



MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
MARCH 17, 2021

- 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, March 17, 2021 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. 78 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 – Wilson County
Governor’s Appointee Ed Cole, Secretary – Davidson County
Mayor Ken Moore – City of Franklin
Mayor Jerry Kirkman – City of Westmoreland
Mayor Bill Ketron – Rutherford County
Mayor Bob Rial – Dickson County
Mayor Anthony Holt – Sumner County
Mayor Billy Vogle – Robertson County
Governor’s Appointee Kelly Dannenfelser – Williamson County
Governor’s Appointee Ken Davis – Wilson County

Others Present:

Mayor Rick Bell – City of Lebanon
Mayor James Maness – City of Mt. Juliet
Mayor Mike Callis – City of Portland
Mayor Jamie Clary – City of Hendersonville
Mayor Jim Durrett – Montgomery County
Ed Elam – Rutherford County (Alt)
Tim Ellis – Goodlettsville (Alt.)
Gerald Herman- City of White House (Alt.)
Kenny Martin (Alt.) – City of Mt. Juliet

II. **Approval of the February 17, 2021 Minutes**

A motion was made by Mayor Ken Moore and seconded by Governor’s Appointee Ken Davis and the minutes were approved unanimously.

III. **Public Comments:**

Clanitra Neijdl, a resident of Franklin, Tennessee, and a Vanderbilt employee said that she originally provided public comment on the proposal for routes 91, and 95 for spring hill. The original proposal was to stop serving the Vanderbilt area with those stops, but she noticed on this document that the decision has been reversed, so she thanked RTA and Mr. Felix Castrodad for listening and responding to the public comments and for contacting Vanderbilt to find out what the concerns were of the employees. She said that she relies on that route to

have a practical and affordable route to work. She said that she was pleased to know that the vulnerable area will continue.

IV. Finance Committee Report: Sumner County Mayor Anthony Holt reported the following:

- a. **Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget Report (EXC-D-21-005):** Sumner County Mayor Anthony Holt reviewed the year-to-date data of the statement of operations for the month of January 2021 compared to the FY2020 budget and the balance sheet as of January 31, 2021. Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant was present to answer any questions and there was one question on the floor:

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

- a. **Monthly Operating Statistics (EXC-D-21-006):** Mayor Jerry Kirkman reviewed the RTA Monthly Dashboard Report through the month of January 31, 2021 with the Executive Committee. Director of Service Quality Dan Freudberg was present to answer any questions and there were none at this time.

VI. Spring 2021 Service Changes & Title VI Analysis (R-A-21-003): Mr. Felix Castrodad presented the following action item for discussion and approval:

During its January 20, 2021 meeting, the RTA Board reviewed recent ridership trends and potential service design approaches to improve regional bus service. The approaches focus on route consolidation for corridors where multiple routes operate in an effort to provide more effective service while expanding options for current and future riders.

As discussed at the meeting, staff developed a service change proposal and presented it to the public for review and comment with the following goals guiding the proposal:

- Create more trip opportunities
- Broaden the appeal to a wider variety of commuters
- Ensure that resources are deployed cost-effectively
- Simplify service
- Keep changes cost neutral for funding partners

Staff developed a service changes proposal and presented it to the public for review and comments. The formal comment period for proposed service changes was open between January 25 and February 15, 2021. Staff held a virtual public hearing on February 11th. At the meeting, staff presented the proposed service changes to the public, answered questions, and received comments for the official record.

The meeting was advertised in local newspapers, posted at WeGo Central, on the WeGo website, and on social media outlets, including Facebook events, and Nextdoor events. Copies of the presentation materials were made available on the agency's website at WeGoTransit.com, including public meeting materials and a comprehensive chart with all proposed changes by route. Additionally, the public notice and the presentation were translated into Spanish and posted on the WeGo website.

A total of 16 comments were submitted via phone, email, Twitter, Facebook, virtual public meeting, and via Customer Care's COM system. Comments ranged from general to specific. Themes include clarification on frequency and span of service; stop requests and retention; feedback on routing, layovers and stops for Routes.

SERVICE CHANGES EQUITY ANALYSIS

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires transit agencies to demonstrate consideration, awareness, and approval of Title VI equity analysis for any major service or fare changes. The Major Service Changes thresholds that required Title VI review were:

1. Any change in service of 25 percent or more of the number of a transit route's revenue service miles computed daily of the day of the week for which the change is made.
2. A new transit route is established or eliminated.
3. Emergency service changes that meet either of these definitions and have been in effect for over one year.

Based on WeGo Title VI Policy, and consistent with Federal law, adverse effects of changes are borne disproportionately by minority populations when the impacts to minority populations are more than 20% greater than impacts to non-minority populations. Similarly, adverse effects of changes are borne disproportionately by low-income populations when the impacts to low-income populations are more than 20% greater than impacts to non-low-income populations.

The analysis found that the proposed service changes would have an 18% more impact on minority persons and a 24% less impact on low-income persons than non-minority and non-low-income persons. For the reduced service levels implemented due to the pandemic, these changes have a 6% more impact on minority persons and an 8% less impact on low-income persons than non-minority and non-low-income persons.

The results of the analysis indicated that the recommended service changes would not have a significantly disparate or disproportionate impact on minority or low-income populations.

Staff requested the approval and adoption of the proposed service changes as documented on the item for implementation on April 11, 2021.

Board Secretary Cole asked for clarification regarding if these changes would be long-term for patterns of route consolidation and simplification, and if we will move ahead once we move beyond the Covid-19 period. Mr. Castrodad said, yes, that was correct. He said that we are currently operating reduce service on routes because the ridership is not there to warrant additional trips, but as soon as the ridership starts to come back, this will allow us to implement additional trips. The consolidation of the routes will go into effect in April.

Mayor Anthony Holt made a motion to approve the Spring 2021 Service Changes & Title VI Analysis action item. The motion was seconded by Governor Appointee Ken Davis and unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

VI. CEO's Report: CEO Bland provided the following report:

1. Earlier this week, the General Assembly approved the RTA's reauthorization bill, extending us for another 3 years. It's now on its way to the Governor's desk. CEO Bland thanked Mayor Hutto and Rita Roberts-Turner who represented RTA at the Senate Oversight Committee hearing last week, as he had a scheduling conflict.
2. The American Rescue Plan Act passed Congress and was signed into law. The \$1.9 trillion package contains \$30 billion overall for public transportation, and the Nashville region should see a significant apportionment to be split among the 4 regional grantees – RTA, MTA, Franklin Transit and TMA Group. In addition, Murfreesboro and Clarksville will see their own apportionments. We will be working with the grantees and GNRC to suballocate these funds in the coming month.
3. We are currently developing capital improvement plans for the next 5 years. We expect to provide an overview to the Board in either April or May and will ask for approval in June.
4. Next week, CEO Bland and CFO Ed Oliphant will attend the budget hearing with Metro. They will request that Metro reinstate RTA funding to its full level of \$1,820,200. Last year, Nashville had to reduce RTA funding by \$1 million due to its fiscal challenges. These funds were replaced in the budget with CARES Act funds. CEO Bland said that they are hopeful that the city's improving financial condition will allow them to restore their funding back to

the baseline level. He also said that it's been a number of years since there has been any increase in requested funding from our local partners.

5. CEO Bland provided the following staff updates: As previously mentioned, Bill Miller retired from the Chief Operating Officer position this month, and Andy Burke has officially accepted this position as the new Chief Operating Officer. Andy comes to us from the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority in San Jose, California where he oversaw their special service in their Operations Division. Also, Jason Minser has relocated to Jacksonville, Florida and we are in the process of interviewing potential candidates for the Director of Marketing & Communications position.
6. Following the discussion of the approval of the service changes, CEO Bland thanked the Mayors and appointees in the Sumner, Williamson and Rutherford County corridors for taking time last week to review each of the specific corridor proposals.
7. Progress continues on the QuickTicket contactless fare collection system. MTA has beta testing the system for several months, and we anticipate full rollout this year. We intentionally scheduled RTA deployment for later in the schedule to the necessity of installing ticket vending machines and platform validators at all the stations on the Star. This work is complete, and we anticipate starting RTA customer beta testing by May 1.

CEO Bland concluded his remarks and was available for any questions from the floor and there were none at this time.

- VII. Chair's Report:** Mayor Hutto wished Mr. Jason Minser well on his departure and he also acknowledged and welcomed Mr. Andy Burke, the new Chief Operating Officer.

In conclusion, Mayor Hutto expressed his appreciation to Ms. Rita Roberts-Turner for doing all the heavy lifting at the Senate Oversight Committee hearing the other day. He said that he was excited that we got the 3-year extension on RTA's reauthorization bill.

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

Respectfully submitted:

Ed Cole, RTA Secretary &
Davidson County Governor Appointee