



MINUTES
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
JUNE 15, 2016

- 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, 400 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, TN on Wednesday, June 15, 2016. A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Chair Kim McMillan, Clarksville Mayor.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chair McMillan entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2016 meeting. Proper motion was made and seconded, and the minutes were adopted unanimously.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Chair McMillan opened the floor for public comments and recognized the following members of the public:

Steve Reiter of Nashville had these comments:

- Mr. Reiter feels there is a lack of public input at these meetings concerning what is discussed. He suggests that on occasion the RTA hold a meeting in the evening to allow the general public to understand what is happening.
- Mr. Reiter states that he hears a lot about the strategic plan and is concerned because he hears the business leaders and community leaders are the ones really setting the agenda.
- Mr. Reiter believes that is why we do not get public buy-in on a lot of initiatives we are trying to do and the only way to do that is to reach out to the public. Therefore, he strongly encourages the RTA to have a meeting in the evening so the general public can attend and give feedback.

RTA Chair McMillan stated that she appreciated his comments and further stated that we do have many, many public meetings. She just attended a public meeting this week in the evening in Clarksville. This was the third or fourth in a series of public meetings regarding work that is being proposed in the Northwest Corridor as part of what the RTA is moving forward with in transportation initiatives. There are many more public meetings that are scheduled in Nashville and other areas in the corridor and those meetings are scheduled in the evening when the public can attend.

Margo Chambers of Nashville had these comments:

- Ms. Chambers is aware of meetings that are advertised by the Chamber of Commerce for business people to come and that are called Stakeholders

meetings. She is more interested in looking for meetings where riders of the current system can attend.

- Ms. Chambers would like for there to be an RTA CEO who is not the same person as the MTA CEO because of the conflicts of interest with what is going on with the MPO and the by-laws and the fiscal agent of the MPO, which happens to be eleven unelected city officials from one city and one elected official from that same city.
- It is her opinion, these officials are not qualified to understand regional needs yet they are funding the decisions of what the regional mayors want. She adds that until they can figure that out, she recommends that the RTA Board definitely have a non-conflicted CEO of the RTA. She adds that Mr. Bland is doing an excellent job; it is just that if we are going to create the structure correctly at the MPO level, we need to have the other components work correctly, too. We just have outdated rules.
- Ms. Chambers also asks that this Board ask that the fiscal agent of the MPO update their major and collector street plan. That is the future growth land use and road network that is out of date by four years. Until that happens, their fiscal agent is really not qualified to give them accurate information about funding.

Jo Ann Graves, Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee (TAMT), reported that tonight they are graduating their eighth Transit Citizenship Leadership Academy and with this class TAMT will have graduated 200. Another class will start this fall. Their alumni are spokespeople that go out on a regional basis and are from all over Middle Tennessee. TAMT has developed a PowerPoint presentation that they are putting on flash drives to get to each one of the alumni. This will enable them to make presentations in the region so people do know what is going on and what is being talked about.

Continuing, Ms. Graves reported that TAMT had their inaugural Transit Government Leadership Conference on May 19. It was held in Sumner County and was targeted toward elected and appointed officials. There were 40 in attendance for this inaugural class and included mayors, members of city councils, county commissioners, and planning commissioners. Rutherford County and Williamson County will be the next areas targeted for these conferences in 2016. Conferences will be held in the rest of the counties in 2017.

Ms. Graves reported that last week in Montgomery County they held another public information meeting on the Northwest Corridor study. TAMT and Cumberland Region Tomorrow were involved in advertising for that meeting. They worked through the Chamber of Commerce, the Leaf Chronicle, 5 Star Radio, which is an extensive radio system in the area; and several websites to make sure the public was adequately informed. The meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. out of consideration for those who worked in Nashville and needed time to get home. They are trying to do an extensive outreach to those who are interested.

Ms. Graves continues to ask for the member's support stating that they are seeing a lot of momentum picking up concerning transit issues. She is happy to report that

TAMT has several new partners in the private sector including the Tennessee Titans, Nissan, Belmont University, and Corrections Corporation of America. She is also pleased to announce that in the public sector Thompson Station has become their newest partner with Mayor Napier saying this is too important not to support. Great things are happening with transit and with the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee.

There were no other public comments at this time.

IV. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE (I-06-007): Chair McMillan called upon Marketing and Communications Director Patricia Harris-Morehead who reported the following:

- July 4 Train – The team has been promoting this highly popular service and expects another complete sell-out.
- CMA Music Festival – This year an agreement was reached with CMA to pay a fee of \$4,500 for use of the station and additionally, they will promote both the RTA and MTA services on-site during the festival, on their website, and on their CMA Music Festival app.
- St. Jude’s Marathon Train – Mayor Hutto secured a sponsor for the event this year and there were 217 who rode the train.
- Game Day Express – Initially, MillerCoors stated they would sponsor this again, but have notified us that they are now reconsidering. We are working with them, and it is still possible; but, we will need to reach out to others as well. As is our agreement, this special service will not run without a sponsor.
- Community Meetings – There are two more community meetings scheduled for the Northwest Corridor study tomorrow. One will be at Tennessee State University at the Avon Campus and the other will be in Bordeaux at the Cathedral of Praise Church on Clarksville Highway.
- Marketing Plan – We recently completed our marketing plan for the upcoming year. This plan includes comprehensive and targeted marketing plans for both our express bus service and the Music City Star. We are working on a measures matrix to examine our return on investment for our initiatives.

V. MONTHLY OPERATING STATISTICS (I-16-008): Chair McMillan called upon Chief Operating Officer India Birdsong who reported the following:

- Operation Statistics – Comparing month to month, it is important to note that April 2016 had two less weekdays of service than April 2015. This is important to note because the loss of two weekdays negatively affects ridership numbers, especially with the train. The average loss per weekday on the train is 1,200 riders.
- Clarksville Service – We have met with Clarksville, and we are preparing for the additional service at Interstate Exit 11. Construction is on time, and we expect completion by September 25. Gray Line is prepared to run the additional trip which should begin October 3, 2016. Extensive marketing efforts are being done to make sure people are aware of this new trip.

- Maintenance Audits – We have completed all of our audits including the Gray Line maintenance audit for the Federal Transit Authority (FTA), and we have also completed our railroad audit for 2015.
- Maintenance Plan (Train) – We are in the process of going through all our action items to make a better rail system as well as bus. We had our consultant on-site yesterday inspecting our trains and preparing us for a maintenance plan to repair those cars. We have also completed our phase 1 seating internal lighting with LED lights that are mandated by the Federal Railroad Authority. We are going through a whole process to update the cars on the Music City Star.

VI. FINANCE & AUDIT REPORT: Member Franklin Mayor Ken Moore reported that the Finance and Audit Committee met earlier in the week and considered five different proposals that they would like to present to the Board today for consideration. He then presented the following items:

- a. RTA-MTA Contract for State EasyRide Services(A-16-008):** Based upon the evaluation by the Finance and Audit Committee of this contract proposal, the Finance and Audit Committee recommends that the full Board approve this contract with Nashville MTA (MTA) that calls for MTA to reimburse the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) for EasyRide trips provided to State employees participating in the EasyRide program at a rate of \$3.15 per ride for a period of one year, beginning July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

Proper motion was made and seconded. There were no questions or discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- b. RTA-MTA Contract Renewal for Regional Transit Services (A-16-009):** In this particular proposal, there are two different contracts. In the first contract, which is for the regional bus service between Davidson and Rutherford Counties, the RTA will pay MTA up to 58.2 hours of daily service at a rate of \$103.18 per hour, or an amount not to exceed \$1,525,290, covering 254 days of weekday transit service contained in the contract. This represents a 3% increase in the contract price compared to the prior year as a result of Nashville MTA’s proposed increase in the hourly rate from \$100.17 to \$103.18 per hour.

In the second contract, which is for connecting bus services for the Davidson County service, the RTA will pay the MTA for 6.67 hours of daily service at a rate of \$103.18 per hour, or \$174,800, covering the 254 days of weekday transit service contained in the contract. This represents a 3% increase in the contract price compared to the prior year as a result of Nashville MTA’s proposed increase in the hourly rate from \$100.17 to \$103.18 per hour.

The Finance and Audit Committee recommends approval of these contracts to the full executive committee.

Proper motion was made and seconded. There were no questions or discussion, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- c. **RTA-MTA Management Contract Renewal (A-16-010):** The Finance and Audit Committee met and recommends to the Board they enter into a new five-year contract for MTA to manage and oversee all operations of the RTA at an annual cost of \$803,400. The contract shall become effective July 1, 2016 and terminate June 30, 2021. The compensation under the contract may be adjusted beginning July 1, 2017 and each year thereafter for the life of the contract by mutual agreement of both parties. There is also a termination clause in the contract that allows either party to terminate the contract for any reason at any time with a 30-day written notice to the other party.

Proper motion was made and seconded. There was no discussion, and the vote to adopt this item was unanimous.

- d. **Music City Star Liability Insurance Renewal (A-16-011):** The Aspen/Liberty bid has been confirmed at a price of \$467,219 which is a 3.1% decrease over prior year. Aspen will be covering the primary layer of \$18 million/\$36 million aggregate and Liberty as the second layer of \$11 million/\$22 million aggregate.

The Finance and Audit Committee recommends to the Board the approval of the insurance policy for \$29 million of liability insurance coverage (with a \$58 million aggregate) for the policy year from July 1, 2016 through July 1, 2017 to be awarded to Aspen Specialty Insurance and Liberty International for a total annual premium not to exceed \$467,219. RTA will continue to provide the supplemental insurance reserve of \$1 million, making our total liability insurance coverage \$30 million.

Proper motion was made and seconded. There was no discussion and the vote to adopt this item was unanimous.

- e. **FY 2017 RTA Proposed Budget (A-16-012):** The RTA budget has two components, the rideshare operations for regional bus services and the commuter rail operations. This proposed FY 2017 budget for RTA is being presented now so that the Finance and Audit Committee can give input and direction to RTA staff as to how to ensure that next year's annual budget is in balance.

The proposed rideshare budget is increasing to approximately \$5.1 million, or 2.4%, compared to the prior year. The reason for the increase is primarily 2-3% contractual increase in the hourly rate by Gray Line and a 3% increase by Nashville MTA to operate the regional bus services.

The proposed commuter rail budget is forecast to decrease to approximately \$4.6 million from \$5 million in the prior year as a result of lower fuel prices and paying off of the deferred track usage fee long-term note payable in the prior year. The train budget is based upon:

- a 3.1% decrease in liability insurance premiums;

- a 49.1% decrease in fuel costs (due to fuel hedging contracts and overall lower fuel prices);
- a 3% increase in the train shuttle contract hourly rate;
- a 5.4% increase in the commuter rail operating expenses;
- removal of the note payment for deferred track usage fees which was fully paid in FY 2016

The Finance and Audit Committee recommends approval of the budget moving forward.

Proper motion was made and seconded. Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson asked what was the total management percentage contract the RTA is paying MTA. Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant answered \$800,000 on \$9 million, so a little less than 10% (actual was stated at 8.9%). Mayor Anderson asked CEO Steve Bland where that falls with norms of other organizations. Mr. Bland said he could answer that it is really good and would get Mayor Anderson some benchmark data.

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

- VII. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION AMENDING BY-LAWS (A-16-013):** Chair McMillan called upon Chief Administrative Officer Rita Roberts-Turner to present this item. Ms. Roberts-Turner noted that at the last meeting, RTA Counsel Todd Presnell and his associate Junaid Odubeko reviewed the RTA By-Laws and Code of Ethics for the members. At the end of the meeting, Chair McMillan noted that Montgomery County had been inadvertently omitted from the list of participating counties.

In the course of making that change, Ms. Roberts-Turner worked with Todd Presnell's office to conduct one final review again of the by-laws to clean up some things that were mostly stylistic. A redlined copy of these edits was included in this month's board book. The most critical, of course, is to add Montgomery County.

Staff asks that the Board approve the Resolution Amending the By-Laws. Proper motion was made and seconded. There was no discussion and the resolution was adopted unanimously.

- VIII. CEO'S REPORT:** CEO Steve Bland reported the following:

- Hamilton Springs Station
 - We have received final approval from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on our accessibility plans for the station. That was the last regulatory hurdle.
 - Next week, we will be meeting with the City of Lebanon and the developer and the designer to put forward a construction schedule. Right now, it looks as if we will put this out to bid in the next month or so, and we should award construction probably at the October Board meeting. We are looking at a one-year construction period.
- Positive Train Control (PTC)

- I have been reporting month after month on our PTC project for the Music City Star which is required under the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations. We had been waiting for type approval of the nature of the system we are trying to install and just this week we did get that approval from the FRA. We will be meeting with the railroad and our consulting partners in the next couple of weeks to put together that project budget and that project schedule to move it forward.
- Legislative Action
 - Thank you to Mayor Moore who participated with a number of us in the bill signing ceremonies out of this past legislative session on Public Private Partnerships for Mass Transit and Bus on Shoulder.
- Northwest Corridor Study
 - The study continues to advance with additional rounds of public meetings. We expect to make final recommendations this summer concurrent with the conclusion of the nMotion process. We expect to wrap the two together and use the Northwest Corridor study as an illustration how other corridor projects might advance or might be sequenced.
 - Some of the key issues coming out of that are assuring project right-of-way, preservation, and the acquisition of additional right-of-way that we need to complete that line. The other challenge we are working on is how do you connect that corridor to the broader regional system as opposed to just a back and forth line.
- Rail Operator Contract
 - This fall, our existing contract with the rail operator is expiring, so we are in the process of solicitation for that to continue operations. That is moving forward smoothly and on schedule, and we do not anticipate any issues there.
- RTA Triennial Review
 - Next week, the FTA will be conducting their Triennial Review of the RTA to assure compliance with Federal Rules and Regulations. We don't anticipate any problems.
- nMotion Process
 - There are efforts going on in most every county in the RTA service area around transportation and mobility and nMotion is one of those. We anticipate doing a presentation on plan recommendations to the RTA Board in August. We would expect in August the authorization we will be asking for is to take it out for one last round of comment and then looking for final adoption in September.
- Public Engagement
 - To date through the entire coordinated process, we have had 17,000 unique engagements. That could be somebody who attended a public meeting, somebody who interacted in an online chat, submitted comments, participated in a survey. More than 8,000 comments have been received in addition to these 17,000 unique engagements.
 - Our public engagements have taken place in a variety of formats. The business community, not just the Nashville Chamber but Sumner

Forward and the Williamson County Chamber, have played an active role in this. There are also a lot of other groups who have participated with us.

- We have been in the churches, in the neighborhood associations and we've been to civic groups and rotary clubs. Most of these more than 100 meetings have happened at night.
- We thank Jo Ann Graves and the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee and Cumberland Region Tomorrow particularly for coordinating our regional efforts in the ring counties.
- It has been an extensive amount of public engagement and very active media coverage. We have had online chats that the Tennessean conducted; we have had a lot of radio and television coverage.
- When you see the final plan recommendations, I would expect there will be a lot of criticism over the recommendations that people don't agree with, or how this isn't ready, or we are too slow, or what have you ... and those would all be legitimate criticisms because these are not simple issues to resolve. But, if people did not participate in the process to date, it is their own fault. There has been every opportunity given with different hours of meetings. We have had people down here at the terminal talking to riders catching buses. We have had people at Riverfront and onboard vehicles. Frankly, if you haven't participated, shame on you.

IX. CHAIR'S REPORT: Chair McMillan reiterated Mr. Bland's comments and Ms. Grave's comments. Chair McMillan reported that there have been a number of public hearings in Montgomery County related to the Northwest Corridor. Most have been held at night. Some were open sessions where people could go and come within a period of time, and some have offered formal presentations. Hundreds of members of the public have attended with very few elected officials and some business leaders. The public comments have been very helpful as they move forward with the final recommendation that will be presented to this body.

Chair McMillan encouraged anyone who has not seen the information to contact the RTA or MTA. She added that there are Facebook pages, websites, and Twitter accounts that relate to all of this. The information is out there about all of the public meetings and the public's attendance is welcomed. As the chair of this body, she would urge and ask all of the individual mayors to continue to work with the RTA and the MTA to make sure that we are doing everything we can in our individual counties to make sure the word is out there about the various meetings. We all want the public to get involved. She knows that everyone is doing that, and she urges them to continue to do so.

X. OTHER BUSINESS: Out of interest in the public comments that were presented earlier, it was stated that as a body there has been nothing done that has been more informative to the public than what has been done in the last 12 months to educate and communicate the desires and the needs for this.

It was suggested that one of the things that might address the issue would be to video these meetings and put that online so that those interested parties could get that and be more educated and more informed. Additionally, if their schedule permitted, they could attend these meetings as regularly scheduled.

The request was made that the RTA, as well as the MPO, look at the possibility of videotaping these meetings as a means of education. Chair McMillan thought this a wonderful idea and stated that we will look into that and see if we can make that possible.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: Motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Respectfully,

Paula Mansfield

Governor's Appointee
RTA Secretary