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## NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY Board of Directors Meeting

February 28, 2019

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- I. Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) Board of Directors was held at WeGo Central, located at 400 Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd., Nashville, TN 37219 on Thursday, February 28, 2019.

**Present:** Gail Carr Williams, Chair; Janet Miller, Vice Chair; Walter Searcy, Member; Glenn Farner, Member; Hannah Paramore Breen, Member; Margaret Behm, Secretary; and Stephen G. Bland, Chief Executive Officer.

A quorum was established, and Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 2:49 p.m.

- II. Approval of Minutes:** The January 24, 2019 board meeting minutes were approved.

- 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:

**Peter O'Connor**

Mr. Peter O'Connor reported the following:

- He wanted to know how are we proceeding with longer bus hours and customer service hours?
- He's noticing drivers are still not wearing seatbelts.
- He said drivers need to control the music on the bus from passengers or put in headphones.

**Tracy Bates**

Mr. Bates reported the following:

- WeGo Public Transit has rude bus drivers on bus (routes) 15 and 55.
- The Murfreesboro Pike stop near McDonald's is not duly marked, and a bus stop sign is needed.
- He spoke with a lady at the Veterans Administration who said that she fell on one of our buses. She has called customer service at least eight times, and the customer service representative keeps telling her to report it.

- MTA talks about funding, but we need to go to our legislature (Nashville Mayor David Briley) and get them to do something.

### **Judith Bassett**

Ms. Bassett reported the following:

- Bus (route) 18 (Lafayette) continues to pass people by that are waiting at the bus stop. The mentality is passengers can catch the later bus (bus route 15 or bus route 55).
- She's previously reported a bus driver falling to sleep on the bus due to having to work double shifts; but, she has seen improvements with the bus driver not falling to sleep as much.
- She almost walked into a tree branch at the Murfreesboro bus stop.
- She's excited about the scooters being in Nashville.
- She thanked We Go Public Transit for lowering the bus rates.
- She asked WeGo Public Transit to consider family passes for people that can't afford bus passes for their entire family.

### **Mr. Thomas**

Mr. Thomas reported the following:

- Drivers are still going across the white crosswalk lines.
- Bus 221: Passengers are playing loud music on the bus and bus driver is not saying anything to him/her.
- Bus at Harding and 10<sup>th</sup> – The sign has been moved.
- Bus 847: There is no signage on the bus, and the marquee is not working.

### **Darius Knight**

Mr. Knight reported the following:

- He suggested that we let the customers push our funding needs at the Mayor's office.
- He has issues with a lot of overlapping bus routes.
- He had an issue with riding on bus (route) 36, and there were only two passengers on the bus.
- He reported that the 1800 vehicle display signs are still not working.
- He reported that maintenance issues are still not being resolved.

### **Mr. Bloom**

Mr. Bloom reported the following:

- Route 4 –Shelby Park is performing very well.
- The buses are cleaner.
- He was glad to hear the Nolensville Project update presentation.
- Tier 1 and Tier 2 are a real kick; need a real dedicated revenue stream.
- If WeGo Public Transit is a family, then the issue with the union needs to be addressed.

### **Ms. Hanson**

Ms. Hanson reported the following:

- She thanked WeGo Public Transit for the Nolensville update.

- She's had issues with having to endure passengers playing loud music on the bus.
- She inquired when the Ocala bus stop was going to be made wheelchair accessible.
- She made MTA aware that she fell on the new floors at the WeGo Central bus terminals, which caused her to miss her bus.
- She stated that she has a blind cane and that bus drivers continue to pass her by.

### **Randall McCall**

Mr. McCall reported the following:

- He thanked the board members and staff for their service.
- He had an issue with drivers passing up passengers waiting at the bus stops. Passengers are having to wave down a bus to get on. He's actually seen people throwing bricks at the bus.
- He liked the WiFi and USBs on the bus.
- He stated that bus drivers need more training.
- He asked if the bus hours and customer service can have extended service hours.

There were no other public comments at this time.

#### **IV. Operations & Finance Committee Report:** Chair Searcy reported the following:

- Facility Monitoring (M-A-19-0-007):** The Committee recommended the Board give the Chief Executive Officer the authority to enter into a contract amendment to exercise the additional five-year contract option for an amount not to exceed \$419,021 through August 30, 2021.

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

#### **V. New Initiatives and Community Engagement Committee Report:** Vice Chair Miller reported the following:

There were three great discussions and presentations that were presented today:

- FY2020 Baseline Budget Discussion Update;
- Blue Ribbon Commission Suggestion; and,
- Update on Nolensville Stop Improvement Project.

Vice Chair Miller was happy to see that a lot of the public comments that come out of the board meetings were reflected in the Annual Risk Assessment report.

#### **VI. CHAIR'S REPORT:** Chair Williams stated that she loved the budget discussion. She stated that we have to be good advocates of our nMotion plan.

In closing, Chair Williams expressed her appreciation to everyone for their acts of kindness and support during the passing of her husband, Mr. David Williams.

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

- First and foremost, he wanted to publicly thank and recognize all of our staff who flawlessly executed a complete evacuation of the Nestor operating facility during the

flood events of February 16-17. Although the Cumberland River never did reach the doors of the building, it came close enough to warrant our abundance of caution in evacuating. Dozens of employees worked hundreds of hours to ensure the seamless movement of our fleet and mission critical operations out of the building to three different locations; the orderly shutdown of the facility; and then the move back. This was all done in a manner that was completely invisible to passengers with absolutely no negative impact on service.

- We met with representatives from Ryman Hospitality to discuss possible routing improvements through their property to help improve service reliability. During the meeting, they also briefed us on their long-term plan to develop a large parcel of property near the Opryland Complex, and we discussed how transit might fit into those plans.
- Several of us participated in a design charrette that the Metro Planning Commission conducted in the Dickerson Pike Corridor. We are working with the Mayor's Office, Metro Planning, and Public Works to advance a possible corridor improvement project in this corridor.
- We continue to advance the Clarksville Pike/North Nashville Transit Center project, with most of the focus now on property negotiations.
- After a bit of a post-referendum hiatus, a number of groups are beginning to re-engage on the question of long-term transit and transportation improvements. In just the past month, we attended meetings hosted by Music City Riders United, Transit Now Nashville, the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee, and the Greater Nashville Chamber of Commerce to discuss next steps.
- He continued to participate in Nashville International Airport's Long-Term Master planning process. Despite the referendum loss, the Airport's long-term plan (thankfully) is to incorporate some form of high-capacity transit into its future growth plans.
- We hosted Federal Transit Administration Region 4 staff in Nashville for our quarterly project review meeting. Most attention was focused on the Murfreesboro Road project, which is nearing completion.
- RTA Items:
  - He conducted introductory briefings for new RTA Board Members, including the new Mayors of Clarksville, Columbia, and Portland.
  - The staff has been working with the Office of State Comptroller as their auditors have initiated RTA's performance audit in advance of the expiration of its enabling legislation next year.
  - Extensive preparations have begun for service impacts during the National Football League (NFL) Draft in downtown Nashville in April. He thanked the Mayor's Office and Convention and Visitors Corporation (CVC) for their support and believes the event will have a much lesser impact on Music City Star operations than originally thought.

- RTA's Ad Hoc Marketing and Branding Committee met again this month and wrapped up review of RTA system rebranding. The Committee will recommend to the full RTA Board that the system adopt the WeGo overall branding strategy, while also retaining the Star nomenclature for the commuter train. Paint schemes and graphics will be done in a consistent manner to communicate a seamless user experience between MTA and RTA services.
- We met with the City of Mt. Juliet to finalize the conceptual designs for an expansion of the park-and-ride lot at Mt. Juliet station. The lot, now chronically over capacity, will be expanded by approximately 125 spaces.
- Finally, he would be remiss if he did not express the thoughts and feelings we all have in support and condolence to our Board Chair, Gail Carr Williams, on the loss of her husband David. Gail has been a pillar of strength, inspiration, and support to all who work at MTA for many years, and it is now our hope that we can, in some small way, start to repay her many kindnesses.

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

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