



Minutes

NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

November 15, 2018

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) Board of Directors was held in the WeGo Central meeting room located at 400 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd. (formally Charlotte Avenue), Nashville, TN 37219 on Thursday, November 15, 2018. Present were Gail Carr Williams, Chair; Walter Searcy, Member; Secretary Margaret Behm; and Chief Executive Officer Stephen G. Bland. A quorum was not established, and Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes will be approved at the December Board of Directors meeting.
- III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Chair Williams 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:

James Thomas, a frequent rider, Nashville, TN:

Mr. Thomas reported the following:

- Stated that bus 853's driver said that he could not put his cart in the handicap area and was also told the same thing by a supervisor when the bus arrived back at MCC.
- Stated that bus drivers are still failing to stop properly. One bus driver picked up an elderly man in front of Whispering Oaks, and as the bus took off, the man fell forward and hit his head on the cash box area. The bus driver didn't stop until she got to Jonquil.
- Stated that on the 56 BRT, a lady asked the bus driver if he/she could lower the bus so that she could get off the bus easier; the bus driver failed to lower the bus, and as a result, she fell and hurt her knee when getting off the bus.
- Made the Board aware that he hasn't been receiving email notifications regarding the board meetings and if someone could check into it.
- Stated that he will be accepting candy cane donations for anyone who wants to donate to the homeless Christmas trees project.

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

Mr. O'Connor reported the following:

- He's still noticing that bus drivers are not wearing their seatbelts; he's trying to get photos when he can, but he does feel better after speaking with Mr. Earl Rhodes regarding the matter.
- The sideways seating seems to take up too much space on the buses and feels that we could get better seating if the seating was not sideways.
- Bus service needs extended hours as well as customer service hours need to be extended so that it is open from the first time that a bus leaves MCC to the time the last bus pulls into MCC.
- Buses are still creep stopping and this causes people to have motion sickness.
- Still noticing that the overhead signs at Music City Central don't have information on the screens.
- Passengers are still playing their music loudly, and the bus drivers are not addressing it.

Darius T. Knight, Madison, TN:

Mr. Knight reported the following:

- He's still reporting the same issues with buses not being cleaned or repaired.
- He has spoken with a couple of drivers, and they are frustrated because they keep reporting the same issues and nothing is being done about it.
- He's considering boycotting the system because it's not working. He stated that he's been in contact with the Mayor's office for the past several months about these issues, and that he has sent email after email, which is proof and evidence of complaints that have not been resolved.
- He has been coming to these meeting since 2006. He encouraged the Board to get focused and pay attention because he's speaking with counsel about having an oversight board over the Board. Having an oversight board will allow customers and drivers to be involved so that these issues can be addressed.
- He asked the Board not to waste their time repainting every bus but only paint the buses that we're going to keep over a seven-year timeframe.
- Signage as it pertains to rebranding; he asked why we moved forward with the rebranding project if we knew that we didn't have the funds to pay for it.

John Bull, a frequent rider:

Mr. Bull reported the following:

- The Next Generation Fare Collection System is a good change because the drivers can focus on driving the buses instead of negotiating nickels, pennies, and dimes.

- The transfers outside of the main bus station are going much smoother than it did two or three years ago. Route 25 and 77 seems to be pretty regular now.
- Appreciates the 350 cold passes that were given out to homeless people, which is the most that's ever been given out.
- The overflow shelter at Shelby Park will open tonight with a total of 75 beds. He stated that there had been over 100 people in Shelby Park for the past two nights, and the shelter hadn't even opened yet.
- Route 4 runs right by Shelby Park; if scheduling can be looked at, especially on cold nights. He stated that people get off this bus, and have to walk a block through a residential, then another half block. If it could run from 19th to 20th, make a left and drop people off right in front of Shelby Park, it would be better on cold nights.
- He likes the sideway features on the new buses because it allows wheelchairs and carts to get through the aisles easier. He thinks that more overhead straps to hang on to would be great as well.

There were no other public comments at this time.

IV. OPERATIONS & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Committee Chair Searcy stated that there were no action items to report from the Operations & Finance Committee.

V. NEW INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT: Board Chair Williams stated on behalf of the New Initiative and Community Engagement Committee that we had good conversations about branding, and she's glad to hear that we've been progressing with the Mobility on Demand. It has made a difference in people's lives, so if we could keep it going and keep it funded for those who fund us, it would be great opportunity for so many people in our city to have that kind of flexibility when they don't.

The paramount theme with both the New Generation Fare Collection and the Mobility on Demand is about equity for our citizens of Nashville, so as we keep talking about these different ways, we need to keep equity and people having affordable transportation and that's what is driving the decision making.

Board Chair Williams asked that we include Dan Freudberg's PowerPoint to the minutes as a part of our historical analysis.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT: Chair Williams stated that she was excited to know that the new Access van was located right outside below the window. It's all about the progress that we're making. The Access van serves populations in our city that don't always get the attention they deserve. The colors are flowing pretty nicely. Again, congratulations to all for being able to have this arrive right here at Thanksgiving.

Chair Williams stated that she's humbled and grateful as a citizen of Nashville that she gets to spend the third Thursday with the Board.

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

- Work on the Central renovations is complete save for some cleanup activities and the wayfinding project, which will take place early next year. Trey Walker was available to show the Board the improvements made after today's meeting if they were interested.
- Last week, our Operations and Maintenance Employees participated in the Tennessee Public Transit Association State Bus and Maintenance Roadeo in Knoxville. In the Maintenance Roadeo, Kyle Kruk placed second in the Cutaway Van Division and Troy Willis placed second in the Bus Division. Access Operator Shunta Johnson placed second in the Customer Service Challenge. In the Bus Roadeo, Scott Wallace placed third in the Cutaway Van Division; Mark Johnson placed first in the 35-foot bus division; Jerome Horton placed second in the 40-foot bus division; and Michael Featherstone placed first in the 40-foot bus division.
- As cold weather sets in, we are once again partnering with Metro Human Services to provide Extreme Weather Fare Cards to the homeless population in Nashville. These cards are activated when the temperature dips below 32 degrees.
- We attended our quarterly project meeting with Federal Transit Administration Region 4 staff in Atlanta this week. The majority of focus was on the Murfreesboro Pike corridor project, where construction is on target for completion in the middle of next year.
- We participated in and conducted a tour for the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) national annual meeting that was held in Nashville this past week. The focus of ACT is on travel demand management strategies, such as vanpooling, carpooling and flexible hours.
- Introduced Monica Howse as his new assistant. He asked the Board to please coordinate one-on-ones through Melissa (McIntyre) and Monica.
- RTA Items:
 - We are in design for an expansion of the parking facility at Mt. Juliet Station, including pedestrian connectivity elements to the surrounding neighborhood and to a planned multi-use development on the other side of the tracks from the station. We expect this project to be out to bid for construction next spring.
 - Yesterday, the RTA Board approved service changes for the Music City Star that will take effect on December 31. These changes include some schedule adjustments to improve the reliability of connections between the Star and the Route 93 Music City Star West End Shuttle bus; and to eliminate the Friday night round trip between Lebanon and Nashville in order to come into compliance with our limited service exception for Positive Train Control with the Federal Railroad Administration.
 - He did RTA orientation meetings with new mayors in Rutherford and Robertson Counties.

- We learned that the operating companies associated with the Music City Star will be changing ownership to RJ Corman, a short-line rail operator out of Kentucky. RTA's legal counsel is examining this transaction for any implications.
- He told everyone to have a great Thanksgiving.

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

IX. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:30p.m.