



## Minutes

# NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 25, 2018

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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 (MCC) Meeting Room, 400 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee on January 25, 2018. Present were: Gail Carr Williams, Chair; 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 3:10 p.m.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Proper motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the December 14, 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:

Shelia Hansen, Nashville MTA rider since 1984:

- Ms. Hansen stated her gratitude for the Nolensville crosswalk at the Walmart and McDonalds.
- Ms. Hansen asked if Nashville MTA had any control over the safety issues that sometimes arise at the bus stops. She stated that she was present at the Walmart stop recently when a fight almost broke out.
- Ms. Hansen asked if Nashville MTA would consider putting chairs beside the phone chargers in the waiting rooms at MCC. She noted that recently she had an almost 40-minute wait for a bus and was told she could not sit on the floor next to the charging station while her phone was charging.
- Ms. Hansen asked why the new bus shelters do not have benches. She stated that some passengers need to sit down while waiting for their bus.
- Ms. Hansen noted her appreciation that some of the buses ran after midnight on New Year's Eve. However, she pointed out that not all of the buses ran on schedule; and because of this, she had to wait an additional hour to get a bus home.

Darius Knight, Madison, TN had these comments:

- Mr. Knight stated that there were a number of buses with destination signs that were not working.

- Mr. Knight did not think that Nashville MTA needed to buy more Genfare fare boxes because of the issues with the current Genfare fare boxes.
- Mr. Knight stated that the bus wrap advertisements were a nuisance because they made it harder for passengers to see out of the windows. He suggested that Nashville MTA find a way to scale those wraps down so that they would not cover the entire bus.

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

- Mr. Green asked for a moment of silence to honor three operators who died within the last month. They were retiree James Escue, active driver Charles Battle, and active driver Louise Kent. A moment of silence was observed.

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

- Mr. O'Connor reported that recently there were a number of riders who were almost stranded or were stranded in downtown Nashville due to the cancellation of some routes caused by the inclement weather conditions. He stated that without mobile devices and apps, riders were not able to receive the notifications. He stated that he should be reimbursed the \$27.49 he paid for an Uber ride home.
- Mr. O'Connor reported that needed bus repairs were not getting done.
- Mr. O'Connor complained that some operators continued to drive with a creep-stop pattern that caused him to have motion sickness.
- Mr. O'Connor stated that the service hours for buses and customer service needed to be extended.
- Mr. O'Connor complained that regular riders were tired of the continued out-of-operation issues with the escalator at MCC.
- Mr. O'Connor recommended that a policy be established that all buses kneel automatically at every stop.
- Mr. O'Connor complained that some riders played loud music on the bus and the operators did not address the issue.

James Thomas, a frequent rider, Nashville, TN:

- Mr. Thomas reported two incidents this month when his bus was eight minutes late.
- Mr. Thomas reported an incident when he rode the bus, and a man on the bus played his music extremely loud. The bus operator asked him to turn the music down, but the man ignored him. Consequently, Mr. Thomas had to get off the bus and wait for another bus.
- Mr. Thomas reported an incident when he rode the bus and another passenger left her child in the stroller while the bus was in motion. He stated that this was a safety hazard for the child.
- Mr. Thomas reported another incident when loud music was played on the bus, and the operator ignored it.
- Mr. Thomas reported that he waited one morning for his bus and it was a no-show. He waited 24 minutes more for the next bus. He also reported another incident of a no-show bus in the afternoon of the following day.
- Mr. Thomas stated that operators needed to be more courteous to pedestrians at crosswalk lights. He reported standing at a crosswalk at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Charlotte Avenue with two friends. They had the crosswalk light to proceed, and the Charlotte bus turned in front of them into the crosswalk.

There were no other public comments at this time.

IV. **OPERATIONS & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Committee Member Paramore Breen reported that the Committee heard the monthly finance and operating reports and those reports stand as is. The Committee had no action items this month.

V. **NEW INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:** Board Chair Williams reported that the Committee had a robust discussion on the FY2019 baseline budget led by Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant and CEO Bland. Attention was given to both pension and healthcare and how they will budget for those. Attention was also given to taxi overflow and the challenges there. There was conversation about what Nashville MTA needs to ask of Metro in terms of budget dollars and what were the Board's thoughts on this. The Board's direction was to ask for dollars. Currently, the Nashville MTA budget projection has a \$2.9 million shortfall.

Continuing, Board Chair Williams reported that the Committee also heard from Director of Marketing Jason Minser about the Nashville MTA advertising policy. The current policy will expire in September 2018. There was discussion about the present policy that was crafted a number of years ago and what that might look like going into the future. They discussed what the contract should look like when they put out the Request for Proposal (RFP). There will be further conversations about this in light of the branding and rebranding efforts.

a. **NEXT GENERATION FARE COLLECTION SYSTEM (A-18-001):** Board Chair Williams asked the Board members present if they had any objection to deferring this action item to next month, and there was none. This item was deferred.

VI. **CHAIR'S REPORT:** Chair Williams commended the Nashville MTA staff for all of the work that they had been doing. She noted that there had been a lot of conversation going on in Nashville about transportation, and the staff had always been a part of that conversation providing expert thought and processes to those who needed it.

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

- **Let's Move Nashville plan** – A number of Nashville MTA staff have been involved in an extensive amount of outreach activity this past month.
- **Metro Council** – Metro Council moved the Transit Improvement Program through on second reading on January 23 by a 25-6 vote. Staff also supported a Committee of the Whole session where a number of staff had an opportunity to present on the plan and take questions from council members.
- **Transit Demand Management Program (TDMP)** – At the request of the Tennessee Department of Transportation Commissioner John Schroer, Mr. Bland met with the Commissioner and Nashville Mayor Megan Barry and discussed the kickoff of this program. It would be housed in Metro Planning and Nashville MTA would support. The Mayor and Commissioner will be directly reaching out to corporate CEO's focusing initially on downtown Nashville to actively engage them in the TDMP. This would include the promotion of the EasyRide program and other approaches such as flex time and work from home arrangements.

- Program of Projects Under the Let's Move Nashville Plan – There have been a number of Nashville MTA staff who worked with a number of Metro staff to plan for possible implementation of the free fare program for low-income individuals that could result if the initiative is passed.
- Community Outreach & the New Bus Seats – A community outreach was led by Community Outreach and Engagement Specialist Miriam Leibowitz with several hundred of Nashville MTA customers who participated in the selection of bus seats. The customers actually selected the next seats for Nashville MTA's order of 31 buses that are scheduled for delivery. Ms. Leibowitz did a professional job, and the customers appreciated being asked for their input.
- Rebranding Nashville MTA – Nashville MTA has been working with Bohan on a rebranding effort for the Nashville MTA and the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA). Mr. Bland thanked the Board members who spent considerable time with Bohan and provided up front impressions. Bohan is in the process of developing strategy recommendations to be provided to the Board in the upcoming months.
- Murfreesboro Road Project – This project is under construction and approaching 20% completion.
- Maintenance Training Committee – Nashville MTA formed a joint maintenance training committee with the ATU Local #1235. Chief Administrative Officer Rita Roberts-Turner will lead the management effort on this. Mr. Bland thanked Patrick Green, President Local #1235 ATU, for his participation with this. He also thanked Nashville MTA Board Members Glenn Farner and Walter Searcy who, because of their backgrounds and workforce development, have agreed to help support this program in any way they can.
- RTA –
  - Columbia, TN – Mr. Bland made a presentation on RTA services to the Columbia City Council. Columbia is moving through the process of joining the RTA as a member city. They have incorporated advancing public transportation into their city's masterplan and staff looks forward to working with them.
  - Transit-Oriented Development Zone – Nashville MTA has been partnering with the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency on their advancing the first Transit-Oriented Development Zone that was enabled in state legislation passed last year surrounding Donelson Station. RTA has finalized an exclusive negotiation period with Pennrose Development to examine joint and transit-oriented development opportunities, including a significant affordable housing development on that site.
  - City of Mt. Juliet – Chief Development Officer Julie Navarrete and her team will be working with the City of Mt. Juliet to advance improvements and expansion of the Park & Ride lot at that station.

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

**IX. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m.