



**MINUTES**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**  
**SEPTEMBER 16, 2020**

- I. **Call to Order:** Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the declaration of a state of emergency by Governor Bill Lee, the Regional Transportation Authority held a meeting via teleconference on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 to conduct essential business to protect the health, safety and welfare of Tennesseans in light of the COVID-19 outbreak. This meeting was held in accordance with Executive Order No. 34 in order to discuss essential business. A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Mayor Randall Hutto.

**Executive Committee Members in Attendance:**

Mayor Randall Hutto, Chair – Wilson County  
Mayor Paige Brown, Vice Chair – City of Gallatin  
Governor’s Appointee Ed Cole, Secretary – Davidson County  
Mayor Anthony Holt – Sumner County  
Mayor Ken Moore – City of Franklin  
Mayor Jerry Kirkman – City of Westmoreland  
Governor’s Appointee Kelly Dannenfelser – Williamson County  
Governor’s Appointee Ken Davis – Wilson County  
Mayor Bob Rial – Dickson County

**Others in Attendance:**

Faye DiMassimo - Sr. Advisor for Transportation & Infrastructure

II. **Approval of the July 15th, 2020 Minutes**

A motion was made by Mayor Paige Brown and seconded by Mayor Ken Moore, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

III. **Public Comments:**

There were no public comments at this time.

IV. **Finance Committee Report:** Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant reported the following:

a. **Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget Report (EXC-D-20-009):** Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant reviewed the year-to-date data of the statement of operations for the month of July 2020 compared to the FY2020 budget and the balance sheet as of July 31, 2020. Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant was present to answer any questions. There were none at this time.

b. **Resolution for Annual FY2021 Annual Grant Applications (EXC-A-20-007):** The Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) has the authority to receive federal, state and local financial assistance for transportation projects.

In order for the RTA to apply and receive federal funds, RTA must comply with Federal Certifications and Assurances and annually submit compliance certifications in accordance

with these terms.

Recurring Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Highway Administration, and State of Tennessee funding sources are as follows:

#### 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funds

When the apportionment is made available, RTA is eligible to use 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funds, along with the 10% State and 10% Local match.

#### 5337 State of Good Repair Formula Funds

RTA is eligible to use State of Good Repair Funds. State of Good Repair Formula funds are for the maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement of existing fixed guideway systems to maintain a state of good repair. The FY2020 apportionment for the Nashville Urbanized Area combined with the State and Local match is \$3,398,316 (80% Federal/10% State/10% Local).

#### Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Funds

RTA is eligible to receive STBG funds in the amount of \$625,000 (80% Federal/20% State-Local) to assist with offsetting the cost of contracting for of the commuter rail services.

#### Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds

RTA relies on CMAQ funds to offset the cost of operating regional bus service for which CMAQ funding was made available, obligated or expended in FY 2012. The last award was in FY2018 in the amount of \$10,608,620 (80% Federal/10% State/10% Local) to cover three years of funding for commuter bus services.

#### State Operating Assistance

RTA is eligible for operating assistance from the Tennessee Department of Transportation. The amount for FY2020 was \$618,400 and an additional \$350,000 for commuter bus service. The FY 2021 amount has not been published.

#### IMPROVE Act Assistance

RTA can request up to \$3 million in assistance (requires a 25% match) for capital projects that support public transportation services.

The attached resolution comprises the annual submittal of Certifications and Assurances for FTA funds and authorization to submit applications for grants with the FTA, the Tennessee Department of Transportation, and other grant funding entities.

Staff requested the Committee recommend to the Executive Board:

- Adopt the attached resolution;
- Authorize the applications for 5307, 5337, CMAQ, and STP funding and State/Local match;
- Authorize the submittal of the application for State Operating Assistance funding; and,
- Authorize the submittal of applications and execution of contracts for any other federal, state, or local grant funding that may become available during the fiscal year 2021 for the benefit of RTA.

There was no further discussion. A motion was made by Mayor Jerry Kirkman and seconded by Governor's Appointee Ed Cole, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

- b. **Establishing Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program Goals (EXC-A-20-008)**: The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) of Middle Tennessee is required to

submit three-year DBE goals to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The goals are established in part by reviewing anticipated public transit projects and census data for Tennessee businesses as well as meeting with current DBE partners, prime contractors, and various community groups. Through this analysis, the 2021 through 2023 overall DBE goal was determined to be 3%.

Outreach efforts to consult with minority and woman owned firms consisted of an email marketing campaign to approximately 2,000 DBE, SBE and MWBE firms introducing them to WeGo's Procurement and Business Diversity office and inviting them to participate in the DBE Goal Setting Methodology session held on Wednesday August 12<sup>th</sup>. 28 registered with 23 participants including WeGo staff.

Per FTA regulations, the calculated goal was advertised on WeGo's website for a 30-day public comment period. We have received no comments, questions, or objections regarding the goal; however, we have received a few phone calls inquiring about upcoming opportunities and our diversity program.

Staff recommended to the Board the approval of the 3% DBE goal for 2021 through 2023.

There was no further discussion. A motion was made by Mayor Ken Moore and seconded by Mayor Paige Brown, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**V. Operations Committee Report:** Mayor Jerry Kirkman reported the following:

- a. **Monthly Operating Statistics (EXC-D-20-011):** Mayor Kirkman reviewed the RTA Monthly Dashboard Report through the month of July 31, 2020 with the Executive Committee. Director of Service Quality Dan Freudberg was present to answer any questions. There were none at this time.
- b. **Approval of Agency Safety Plan (EXC-A-20-009):** Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) granted authority to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to create and enforce a comprehensive framework that will oversee the safety of public transportation throughout the United States. This new authority gave FTA the ability to assist transit agencies in moving towards a more holistic, performance-based approach in Safety Management Systems (SMS).

On July 19, 2018, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Final Rule, which requires certain operators of public transportation systems that receive federal funds under FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Grants to develop plans that include the processes and procedures to implement Safety Management Systems. The plan must include safety performance targets that will be voluntarily shared with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the local Department of Transportation. The PTASP rule became effective on July 19, 2019. Consequently, FTA published a Dear Colleague letter, on the same day, to alert the transit industry of the July 20, 2020 safety compliance deadline. FTA published a Notice of Enforcement Discretion on April 22, 2020 effectively extending the PTASP compliance deadline to December 31, 2020 due to the global Coronavirus pandemic.

Once the plan is adopted, RTA will move towards finalizing the entire Safety Management System as a systematic and comprehensive approach to identifying and mitigating safety hazards and risks associated with transit system operations and related maintenance activities which will further help us address FTA regulations established by Section 5329(d) of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act signed into law by President Barack Obama on July 6, 2012.. The PTASP does not apply to activities associated with operation of the WeGo Star as FTA has deferred safety authority to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for mass transit rail service regulated by the FRA. The RTA received

final approval for its Rail safety and Emergency Preparedness Plan from the FRA on August 17, 2020.

Staff requested the Executive Committee give CEO Steve Bland the authority to execute the Agency Safety Plan to comply with FTA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Final Rule. The final draft of the Agency Safety Plan was made available for inspection upon request.

There was brief discussion. Proper motion was made by Governor's Appointee Ed Cole and seconded by Governor's Appointee Ken Davis, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**VI. CEO's Report:**

1. We appreciate your patience in continuing to do these meetings in a virtual environment.
2. We have received approval from the Federal Transit Administration for the CARES Act Funding available to the RTA. As discussed during the presentation on the budget in June, the majority of these funds will be utilized to offset operating losses during the pandemic, with funds also allocated to potential park and ride projects on the commuter bus side and next level engineering for under the STAR Improvement Plan.
3. With respect to the next steps for the STAR Improvement Plan, staff from Planning, Engineering, Operations and Procurement are developing a request for information to advertise to the broader consulting community. In addition to "next step" engineering on railroad improvements, we would like to take a deeper look at how the enhancements could be funded, as well as some related service issues such as connector bus service in Wilson County.
4. Last month, Faye DiMassimo of Mayor Cooper's Office discussed the Mayor's developing transportation plan. The intent of the Administration is to include next level development of the Star in the final draft plan circulated for public comment later this year.
5. Mayor Kirkman reported on RTA ridership and performance trends. Although ridership has ticked up slightly over the past few weeks, we do not expect to see a significant ridership increase until the region is well into reopening, including the return of office employees. As a result, we will maintain our current reduced service schedule which is at about 50% of normal service levels.
6. With respect to the work at Mt. Juliet Station, paving has begun on the site and we expect to shift our commuters from the pre-existing lot to the new western lot next week so we can mill and pave the old lot. Pedestrian connections are complete, and handrails and fencing along the pedestrian paths will be installed in the coming weeks. We expect the project to be complete by the end of this year, a full 6 months ahead of the original schedule. Separate from the construction project, we will be repainting the shelters and doing minor sidewalk repairs at Mt. Juliet from normal wear and tear. This work is part of our revamped station maintenance plan. Shelters at Donelson and Hermitage were painted previously, and the remaining older shelters on the line will be completed after Mt. Juliet.
7. GNRC continues to advance work on the South Corridor Study, with most effort right now focused on land use, employment and development data for the travel demand model.
8. Construction at all stations to support validators and other hardware associated with our fare collection system is largely complete. Site cleanup is occurring now, and we anticipate equipment installation by the fare system vendor over the next 3 months.
9. All of the new rehabilitated Star passenger cars are in regular service and operating well, with positive feedback from customers. Occasionally, you may see an old train set in

service as we are using all new cars in regular service, so older cars will be used if a new car is down for maintenance.

10. We have experienced minor delays in the delivery of our second rehabilitated locomotive due to COVID-related production disruptions at the rebuilder's plant in Illinois. The second unit is nearing completion, however, and we expect to have it in Nashville for pre-service testing by early October.
11. Many of you participated in a web conference with GNRC this past month during which Faye DiMassimo of Mayor Cooper's Office provided background information on the Mayor's draft Transportation Plan. If any members would like more detail, please let CEO Bland know and he will make sure that you get it.

**VII. Chair's Report:** Mayor Hutto said that and we asked all current RTA Executive Committee members to confirm whether or not they were interested in continuing to serve on the committee, and if RTA Board Members had an interest to serve on the committee for the upcoming fiscal year to let Ms. Monica Howse know. All RTA Board Members are eligible to serve on the committee as long as they are members in good standing, have attended at least fifty percent of the meetings and have expressed an interest to serve on the committee. Those that expressed an interest to serve are as follows: Mayor Randall Hutto, Mayor Paige Brown, Mayor Ken Moore, Mary Jerry Kirkman, Mayor Bob Rial, Mayor Bill Ketrion, Mayor Anthony Holt, Governor's Appointees: Ed Cole, Ken Davis and Kelly Dannenfelser. Mayor Hutto said that anyone desiring to serve on the committee, whose name was not mentioned, to let Ms. Monica Howse know as soon as possible. All RTA Board Members are welcome to attend the RTA Executive Committee as non-voting members.

Mayor Randall Hutto gave special thanks to CEO Bland and the WeGo staff for their hard work during this pandemic. He concluded his remarks by thanking everyone for being present on the teleconference call and said that he looked forward to when we're able to meet face to face.

**VIII. Adjournment:** Proper motion was made and seconded to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Ed Cole, RTA Secretary &  
Davidson County Governor Appointee