



**MINUTES**  
**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**  
**FEBRUARY 15, 2012**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority Board of Directors was held in the meeting room at Music City Central at 400 Charlotte Avenue on February 15, 2012. A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 10:18 a.m. by RTA Board Chair, Gallatin Mayor Jo Ann Graves.

Chair Graves recognized RTA General Manager Lora Baulsir for the introduction of new RTA Board members. Ms. Baulsir announced that official notice had been received and Ed Cole was returning as the Governor's appointee for Davidson County. Additionally, she noted that James Fenton, who had previously been the alternate for Cheatham County, was now the Governor's appointee for Cheatham County. Paula Mansfield was introduced as the Governor's appointee for Rutherford County. Both James and Paula were in last year's Transit Academy class and Paula is also the secretary for the Transit Alliance Board. Kelly Dannenfesler from Franklin, also appointed by the Governor to represent Williamson County, was not able to attend today's meeting due to a conflict in schedule. Ms. Dannenfesler is very active in Franklin. She is a part time worker in the planning department, sits on the TMA Board of Directors, and works with Franklin Tomorrow.

- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chair Graves entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2012 meeting. Motion was made and seconded. The vote of approval was unanimous and the minutes were adopted as presented.

- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

- IV. **SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR REPORT:** Committee Chair Rutherford County Mayor Ernest Burgess reported that the committee met February 1<sup>st</sup>. All municipalities in the corridor were represented by either the mayor, or the manager, or both. MTSU was also present. Chair Burgess thanked the RTA staff for their good support and information provided to the committee. With CMAQ funds recently awarded, trips in the corridor can be increased from 16 to 36, more than doubling the present service. With matching state and local funds, this will be close to one million dollars.

The Committee, with the help of staff, has looked carefully at the options and the projections of dollars that will be required in a small increase from the local jurisdictions. MTSU has not officially committed to date, and we do not know

about the State's commitment; however, everyone else has expressed commitment to the increase. At this point, Chair Burgess stated that he can report that they have a plan, and that they are in agreement on the plan, and that they are ready to move forward.

V. **NORTHEAST CORRIDOR REPORT:** Committee Chair Sumner County Executive Anthony Holt reported that the committee met and continued discussions about the possibility of increased bus service to Sumner County. He also reported that in the following week he, Chair Graves, Jim McAteer and Lee Zoller met to discuss a possible transit stop in the Vol State area on Green Lea Blvd and that went well. Everything is moving forward and he feels good about it.

VI. **MARKETING REPORT:** Committee Chair Governor Appointee Ed Cole reported that the committee met and Patricia Harris-Morehead reviewed the marketing activities that have taken place over the past calendar year for the RTA. The list was extensive and on behalf of the committee, Chair Cole said that in terms of marketing, the work that Patricia and her staff does is outstanding.

Concerning new business, Chair Cole mentioned three new projects: the new RTA map of regional services which will be made available late this spring; the latest edition of the RTA newsletter is in process; and, the TPTA Day on the Hill will be February 29<sup>th</sup> and they will be working to represent the RTA as a part of that.

In conclusion, he noted two interesting things that came up in committee discussion. One was the possibility of working with the RTA on banners to identify stops for express services and Springfield would be a possible start for that. Secondly, Mayor Carter brought up the possible exploration of Game Day Express that would be operated by private sector but would fit into the marketing and operational mode of the Game Day Express for the Music City Star. It was agreed that they would follow up and do some exploration with private providers to see if that would be something that could be developed. Paul Ballard very clearly outlined that the RTA could not do that as a public provider, but under the umbrella of the RTA perhaps a private partnership could be developed.

VII. **OPERATIONS REPORT:** Chair Robertson County Mayor Howard Bradley reported that December was an excellent month with ridership on most routes holding steady or improving while retail gasoline prices dropped slightly. He then noted the following:

- *The Music City Star* ridership increased almost 22% when comparing December 2010 to December 2011. It was reported that the Hermitage and Lebanon ticket machines were broken into and both have been sent out for repair. Staff is working with security for additional preventative measures.
- The #93 - *Music City Star West End Shuttle* showed an increase of almost 35% when comparing ridership between December 2010 and December 2011.
- The #89X - *Springfield/Joelton Express* on time performance was improved by a route change to remain on route 24E rather than using Ellington Parkway. This was suggested by passengers riding this route.
- The # 96X - *Nashville/LaVergne/Smyrna/Murfreesboro Relax and Ride* and the #92X *Gallatin/Hendersonville Express* services continue to have crowding issues.

The combined public transportation report, which shows month-to-month and fiscal year comparisons for all Nashville MTA and RTA public transportation services, showed double digit increases for the fiscal year comparisons with a 16% increase for all services combined. These services broke the five million ridership mark for the first half of the 2012 fiscal year. This is a new record for these services and places us on track to reach 10 million riders for this fiscal year.

A discussion ensued about the possibility of increased capacity issues as fuel prices rise over the next several months. With ridership dipping only slightly as the gas prices dipped it seems inevitable that as gas prices increase that ridership is also going to increase significantly.

Currently, there are proposals to beef up RTA services in three corridors over the next several months; however, we can see the potential down the road of having capacity issues as we go forward. Ed Cole noted that these issues could be valuable as we begin our public discussions on a dedicated funding source and Chair Bradley concurred. He noted his gratefulness to Mayor Graves and Mayor Dean who brought them all together in January for the Mayors Caucus and this is the first of many, many discussions on that topic.

**VIII. FINANCE AND AUDIT REPORT:** Committee Chair Brentwood Mayor Paul Webb reported that the finance report is through December 31<sup>st</sup> and the budget is still favorable. He reminded everyone that this is not a one twelfth budget, but an actual to actual budget and it is positive. Accounts payable are current and everything is within 60 days and the credit line has not been used. The budget for 2013 will begin next month and if anyone needs anything, they need to see CFO Ed Oliphant right away.

**IX. REQUEST FOR NAMING OF TRAIN STATION (A-12-002):** Chair Graves recognized Mt. Juliet City Manager Kenny Martin. Mr. Martin presented the request that the City of Mt. Juliet be allowed to name the Mt. Juliet train station after their first mayor with all costs to be paid by Mt. Juliet. Proper motion was made and seconded and the vote of approval was unanimous.

**X. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:** General Manager Lora Baulsir reported on her trip to Jacksonville, Florida where she participated on a regional study panel. They are considering regional transit services for a seven county region and are making a decision whether it should be just transit related or whether it should also encompass the port authority and roads. They were interested in board structure, funding, governance, and management. She noted that Jacksonville Transit Authority paid all of her expenses.

Continuing, she reported that she believed that Montgomery County had their final vote to join the RTA this week and that Clarksville is planning on putting it on their agenda in March.

In closing, Ms. Baulsir noted that she has asked Todd Presnell to report to the Board next month on some legislative updates. He will also report on some amendments to the by-laws on which he has been working. These amendments reflect some changes that were made with the reconstitution.

- XI. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT:** CEO Paul Ballard reserved his comments for next month.
- XII. CHAIR’S REPORT:** Chair Graves reported that the Mayors’ Caucus retreat last month was very well attended. There was a lot of healthy discussion about finding a dedicated revenue source to be able to move mass transit forward. It was exciting, people were open to suggestions and listened to each other’s ideas, and evaluating what is best for the region. They were able to come together and form a consensus. Michael Skipper is running an analysis on some of the suggestions. She hopes to have that back in another month.
- XIII. OTHER BUSINESS:** There was no other business.
- XIV. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

Respectfully,

*Ed Cole*

Governor Appointee  
RTA Secretary