



MINUTES
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
AUGUST 15, 2018

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) Board of Directors was held in the Bradley L. Barrett Training Center at the TN Banking Association Office, 211 Athens Way Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee on Wednesday, August 15, 2018. A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Kim McMillan, City of Clarksville Mayor.

IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

BRENTWOOD	MAYOR JILL BURGIN
CHEATHAM COUNTY	MAYOR KERRY MCCARVER
CLARKSVILLE	MAYOR KIM MCMILLAN (CHAIR)
DICKSON COUNTY	MAYOR BOB RIAL
FRANKLIN	MAYOR KEN MOORE
GALLATIN	MAYOR PAIGE BROWN
HENDERSONVILLE	MAYOR JAMIE CLARY
LEBANON	MAYOR BERNIE ASH
PORTLAND	MAYOR KENNETH WILBER
SUMNER COUNTY	COUNTY EXECUTIVE ANTHONY HOLT
WESTMORELAND	MAYOR JERRY KIRKMAN
WHITE HOUSE	ALTERNATE GERALD HERMAN, CITY ADMINISTRATOR
WILLIAMSON COUNTY	MAYOR ROGERS ANDERSON
WILSON COUNTY	MAYOR RANDALL HUTTO (VICE CHAIR)
GOVERNOR APPOINTEES	JEROME TERRELL, CHEATHAM COUNTY ED COLE, DAVIDSON COUNTY LEE ZOLLER, SUMNER COUNTY MARGOT FOSNES, ROBERTSON COUNTY KELLY DANNENFELSER, WILLIAMSON COUNTY KEN DAVIS, WILSON COUNTY

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chair McMillan entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2018 meeting. Proper motion was made and seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.
- III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Chair McMillan opened the floor for public comments, and there were none at this time.

IV. FINANCE & AUDIT REPORT: Committee Chair and Sumner County Executive Anthony Holt reported on the following items:

- a. Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget (D-18-007):** Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant reported and reflected on the statement of operations for the month of June 2018 compared to the budget and balance sheet as of June 30, 2018. This was reviewed and discussed by the Committee, and everything was how it should be.
- b. RTA Capital Plan (A-18-018):** Chief Development Officer Julie Timm reported that the RTA needs to develop a FY2019 Capital budget and a multi-year capital Plan in light of the Middle Tennessee Connected 2014-2040 Regional Transportation Plan and the nMotion Transit Plan. RTA also recognized that the agency had significant capital needs to ensure that safety and compliance requirements are met, assets are managed in a State of Good Repair, and that meaningful customer service and amenity enhancements occur as possible.

Ms. Timm presented a summary of projected capital funding sources and program needs for an in-depth discussion during the RTA board meeting.

The recommended FY2019 RTA Capital Budget is attached and categorizes projects into seven key areas:

1. Safety/Regulatory Projects
2. Projects committed from prior years
3. Transfers to Operations Budget for Preventive Maintenance
4. State of Good Repair
5. Business Improvements
6. Service Improvements consistent with nMotion Strategy
7. System Expansion consistent with nMotion Strategy

If approved, projects identified for FY2019 would move to implementation; and projects identified for FY2020 would advance to MPO consideration and identification of specific grant sources.

The Finance Committee recommended that the Board approve and adopt the policy level FY2019 Capital Plan as attached.

Proper motion was made and seconded, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

Mayor Ken Moore questioned where we were in relation to the South Corridor Study. He stated this study has been delayed for some time now and he didn't understand what the delay is on moving forward with the study. Ms. Timm responded by saying that we are still in the early stages of coordination with this study. Chief Executive Officer Steve Bland added that we were partnering with the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with their lead agency. We would be relying on their work activity, would be putting together funding, and would provide information and address this question at the next MPO meeting.

Mayor Moore also questioned where we were on the Park & Ride Study. Ms. Timm stated that we are in the process of putting together the scope of work for his project. CEO Bland added that we've talked for several months regarding the Park & Ride Study. We've seen successes in places like Clarksville and challenges with ridership in places like Franklin and Murfreesboro where we don't have those facilities. It's a methodical effort on how we acquire those sites, how we fund, how we construct, and what the service commitments are. It's a project that will lead to specific park and ride projects.

Davidson County Governor's Appointee Ed Cole mentioned that half of the voters in Davidson County voted yes on the referendum, which included improvements as it relates to the Music City Star and RTA-type activity. He stated that those same voters would have shown up at next year's component of that. Mr. Cole stated that this was an important step that this motion represented.

Proper motion was made and seconded.

- c. **Grant Contribution to south Corridor Transit Study (A-18-019):** CDO Timm reported that the MPO commissioned the South Corridor Transit Study to provide transit agencies, community leadership, and stakeholders a series of short-, mid-, and long-term recommendations to implement the vision for rapid transit between Nashville and communities along the south corridor into Maury County as defined by the MPO's 2040 Regional Transportation Plan and the nMotion Strategic Plan developed by the RTA and the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA)

In order to accomplish the full purpose of the study and undertake a comprehensive scope of work that can provide thorough recommendations, the RTA will contribute up to \$400,000 in Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula funds and \$50,000 in FTA, Section 5303 Metropolitan and Statewide Planning grant funds and \$50,000 in state matching funds to cover the MPO's cost of the study. Before RTA can make its share of the funds available for the study, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the RTA and Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) will need to be approved by the RTA Board.

The Finance Committee recommended that the Board approve the attached MOU between RTA and the GNRC to allow the RTA to contribute up to \$300,000 in FTA, Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funds and \$50,000 in state matching funds to assist with the total cost of the South Corridor Transit Study.

Proper motion was made and seconded.

- V. **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:** Committee Chair and City of Portland Mayor Ken Wilber reported that the Committee did not have any action items and called upon Chief Operating Officer India Birdsong to present the following item:

- a. **Monthly Operating Statistics (D-18-008):** COO India Birdsong reported on the ridership report for the month of June 2018. Ridership was down 10.2% due to one less week day in June. Highlighting the individual route performance, lower

ridership is prevalent in the southern top corridors. Ridership declines over 12% regardless of the number that we base this on. The Operations Department is evaluating this for potential outreach solutions. Higher success in ridership is usually seen in the Northwest corridors. As for missed service, we are currently holding steady at 99% trip completion. There's always room for improvement, so we will continue to evaluate the lack of manpower in dispatching, communication issues through Gray Line, internal absenteeism issues for operators to mitigate those contributing factors on missed trips. For safety, we remain accident free for the month of June 2018.

One of the action plans for next year is to expand park and ride sites. We might need to look at moving the existing park and ride locations to increase ridership and make it more accessible for riders.

CEO Bland added that he and Mayor Moore and Kelly Dannenfelser are looking at some potential sites.

- b. **Music City Star Changes (Notification of Public Hearings for Sept/Oct) (D-18-009):** Ms. Timm directed the Board's attention to the Music City Star Changes in the Board's report.

Federal rail safety regulations outlined in the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 require installation of Positive Train Control (PTC) across most of the United States commuter rail network, and impacting the rail line where the Music City Star commuter rail operates. In October 2015, Congress extended the original deadline of December 15, 2015 to December 31, 2018, allowing additional time for rail operators to achieve compliance.

Up until last year, RTA and its host railroad, the Nashville and Eastern Railroad Corporation (NERR), had been advancing plans to install a functional PTC system in advance of this deadline, including the development of functional specifications, acquisition of a "type approval" for the system being procured from the federal formula based grant funding to apply toward this system. In addition, the RTA applied twice (unsuccessfully) for discretionary capital grants for the installation of PTC. During the period that these formula funds were accumulating, other pressing capital needs associated with the Music City Star began to accelerate in need, including track rehabilitation projects, the overhaul of locomotives, and the need to replace aging passenger coaches.

On March 28, 2018, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) gave NERR a waiver on implantation of PTC provided the Music City Star revenue and non-revenue trains run no greater than 12 trips per day. This waiver requires the elimination of two trips on Friday no later than the PTC implementation deadline of December 31, 2018.

Over the past several years, the Music City Star has seen declining ridership on the Friday evening trips in contrast with increasing ridership on commuter-oriented services. During recent months, Friday night ridership has averaged 70 passengers per one-way trip. This contrasts with average daily commuter service ridership of 180 per one-way trip and represents a decline of approximately 9%

over the past four years. Based on the level of ridership for the Friday evening train relative to other service, the RTA proposed to eliminate this trip and review possible schedule alterations to better serve existing and future riders of the train.

During the month of June 2018, the RTA surveyed train riders to inform them about the upcoming elimination of the Friday evening trip and to use this opportunity to further explore potential schedule adjustments that could better cater to their needs. Based on survey responses received, as well as consideration for other factors like serving the new Hamilton Springs Station opening this summer, impacts on train operating rules and costs, and maintaining schedule connectivity with buses at the Riverfront Station, staff developed three options for potential schedule adjustments as follows:

- **Alternative 1:** No service change (based on the new scenario to be implemented with the start of Hamilton Springs later this month) except the Friday night elimination.
- **Alternative 2:** A modest schedule change including:
 - Friday night elimination;
 - Earliest a.m. train leaving from Lebanon in the a.m., about 10 minutes earlier than the current schedule; and,
 - Last train leaving from Riverfront in the p.m. about 15 minutes later than the current schedule.
- **Alternative 3:** The largest shift that could be developed without adding additional WeGo Public Transit (formerly Nashville MTA) connections and costs including:
 - Friday night elimination;
 - Extension of the midday train to Martha;
 - Earliest a.m. train leaving from Lebanon in the a.m., about 10 minutes earlier than the current schedule; and,
 - Last train leaving from Riverfront in the p.m. a half hour later than the current schedule.

All of these options fit within the staffing and work hour rules required to be compliant with FRA regulations.

The next steps for this process include conducting public outreach to continue to inform riders and the public about the elimination of the Friday night trip and to gather feedback on the proposed schedule options. A 30-day public comment period will start in September and will include a total of three public hearings. Specific dates and times are being finalized and the hearings will be advertised through different outlet including media advisories, seat drops, notifications at train stations, flyers, social media outlets, website, and direct contact to local media resources and stakeholders.

Results from the public outreach and final recommendations will be brought to the RTA Board in November for approval, including an analysis of impacts of the

changes to Title VI populations, if applicable. Schedule changes would be enacted prior to the end of the calendar year.

VI. CEO'S REPORT: CEO Bland gave the following report:

- He asked the Board to review the attendance sheet in the minutes and make sure they signed in for today's meeting so we could properly monitor Board attendance.
- At long last, Hamilton Springs Station is coming to fruition. The station will have a soft opening, with trains stopping there, beginning on August 27. We will hold a formal ribbon cutting/dedication on September 6.
- Our joint development project at Donelson Station is still on hold pending Metro Council consideration of the approval of a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Zone as allowed under Tennessee Law. Metro Council is holding a joint committee meeting of its Planning and Affordable Housing Committees this Monday to discuss the legislation.
- We are issuing solicitation documents for the rehabilitation of our locomotives on the Music City Star. A pre-proposal event held this past weekend generated significant interest.
- We are advancing discussions with Gray Line to determine the impacts on our operating agreement with them if we provide them with coaches to operate service.
- Central rehab continued on schedule, with work completed on the 1st level of the terminal and now underway on level 2. It remains on schedule to be completed by the end of this calendar year.
- We have begun work on the design of the Mt. Juliet parking expansion and will be working with the City on this effort over the next several months.
- We had an initial meeting with the City of Dickson and Dickson County to begin discussions of options to extend this service beyond the expiration of its eligibility for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds this year. The discussions yielded several options we'll be examining and bringing back to the corridor partners and the Finance Committee in the coming months.
- Finally, he let the Board know that his Executive Assistant and their Board Liaison, Kathy Owen, would be retiring effective this Friday. He thought they all had a good sense of the level of effort Ms. Owen had invested in trying to make RTA Board and Committee meetings go smoothly. He said they have advertised for a replacement and will keep the Board posted on changes in staff assignments. In the meantime, he asked the Board to please contact Chief Administrative Officer Rita Roberts-Turner or himself if they have any RTA administrative issues they need to take up.

- VII. CHAIR'S REPORT:** Chair McMillan noted that she would like to echo CEO Bland by thanking Ms. Owen for her years of hard work and dedication.

A motion was passed to prepare an appropriate certificate of appreciation from the RTA Board that will be presented to Ms. Owen at a later time.

Chair McMillan reminded members of the Board to the importance of signing the attendance sheet and that each check the minutes to make sure that they reflect their attendance so that we can accurately report to the State and the Comptroller's office.

- VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:** There was no other business to come before the Board.

- IX. ADJOURNMENT:** Proper motion was made and seconded to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Ed Cole, RTA Secretary &
Davidson County Governor Appointee