



MINUTES
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
NOVEMBER 18, 2020

- I. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) Board of Directors was held at via WebEx videoconference on Wednesday, November 18, 2020. Due to not having a quorum for the full Regional Transportation Authority Board, The RTA Board Meeting was adjourned and the RTA Executive Committiee Meeting was called to order at 9:38 a.m. by Mayor Randall Hutto, Board Chair.
- II. **Roll Call:**
- In Attendance Were:**
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| City of Gallatin | Mayor Paige Brown |
| City of Mt. Juliet | Kenny Martin (Alt.) |
| City of Portland | Mayor Mike Callis |
| City of Westmoreland | Mayor Jerry Kirkman |
| City of White House | Gerald Herman (Alt) |
| Dickson County | Mayor Bob Rial |
| Robertson County | Mayor Billy Vogle |
| Sumner County | Mayor Anthony Holt |
| Wilson County | Mayor Randall Hutto |
| | Ed Cole, Davidson County |
| | Kelly Dannenfelser, Williamson County |
| | Ken Davis, Wilson County |
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Governor Appointee Ed Cole made a motion to approve the June 17, 2020 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mayor Bob Rial and unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.
- IV. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments to come before this board at this time.
- V. **Audit Report:** Committee Chair Anthony Holt reported the following:
- a. **FY2020 Annual Audit Report (R-A-20-014):** The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020 has been completed and will be distributed along with the auditor’s required communication at the committee meeting. We are pleased to report that the RTA once again received a “clean” opinion on the report from our auditors and had no new audit findings.

The financials presented with this action item represent the audited numbers in the

regular format the committee receives on a monthly basis.

Mayor Anthony Holt made a motion to approve the FY2020 Annual Audit Report action item. The motion was seconded by Governor Appointee Ken Davis and unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

VI. Finance: Committee Chair Mayor Anthony Holt reported the following:

- a. **Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget (R-D-20-008):** Chair Holt reported and reflected on the statement of operations for the month of September 2020 compared to the budget and balance sheet as of September 30, 2020. Chief Operating Officer Ed Oliphant was present to answer any questions. There were no questions at this time.
- b. **Proposed Riverfront Rental Rates and Free Fares for Active Military (R-A-20-015):** At the June 2020 RTA board meeting, a recommendation was made by staff to propose an increase in the rental rates for use of the Riverfront Station. The current daily rate is \$1,000 per day and \$1,500 per day if alcohol is involved. The proposal was to increase the rates to \$5,000 per day in instances where the leasing of the station does not interrupt our service, such as weekend rental, and \$10,000 per day if the rental of the facility interrupts our normal service around the station. Also, as a part of the FY2021 operating budget approval, staff recommended that the current policy allowing free fares to veterans that was put in place several years ago also be extended to active duty military as well. The Board gave approval to go out for public comments to receive feedback on the proposed change of in rental rates as well as the proposed free fare policy for active duty military. Both proposals would be brought back to the Board or Executive once the public had a chance to comment.

An open public comment period occurred from July 22, 2020 thru August 20, 2020 regarding the Active Duty Military Fare Policy and Facility Rental Fees. Notification was sent to the public via the WeGo email mailing list, posted on www.rtarelaxandride.com, and posted on social media. Notably, this is the first time we have created all public comment materials in both English and Spanish.

Both items were reviewed and discussed with the Finance Committee of the RTA Board on Thursday, November 12, 2020.

Given the broad support and nominal financial impact of expanding the free fare program to include active military personnel, the Committee recommends the original proposal move forward, and that free fares be offered to active military personnel (in addition to the prior policy including Veterans) upon presentation of an applicable identification card.

With respect to the proposal to increase rental fees at Riverfront Station, discussion was more involved. Although general public comment was slightly positive on the recommendation, many commenters simply had no opinion. Among those opposed to the specific proposal were several prior renters of the station property. They generally indicated that they certainly understood the need for an increase, and appreciated the relationship with the RTA, but thought that the rate of increase was excessive. They further indicated that there would be a high likelihood that a rate hike of this magnitude would simply lead them to not use the property at all. Given that the street closures and associated neighborhood challenges that tend to be the underlying cause of service disruptions for these events would not change even if the station itself were not rented, imposing this magnitude of increase would likely only result in lost income, and RTA would still face the expense associated with disruptions in access to the Station.

A lower level rate hike would likely achieve the necessary balance of increasing revenue to offset expenses associated with event disruptions. Following discussion

among staff and committee members, the Finance Committee of the RTA recommended that a flat daily rental rate of \$1,500 per day be enacted for Riverfront Station effective January 1, 2021; and that this rate be increased to \$2,000 per day effective January 1, 2022. The rental rate for Riverfront Station should be evaluated as part of the Authority's overall annual fare structure review each year thereafter.

Governor Appointee Ed Cole made a motion to approve the Proposed Riverfront Rental Rates and Free Fares for Active Military action item. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kenny Martin and unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

VII. Operations Committee Report: Committee Chair Mayor Jerry Kirkman reported on the following items:

- a. Monthly Operating Statistics (R-D-20-009):** Mayor Kirkman reported on the monthly operating statistics report through September 30, 2020. Director of Service Quality Dan Freudberg was present to answer any questions. There were no questions at this time.

Mayor Kirkman provided an update on the rebuilt locomotives. He said the testing on the second locomotive on the Star is complete and in full operation; the third locomotive is being rebuilt in St. Louis and is expected to return to Nashville some time in the late summer or early fall of 2021.

VIII. 2021 RTA Committee & Board Meeting Schedule (R-A-20-016): Board Liaison Monica Howse reported the following:

Under Article 2, Section 3 of the by-laws of the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee ("RTA"), the RTA shall meet at least quarterly at a time and place to be established by the Chair/President of the Board. RTA and may meet more frequently as needed. Additionally, under Article 4, Section 5 of the by-laws, the Executive Committee shall meet monthly except for those months in which the Board shall meet. In order to effectively satisfy the established meeting requirements, a schedule of proposed 2021 meetings dates for both the RTA Board and Executive Committee is herein attached.

Staff recommended that the proposed meeting dates be adopted and approved by the Board.

Mayor Paige Brown made a motion to approve the 2021 RTA Committee & Board Meeting Schedule action item. The motion was seconded by Mayor Anthony Holt and unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

IX. Other Business:

X. CEO'S Report: Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant gave the following report on behalf of CEO Steve Bland:

1. CFO Oliphant stated that CEO Bland and CAO Roberts-Turner are attending a hearing of a joint committee of the House and Senate to cover questions associated with the renewal of the RTA's enabling legislation.
2. CFO Oliphant stated that the work at the Mt. Juliet Station is largely complete, with the exception of a few punchlist items. He said that we are working with the City of Mt. Juliet to develop a long-term maintenance agreement. We have also received an inquiry from the Developer of the Vintage Station North project on the other side of the tracks to examine the feasibility of them developing a platform on the opposite side for dual side boarding. We will work with the developer, the Nashville and Eastern Rail Authority and RJ Corman to advance this concept if possible, and we will keep you posted.

3. In terms of the fare collection system project, most of the equipment associated with fare collection on the Star has been installed and is in testing. Beta testing will be next week on the MTA system, with RTA bus and rail customers to join during the first quarter of next year once we are comfortable with the performance of ticket vending machines and platform validators.
4. With respect to the bus fleet, we anticipate coming to the Board in December for approval of the acquisition of 10 over the road coaches. These will largely replace buses in the Southeast corridor service that will have reached the end of their useful life, but will also allow us to replace several more Gray Line leased buses.

Mr. Kenny Martin thanked CEO Bland and staff for the great work that is being done in Mt. Juliet.

- XI. **Chair's Report:** Chair Hutto echoed Mr. Kenny Martin's comments by saying, the Mt. Juliet Train Station is a beautiful site. He said that he hopes that the offside train platform would come to fruition because it would be an added safety feature for our passengers and hopefully it would increase ridership there.

Chair Hutto said that we had 80 people signed up for the St. Jude Rock-n-Roll Marathon train ride, but it was canceled. He said that our sponsor is willing to work with us on future events and we'll be ready to go the next time.

Chair Hutto thanked everyone for being present on the call and for being patient with us in the virtual world. He then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

- XII. **Adjournment:** Mayor Bob Rial made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Ed Cole, RTA Secretary &
Davidson County Governor Appointee