on Route 4 that once parked in the lower level are rerouted to substitute stops scattered along neighborhood streets.

There was little if any warning that this closure of the lower level was going to occur. And several riders including myself are hopping mad about this.

Do the MTA Board and the CEO not realize that this unneeded construction obstruction puts real hardship on us bus riders? It is particularly detrimental to older riders who just don't get around by walking as well as we used to!

My response to this hardship has been to reduce my use of Nashville buses except on Saturdays when downtown traffic is considerably less. And I now plan not to buy a 31 day pass when my current pass expires in a few days. I shall find other means of getting around Nashville, and abandon the city buses until such time as the downtown depot construction projects are finished and the depot is again open for business.

Sincerely,

Glen Alan Graham

Patrick Green, President Local #1235 Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU):

- Mr. Green informed the Board of an activity in which the ATU was involved on the federal level and encouraged the Board to take a leadership role in the same. The ATU introduced in the first week of June the Bus Operator and Pedestrian Act. Mr. Green explained that the act encouraged transit systems to properly report operator assaults and safety issues that they had with the current design of the vehicles. He noted that when operators were spit on or

had things thrown at them that was an assault, and the incident was not reported. Mr. Green added that they had asked this Board previously to consider optional barriers for the operators.

Peter O'Connor, frequent rider, Nashville, TN:

- Mr. O'Connor stated that customer service hours needed to be extended from the time the first bus left MCC in the morning until the last bus completed its run at night. He stated that he would appreciate it if someone would let him know what was being done about this.
- He added that service hours needed to be extended, especially on weekends, because there were a lot of people who needed that service, especially those who work at night. He stated that he would appreciate it if someone would let him know what is being done about this.
- Mr. O'Connor stated that police presence needed to be stepped up at some of the bus stops such as the Walmart bus stop on Nolensville Pike near Harding Place. He added that at this stop there were a lot of drunks who get rowdy and were intimidating passengers who were either waiting or getting off of the bus. He added that they also trash the bus stop.
- He stated that he was still experiencing drivers who do not drive smoothly, and the stop/go motion continued to make him sick.
- Mr. O'Connor thanked Director of Operations Carolyn Riggs-Farrar for getting the bus stop moved on Harding Place

James Thomas, a frequent rider, Nashville, TN:

- Mr. Thomas cited specific bus numbers, dates, and times when he had observed buses leaving MCC late; a brake light out on one of the vans; and a driver who got off the bus at MCC and then when he came back and there were other passengers on the bus who had not been on there, the operator did not make them pay their fare.

Pauline Woods, an AccessRide rider:

- Ms. Woods reported of an incident that happened to her about six weeks ago. She called and scheduled her pick-up between 9:00 a.m. & 9:30 a.m. and was not picked up. She called at 9:35 a.m. to inquire about her ride and was told that there were no rides because a number of drivers had called out, and Allied Cab did not have any wheelchair accessible cabs that day.
- She noted that some of the drivers for Allied Cab have nasty attitudes.

Darius Knight, Madison, TN:

- Mr. Knight complained about buses being on the road that he believed are beyond their life's use.
- He suggested that the Board make sure that buses were being bought every single year to replace the aging fleet.

There were no other public comments at this time.

IV. **OPERATIONS & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Member Breen reported on the following:

- a. **Liability Insurance Renewal (A-18-012):** It was the Operations & Finance Committee's recommendation to the Board that they authorize the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a contract with RLI Insurance for our liability coverage for the period effective July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 for \$3 million in coverage with a \$100,000 deductible for a premium of approximately \$775,536. The vote of approval was unanimous.
- b. **MTA/RTA Contract Renewal for State EasyRide Services (A-18-013):** For several years, the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) along with the Nashville MTA have participated in the EasyRide program with the State of Tennessee where both agencies provide transit rides to state employees, and the State reimburses both the Nashville MTA and RTA on a cost per ride basis. The Nashville MTA has been the principle in this contract with the State, and RTA's portion of the rides provided is passed through via a separate agreement with the Nashville MTA. The State has agreed to a new contract with the Nashville MTA for the EasyRide Program for July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 at a cost per ride set at a weighted average of \$2.50 per ride and a total contract not to exceed \$1.75 million.

An analysis of state employee ridership for both the Nashville MTA and RTA services was performed, and it affirmed an effective rate of \$3.15 per ride should be passed through to RTA from the Nashville MTA since RTA's fares for regional bus service and train service are proportionately higher than the Nashville MTA's fares. This is the same rate that was used in FY2018

The Operations & Finance Committee recommended to the Board their approval for the Nashville MTA to enter into a contract with RTA that calls for the Nashville MTA to reimburse RTA for EasyRide trips provided to state employees participating in the EasyRide program at a rate of \$3.15 per ride for a period of one year, beginning July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. There was no discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- c. **FY2019 State EasyRide Contract Renewal (A-18-014):** In 2006, Nashville MTA and the State of Tennessee began a program for their employees in which the State would pay the work commute transportation cost for all their employees who utilize public transportation. While we have seen some decline in ridership over the past two years, the program continues to work well in helping the State with their employee parking issues and supplying the Nashville MTA and RTA with fairly consistent ridership. The current \$1.75 million contract managed by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) is scheduled to expire June 30, 2018.

We have successfully negotiated with the State to continue the contract for FY2019 at the same rate per ride of \$2.50 based upon all regional transportation services including both the Nashville MTA and RTA. AccessRide trips will be billed at \$3.40 per ride. The contract will be between the Nashville MTA and TDOT with the RTA receiving its proportional share for rides provided under the

program as defined in a separate sub-agreement between the Nashville MTA and RTA. The total contract amount will remain \$1.75 million. The contract term is for 12 months beginning July 1, 2018 with an expiration of June 30, 2019.

The Operations & Finance Committee recommended to the Board their approval for the Nashville MTA to enter into a contract with TDOT for the EasyRide program at \$2.50 per ride and \$3.40 for AccessRide with a contract amount of \$1.75 million and a contract term of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. There was no discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- d. **RTA/MTA Contract Renewal for Regional Transit Services (A-18-015)**: A positive working relationship has been established for many years between the RTA and the Nashville MTA on regional transit programs.

Each year, the RTA contracts with the Nashville MTA for regional transit services, Davidson/Rutherford County Relax & Ride services to Murfreesboro, Tennessee as well as connecting bus services to support the commuter train service for the Music City Star in Nashville, Tennessee.

For the past several years, the Nashville MTA has requested and received a 3% increase in the hourly rate. We are again requesting a 3% increase for the new fiscal year which would take the hourly rate from \$106.28 to \$109.47. While the RTA desires to renew these contracts for the period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, they have requested a more detailed cost analysis to better understand the basis for the cost being charged for the service. They have asked that the current rate of \$106.28 be extended through September 30, 2018 until the analysis can be completed on the new rate and be reviewed and approved. Once approved, it could be applied retroactively back to July 1, 2018. We are in the process of performing a cost analysis to re-submit to the RTA Board and will also submit an action item to the Nashville MTA Operations & Finance Committee and Nashville MTA Board once we have consensus on the hourly rates.

The Operations & Finance Committee recommended the Board approve a three-month extension of the current hourly contractual rate of \$106.28 for both contracts mentioned above through September 30, 2018. The proposed contractual increase will be readdressed once management provides an analysis to the Committee for review before bringing it back before the Board. Vice Chair Miller noted that the Committee discussed how this was a three-month extension to accommodate RTA's request for more data as a matter of course. There was no further discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- e. **Industrial Parts Washer & Waste Disposal Services (A-18-016)**: The current contract for industrial parts washer and waste disposal service with Safety-Kleen expired on March 9, 2018. The contract was enacted to supply parts cleaning equipment, cleaning chemicals, and disposal of hazardous waste, in addition to providing of emergency services in the event of a hazardous waste spill or leakage. A Request for Proposal was issued and three proposals were received as responsive. The evaluation committee recommended to award continuation of the

contract with Safety-Kleen, the current vendor serving Nashville MTA and also deemed best value.

The Operations & Finance Committee recommended to the Board that they authorize the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a five-year contract for industrial parts washer and waste disposal services with Safety-Kleen. The proposed contract is written for an amount of \$700,000, with a 15% contingency of \$105,000, for a total contract value not to exceed \$805,000. The source of funding for this contract will be Operating funds from the Maintenance department. There was no discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- f. **Heavy-Duty Bus Cleaning Product & janitorial Supplies Contracts (A-18-017):** The Nashville MTA contract for bus soap with State Product and the contract for janitorial supplies with American Paper and Twine have both expired. The contracts were enacted to supply effective cleaning products to ensure cleanliness of the Nashville MTA fleet while in service for transit operations.

In an effort to ensure a recommendation of the most suitable vendor to carry out these two essential services, the Nashville MTA issued a solicitation via request for proposals (RFP) for each contract for internal review and product testing.

The Operations & Finance Committee recommended the Board provide the Chief Executive Officer the authority to enter into a contract with American Paper and Twine to supply Heavy-Duty Bus Cleaner for three years with two one-year options for renewal. The value of the five-year contract is \$360,000, with a 10% contingency of \$36,000, for a total contract value not to exceed \$396,000. The source of funding for this contract will be Operating funds from the Maintenance department budget.

The Committee also requested approval from the Board to provide the Chief Executive Officer the authority to enter into a contract with American Paper and Twine to supply janitorial supplies for three years with two one-year options for renewal. The value of the five-year contract is \$488,000, with a 10% contingency of \$48,800, for a total contract value not to exceed \$536,800. The source of funding for this contract will be Operating funds from the Maintenance department budget.

The total combined expenditures for both proposed contracts with American Paper and Twine is for an amount not to exceed \$932,800, funded by Operating funds from the Maintenance department budget. There was no discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- V. **NEW INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:** Committee Chair Miller reported that the Committee had a good discussion around the topic of advertising on the buses and Board input on direction. The Board was united and clear about two things. The first directive was to keep the new buses as attractive and protective of the new brand as much as possible. The second directive concerned the full wraps and the King Kong ads. The Board would like to move away from those wraps as quickly possible and get back to the brand. They posed

safety concerns, and the Board really wanted to support the new brand. The third directive was that they wanted to do whatever was possible to maximize tasteful, appropriate advertising in Music City Central, on benches, anywhere that was not on a bus and even naming rights for the Music City Circuit.

Staff would now go back and look at the budget implications of that and then come back to the Board. Again, she reiterated, the Board said that before advertising gets placed on the new buses, the Board wanted to see it. They wanted to be sure they do not end up in an unsafe and distasteful place with the new product. The Board was very interested in doing that.

Continuing, Chair Miller added that they discussed life past the transit referendum and the universal opinion was that we had to operate the best transit system that we could and to make as many improvements as we could within the budget, and to spend a year being sure that the relationship with council was strong so that we could protect funding and hopefully keep moving the ball downhill.

Chair Miller presented the following two action items for the Board's consideration:

- a. **Nestor Operations and Maintenance Facility Renovation (A-18-018):** Per the approved FY2018 capital budget, Nashville MTA had developed design and construction plans for a renovation of the Nestor Operations and Maintenance Facility. This renovation package represents the first major renovation of the facility since emergency repairs were made to the building following the May 2010 flood. The Board saw a very detailed plan about the renovations plan for Nestor.

After a brief discussion, the New Initiatives & Community Engagement Committee recommended the Board provide the Chief Executive Officer the authority to enter into a construction contract with Batten and Shaw Construction for a base amount of \$2,485,186. Due to the nature of the project, specifically the unknowns associated with interior demolition in the once-flooded facility, the Committee also recommended the Board authorize a project contingency of 20%, resulting in a not-to-exceed project total of \$2,982,224. There was no discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- b. **FY2019 Operating Budget (A-18-019):** Chair Miller stated that staff had done an extraordinary job this year in a very difficult budget year. She added that discussions about this budget had been going on for several months so the Board had vetted it thoroughly. The budget that was approved for the council was a flat budget for the year. Nashville MTA had requested a \$2.6 million increase and today Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant went over the line items they had discussed before that will get them to a balanced point. The good news was there would be no cuts in service and no cuts in frequency, which was very important to this Board.

Continuing, Chair Miller reported that a new twist was presented to the Board today. About \$2.2 million dollars of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding that Nashville MTA was anticipating would come to the agency

would probably not make it to the budget this year. It was not yet formal, but it was expected. Staff was already working on a plan B for where those cuts would come from; and again, the message from the Board was not to cut service or frequency if at all possible.

The Committee's recommendation for this Board was to approve the budget as presented today understanding that within the next month or two, staff was very likely to come back with an alternate budget that they would need to discuss, to determine if the cuts were in the right places, and to also have a substitute budget a couple of months out.

Chair Miller asked if there were any additional remarks to be added to this and CEO Bland clarified that in all likelihood it would not actually be a budget cut but would be a different revenue source, a flex over of service transportation money that we could apply to preventive maintenance.

There was no further discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

VI. VICE CHAIR'S REPORT: Vice Chair Miller stated that this budget season was very difficult and she thanked staff and CEO Bland for doing a great job late into the night with Metro Council. She also noted her appreciation to staff who handled well the recent accidents that were very heartbreaking.

VII. CEO'S REPORT: CEO Bland reported the following to the Board:

- Mr. Bland thanked the Board members who individually reached out to Metro Council members on this budget as well as a lot of members of the community who made their thoughts on the budget well known. That was all very beneficial.
- As reported earlier during the budget discussions, Nashville MTA's operating budget also relied on about \$2.3 million in CMAQ funds that were originally acquired in 2012 to support new service on the 36X Madison Express and the 3/5 West End service. These funds were up for renewal this year, and to date no indication has been received from TDOT as to whether or not they would be renewed. It was looking increasingly as though they would not be renewed, and we have been working with the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to flex other surface transportation funds to Nashville MTA for the express purpose of increasing funding available for preventive maintenance. We are, however, quickly approaching the upper limits of what we would be allowed to spend in this area.
- Somewhat related to this issue, Mr. Bland reported that they met with TDOT and the Mayor's Office to discuss TDOT's planned reconstruction of I-440 in the coming year. For a number of months, TDOT has plans to close sections of the highway to expedite work, and Nashville MTA has been encouraged to apply for funds to mitigate the impacts. We are currently putting together a proposal that would primarily fund supplemental service hours to mitigate anticipated schedule delays in the corridors that were expected to be most severely impacted by these closures.

- Mr. Bland reported with *Let's Move Nashville* behind them, they were refocusing on the Comprehensive Operational Analysis. At next month's NICE Committee meeting, they will give the Board an update on this project, as well as have discussion on overall service design principles.
- Mr. Bland reported that the Murfreesboro Road Project was about one-third completed overall. They were on schedule for completion in mid-2019, and the project was tracking well for budget. Contractors were working on both pedestrian improvements and upgraded signal technology at that time.
- Staff continued to slowly advance three specific neighborhood transit center projects. Work continued with the School District on the site at Hillsboro High School in Green Hills; they have reviewed site concepts with Tennessee State University for a location on their campus and are awaiting their feedback after they review with their student government and Board of Trustees; and, they were also working to advance a site on Clarksville Pike. All three sites were identified in the nMotion Strategic service plan, and sit at the intersections of several major bus routes.
- The first class in Nashville MTA's Leadership Academy graduated this past month with 12 staff completing the intense nine-month program. Our congratulations to all of them, but they are not done as they will be undertaking ongoing projects that have cross-departmental implications. The Board was likely to see presentations from these groups in the coming months.
- Nashville MTA helped to host the annual user conference for the Trapeze Software Group here in Nashville. Trapeze supplies most of Nashville MTA's operating software, including fixed route scheduling, AccessRide scheduling, automatic vehicle location (AVL), and real-time information to name a few. Several hundred transit agency personnel from around the country attended to dig deeper into technology issues, and the conference included an autonomous shuttle.
- Speaking of industry conferences, Director of Marketing Jason Minser is leading our efforts to host the Annual Meeting and Conference of the American Public Transportation Association this September. He asked the Board to please let him know if they were interested in attending any, or all, of the conference.
- Mr. Bland and Nashville MTA Board Chair Gail Carr Williams had the opportunity to meet with Nashville Mayor David Briley in June to update him on various activities associated with Nashville MTA, including the MCC renovations, Murfreesboro Road project, new fleet delivery, transit center progress, and the branding initiative. Mayor Briley remains very supportive.
- Work on the MCC renovations continues on schedule, with major work occurring on the level 1 terminal and operations moved on street. There have been some operational hiccups, but generally employees and customers were adapting well.
- Thirty-one new buses and 19 new AccessRide vans are expected to begin hitting the streets in the next three months.
- RTA Items:
 - Progress continues on construction of the Hamilton Springs Train Station. Opening is scheduled for August.

- Mr. Bland participated in a panel discussion at the Williamson County Transportation Summit hosted by the Williamson Chamber. The session was well attended, with well over 200 people in attendance.
- Work continues on the South Corridor Study, examining transit options in the Maury/Williamson/Davidson County corridor south between downtown Nashville, Williamson, and Maury Counties.

Vice Chair Miller asked the Board if they had any questions and Member Farner asked if the renovation project was going well. Mr. Bland responded that it was and that a lot of the challenges had to do with relocating such a large operation and all the nuances of getting people moved around.

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

IX. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.