



## Minutes

### NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

July 27, 2017

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- 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 Meeting Room, 400 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee on June 22, 2017. Present were: Gail Carr Williams, Chair; Janet Miller, Member; Hannah Paramore Breen, Member; Walter Searcy, Member; Secretary Margaret Behm; and CEO Stephen G. Bland. A quorum was established, and Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 2:25 p.m.

Chair Williams asked Director of Operations Charles Mitchell to come forward where he was joined by Chair Williams and CEO Bland. Chair Williams recognized Charles for his 28 years of hard work and dedication.

Charles began as a part-time driver, became full time, and then was promoted to Operations Supervisor. He ended his career as Director of Operations. She noted that Charles is impeccable in his character, his integrity, and his clothing (humor with laughter from all). Continuing, Chair Williams stated that it has been his impeccable attention to the smallest detail that has made a difference at Nashville MTA. He cared not just about how our buses ran, but about how our operators felt and how our customers felt. Charles treated everyone with respect. In closing, Chair Williams told Charles that he will be greatly missed. She and the Nashville MTA Board celebrated all that he has done for Nashville MTA and look forward to him having a wonderful and fun retirement.

Chair Williams then presented Charles, on behalf of Nashville and Davidson County Mayor Megan Barry, a framed letter from the Mayor commemorating his years of service to Nashville MTA and the City of Nashville and Davidson County, and her congratulations on his retirement. (Applause)

CEO Bland presented Charles with a certificate of appreciation of his 28 years of service. This is a token of deep appreciation and esteem on behalf of the Nashville MTA staff, every driver, every maintenance person, and every customer for all the years of service. CEO Bland summed up by stating that class and dignity are the two words that epitomize Charles the most.

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Proper motion was made to approve the minutes of the June 22, 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 had these comments:

Derrick Walker, Dickson, TN:

*For purposes of the record, Chair Williams noted that Derrick Walker, who lives in Dickson, Tennessee and works Downtown, had been at the meeting but had to leave and could not be present to make his comment. He left a written comment, and Chair Williams read that aloud.*

- He gets off work at 4:45 p.m., and the last bus to Dickson leaves out of Downtown at 4:50 p.m.
- He asks if that last bus could leave at 4:55 or 5:00 p.m.
- Presently, he drives to Bellevue to catch the 24X Bellevue Express bus, but he would really like to be able to take the bus from Dickson instead.

James Thomas, frequent rider, Nashville, TN:

- He reported various routes having issues with on-time-performance.
- Asked that the Tampa Drive bus stop that is on the hill be moved to Harding Place at the corner where the old Route 72 bus stop used to be. The sidewalk there would make it a lot safer for all the passengers and it is right next to a crosswalk.
- Something needs to be done with the Nolensville Walmart stop. There are drunks sitting on the benches that harass the customers. It would be better to get rid of the benches.
- The bus stop is still on Paragon Mills (Route 52) and the discontinued sign keeps getting ripped off so that it looks like a regular bus stop. The bus bench and the sign need to be removed.

Sheila Hansen, MTA rider since 1984:

- She agreed with Mr. Thomas's assessment of the Walmart stop, but did not agree with moving the bench. There may be people waiting to ride the bus who need to sit down. There either needs to be a crosswalk there, or stop needs to be moved to where there is a traffic light.
- She is legally blind with only 10% sight and walks with a white cane. She has had numerous bus drivers, including two on the Music City Routes, who have told her that her cane doesn't mean anything. She thinks there needs to be some additional Americans with Disabilities (ADA) training to go along with the sensitivity training for our drivers, please.

John Bull, frequent rider, Nashville, TN:

- He is pleased to see additional funding coming through especially for pedestrian access to bus stops, sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian buttons.
- The Nolensville route, particularly at Wallace Road/Edmondson, has no marking for crosswalk at all across Nolensville Road and no pedestrian buttons. It is an issue crossing Nolensville Road safely.
- The comments he hears while riding the bus about the upcoming fare changes are extremely positive.

Kutonia Bond, Music City Riders United, Nashville, TN:

- Noted that there are no crosswalks after the Tusculum stop.
- She spoke with a rider yesterday that needs more service in the Tusculum area – more stops, extended service time, and more frequent service.
- Thanked the Nashville MTA Board for the fare changes.

Angelique Johnson, Music City Riders United, Nashville, TN:

- Ms. Johnson is legally blind.
- Thanked the Nashville MTA Board for all of the changes, especially with the Bordeaux route.
- She doesn't like the fact that the waiting rooms at Music City Central require a bus ticket to get into the room.
- One of the two entrances to the waiting room on the lower level is not working.

Darius Knight, Madison, TN:

- Complained that buses are not being cleaned that run out of the Myatt facility.
- Some drivers at times on various routes do not pay attention and run lights
- There are issues with on-time-performance on routes #56, #76, and #26.
- Buses are not being repaired.

There were no other public comments, and the time for public comments closed.

**IV. OPERATIONS & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Chair Searcy presented the following action item for the Board's consideration:

- a. Construction Services for Murfreesboro Pike Traffic Signal Priority (TSP) (A-17-022):** The Operations and Finance Committee recommended to the Board to give CEO Bland the authority to enter into a contract with Stansell Electric Company for the construction of the Murfreesboro Transit Signal Priority (TSP) project for a 22-month term at a cost not to exceed \$9.13 million which includes a 10% contingency. There was no discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

**V. NEW INITIATIVES & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE:** Chair Janet Miller presented the following action items for the Board's consideration:

- a. FY2018 Final Budget Adoption (A-17-023):** The New Initiatives & Community Engagement Committee (NICE) went through this budget in great detail and recommended to the Board the adoption of the FY2018 final budget as presented. There was no discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.
- b. Fall 2017 Major Service Changes, Fare Changes & Title VI Analysis (A-17-024):** After a full analysis, the committee found the changes to be all positive and widely embraced. The impact is greater frequency, greater hours, more service, and lower fares. A wide public outreach was conducted and the greatest majority of the feedback received was very positive. Based on the Title VI equity impact review, there are no negative impacts.

The NICE Committee recommended to the Board acceptance of this Title VI equity analysis per FTA Title VI regulations prior to adoption of proposed service and fare changes. Further, with the acceptance of the Title VI equity analysis, we recommended implementing the proposed Fare Structure Change as presented to be effective on August 1, 2017, and the Major Service Changes to be effective on October 1, 2017.

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

**VI. CHAIR'S REPORT:** Chair Williams noted her appreciation of the support we are receiving from the Mayor's office and the Nashville Metro Council. She thanked the Nashville MTA Board for their support and staff for all their hard work that they have done and will continue to do. She is excited about the partnership with Nashville Metro Public Works on the TSP Project on Murfreesboro Pike.

Continuing, Chair Williams announced that their fellow colleague Lewis Lavine has resigned from the Nashville MTA Board. She added that Mr. Lavine has served this Board since September of 2000 with grace and style. He has always kept the Board on point and kept us going. We will miss him greatly, and we plan to celebrate him at a later time.

At a recent Nashville MTA Board meeting, Mr. Lavine made the following comments and Chair Williams shared them at this time to illuminate where his commitment to Nashville MTA was and continues to be even though he cannot be with us today:

*"For more than a decade, we have talked about having dedicated funding and have known that transit is not going to progress to the level that we want it to without that. Now, the Tennessee Legislature has passed a bill that gives us the ability to do that; and, we have a Mayor and her team who are prepared to go to the public next year with a referendum.*

*"It will take a lot of work by this team here, both in terms of deciding what projects ought to be included and also determining what kind of revenue it will take to ask the voters to increase in order to make that happen. It is a once in a generation opportunity and it is a wonderful thing that we have to do. At the same time, we have to make sure that Nashville MTA operates to its highest level because that will make the difference in the referendum if people feel good about Nashville MTA and that they can implement what they promise."*

Chair Williams stated that Nashville MTA and this Board have a huge amount of gratitude and a huge amount of thanks for Mr. Lavine for his amazing service to Nashville MTA and to the city of Nashville.

Chair Williams reported that former Nashville MTA Board member Reverend Bill Barnes is presently having some challenging health issues. He served the Nashville MTA Board extremely well, and Chair Williams stated that she learned so much about compassion and caring for people from him; and making certain that things were done right. Reverend Barnes was a great mentor and a great leader in the community. She asked that as we go about our day to give a really positive thought to Reverend Barnes.

Continuing, Chair Williams noted Knoxville Area Transit (KAT) was recognized by the American Public Transportation Association and awarded the 2017 Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award for small transit systems. Dawn Distler, Director of Transit for KAT, was Nashville MTA's former General Manager of Operations and Maintenance. Chair Williams is proud of our former employee who has graduated up in the industry and has done so well. She celebrates Ms. Distler's success. Concluding, Chair Williams thanked Chief Administrative Officer Rita Roberts-Turner for managing the summer intern program. It was a great success.

**VII. CEO'S REPORT:** CEO Bland reported the following:

- Lewis Lavine – In extending the opinion of the staff, CEO Bland echoed everything Chair Williams stated about Mr. Lavine. From the time CEO Bland came to Nashville, Mr. Lavine has been a true mentor and a real professional.
- Program of Projects – A number of our staff have been working very aggressively and with our consulting team to work with Metro Offices of the Mayor, Finance, Public Works, and Planning on developing a Program of Projects moving toward the planned referendum for next year. We want to put together a program that is responsive to the needs of a really changing city and region. You can expect to see updates and reporting on that in the next few months.

We have initiated a series of regular meetings with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and Metro Public Works on how we develop those right-of-way projects that impact both state right-of-way and city right-of-way. That relationship is going to be key if we are going to move forward with key transit initiatives in the future.

- The Improve Act – We have been implementing the changes in the weapons law in our Code of Conduct that you approved last month. We are updating some signage and have done some training in both security and the operator workforce.
- RTA Activities – We kicked off work with Metro, Metro Planning, and the developer of the Donelson Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project. There is a lot of excitement around this first TOD project in Nashville.
- CEO Conversation at Center for Nonprofit Management (CNM) – At least 60 or 70 senior leadership people were there. People from large profit making private sector corporations to social service agencies and advocacy organizations all had the same recurring theme about our transit infrastructure – we need more, we need better, we need faster.
- FTA Quarterly Meeting – The meeting went well. We included Metro Public Works in that meeting and the consulting team working on the corridor because it is very important for us to preserve our ability to potentially apply for those federal funds as they become available.
- Charles Mitchell – Wishes Charles the very best.
- Carolyn Riggs-Farrar– Our new Director of Operations joins us with extensive experience in logistics, most recently with Dell Corporation, and we are happy to have her join our staff.
- Jason Minser – Our new Director of Marketing joins us coming most recently from the transit agency in Washington D.C. where he did an extensive amount of work in their market research area, and we welcome him.
- 100 Shelters Project – We have been aggressively working towards completing that, and we are up to 91 new shelters in the system.

This concluded his report.

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

**IX. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.