



MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
NOVEMBER 14, 2018

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) Executive Committee meeting was held at the Bradley L. Barrett Training Center TN Banking Association Office, 211 Athens Way, Nashville, Tennessee 37228 on Wednesday, November 14, 2018. A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. by Vice Chair Mayor Randall Hutto.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

Mayor Randall Hutto, Vice Chair	Wilson County
Governor Appointee Ed Cole, Secretary	Davidson County
Anthony Holt, County Executive	Sumner County
Mayor Jerry Kirkman	Sumner County (Westmoreland)
Mayor Dean Dickey	Maury County
Kelly Dannefelser, Governor Appointee	Williamson County
Ken Davis, Governor Appointee	Wilson County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

Mayor David Briley	Davidson County
Mayor Ken Moore	Franklin City
Mayor Paige Brown	Sumner County (Gallatin)
Mayor Jamie Clary	Sumner County (Hendersonville)
Billy Vogel	Robertson County
Mayor Rogers Anderson	Williamson County

- II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Joanne Graves with the Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee stated that the Transit Citizen Leadership Academy just completed its' 14th Leadership Academy and that they spent a lot of time addressing misinformation that was given out to the public. She went on to say that scheduling is underway for next year's Leadership Academy beginning the first week in February, also in the months of April and September. She stated that if anybody knew of individuals that wants to be a part of the Leadership Academy to direct them to their website to sign up.

III. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT COMPARED TO BUDGET (EXC-D-18-014): Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant reviewed the year-to-date data of the statement of operations for the month of September 2018 compared to the FY2019 budget and the balance sheet as of September 30, 2018. Mr. Oliphant asked if there were any questions, and there were none at this time.

IV. COMPTROLLER'S SUNSET AUDIT ACTION PLAN UPDATE (EXC-D-18-015): In November 2017, the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) Board reviewed and accepted a performance audit performed by the Tennessee State Comptroller's Office. The performance audit contained three findings and four observations. We felt that all the findings and observations were reasonable and each was addressed in our corrective action plan to the Comptroller's Office which was filed on November 28, 2017. As a part of the audit process, we also submitted a six-month progress update on the action plan to the Comptroller's Office. We reviewed the updated action plan with the Executive Committee during the May 2018 meeting.

This performance audit was also discussed during RTA's Sunset Hearing in April 2018 before State Legislature's Commerce, Labor, Transportation and Agriculture Joint Subcommittee of Government Operations. RTA was ultimately reauthorized for an additional two years by the State Legislature with the understanding that RTA would come before the Joint Committee before December 31, 2018 to give an update on RTA's progress in implementing the recommendations from the performance audit.

We recently received notice from the Joint Committee to appear for an update on December 18, 2018. The attached update is what we will be discussing at the hearing. Once the Committee has reviewed this update, we will send a courtesy copy to the Comptroller's Office prior to the December 18 hearing.

Secretary Ed Cole offered a compliment and a supporting statement to Chief Financial Officer for this type of report and the accurate responses that have been received from it. There were no further questions or comments at this time.

V. OPERATIONAL STATISTICS (EXC-D-18-016): Carolyn Riggs-Farrar, Director of Operations reviewed the RTA Monthly Dashboard Report through the month of September 30, 2018 with the Executive Committee and was available to answer any questions. There were no questions or comments at this time.

VI. MUSIC CITY STAR SERVICE CHANGE (EXC-A-18-005) Mr. Felix Castrodad, Director of Planning and Grants reported the following:

On March 28, 2018, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) gave the Nashville and Eastern Railroad Corporation a waiver on implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC) provided the Music City Star operate no more

than 12 passenger trips per day. This waiver requires the elimination of two trips on Fridays no later than the PTC implementation deadline of December 31, 2018. Discussions with the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) Board resulted in the decision to eliminate the Friday night train service due to declining ridership.

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 serve passenger needs. Based on this survey, RTA staff developed possible schedule adjustments to daily commuter service that could extend the hours of service slightly in the morning and afternoon periods. Further public outreach was scheduled to gauge public preference for alternative train schedules in order to inform the recommendations.

A 30-day public comment period from September 12 through October 15 included an online survey and three open-house public meetings in Nashville, Mt. Juliet, and Lebanon.

In addition to the online survey and the public meetings, opportunity for feedback was also available via phone, email, and mail. Information was also made available on the RTA website, providing responses to frequently asked questions, a link to the online survey, and details about the proposed schedule alternatives.

None of the proposed service adjustments would constitute a major service change as defined under the agency's Title VI policy.

A summary of feedback was outlined as follows: a total of 519 completed surveys were received and an additional 28 comments were recorded via phone, email, and public comment cards, totaling 547 public comments. Of the survey respondents, 334 identified themselves as regular train customers (riding every day, a few times a week or about once a week). Only 16 respondents never ride.

- Alternative 1: No change to current weekday service, except for elimination of Friday night train. Preferred by 37% of respondents (204)
- Alternative 2: Adjustments of between 5-15 minutes for morning trains to arrive earlier and afternoon trains to depart later. Preferred by 17% of respondents (95)
- Alternative 3: Adjustments of between 5-30 minutes for morning trains to arrive earlier and afternoon trains to depart later, and the first afternoon train to travel to Martha, rather than stopping at Mt. Juliet. Preferred by 40% of respondents (221)

Alternative 3 (maximum change) had the most votes ut results were almost

evenly split with Alternative 1 (no change). Unfortunately, the slim margin does not present enough evidence to clearly favor either of those alternatives. Additionally, Alternative 1 was the most popular with current train riders, indicating a clear divide between current and potential users. Several public comments were provided with no stated preference (5%).

Some comments provided suggestions for other alternative schedule times or service options.

- Keep Friday night train service and eliminate passenger service on return trains to stay under FRA threshold. Staff reviewed the possibility of converting two current low-productivity reverse commute passenger trips to non-revenue trips in order to maintain the Friday night trips in passenger service. This option would require further coordination with FRA and a written request for modification or clarification on the FRA waiver. This would require additional time and is not feasible prior to December 31, 2018. Additionally, such a request would reopen the waiver to reconsideration and possible refusal.
- Add weekend or Saturday service. Staff reviewed the costs of adding a regularly scheduled weekend trip to the service plan. This added service is anticipated to increase operational costs by several hundred thousand dollars annually. At this time, RTA does not have the funding or sponsorship to advance this additional service as a regularly scheduled trip.
- Add weekday service including having all trips serve Lebanon, weekly mid-day service, more commuter train frequency, or weeknight service. There is interest in exploring numerous changes that would provide additional service but there are several challenges to that given the current infrastructure conditions, federal regulations, service design, and budget constraints. The proposed rail improvement study can examine these needs in more detail and provide better insight on the potential for prioritizing those options in conjunction with future implementation of PTC.

Based on the feedback from the public outreach regarding potential schedule changes, the board recommended advancing with a slight modification of Alternative 1 to include minor changes to afternoon service to allow the Route 93 Music City Star West End Shuttle to make a more reliable connection to the train.

Competing demands and requests for expanded service or alternative service scenarios beyond those presented by staff cannot be balanced under current operating constraints including the PTC restrictions, operating budget, and physical limitations of existing infrastructure. Staff will continue to evaluate public comments along with service and infrastructure priorities and phasing of implementation as part of the Music City Star Rail Improvement study.

Secretary Ed Cole questioned where we were in relation to the Positive Train Control process down the road. He stated that he knew that it was a lot of money and wanted to know if this was something that we could foresee that we could comply with; so that we can manage a schedule based on what is the best balance with trying to resource, as opposed to having to comply with federal funds?

CEO Bland responded by stating that he agrees with Mr. Castrodad's comments regarding the Music City Star Rail Improvement study. The issue with additional trips is not just with Positive Train Control; the goal is to create a sequence or range improvements with price tags associated, which ranges between \$25-30M. The PTC will have to include more daily trip runs, more rolling stocks and other things like software licenses and maintenance fees will have to be added to the annual budget.

Mr. Castrodad added that there are will be some minor proposed time changes for route 93 (West End shuttle).

Mr. Ken Davis, Wilson Country Governor Appointee asked about adding a bus service in Wilson County that would compliment the Music City Star. He asked if this was something that we would want to go through the Regional Transportation Authority or if they needed to contract somebody that could complete the study. CEO Bland stated that this is absolutely possible, but it will come down to the funding source for those trips.

Mr. Ken Davis, Wilson Country Governor Appointee also asked about the PTC hurdles and what the timeline would be. CEO Bland replied by saying that we'll know the outcome of the Music City Star Rail Improvement study by Mid-2019.

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

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

- Last month, you approved a contract to rebuild locomotives on the Music City Star. We are in the midst of pre-award audits of the selected vendor, and anticipate the project to start after the first of the year.
- We also believe we've identified new (used) passenger cars for the Star. They are rehabilitated cars from the commuter rail system in Chicago, currently owned by a small railroad in Michigan. Once we complete negotiations and gain concurrence from the FTA, we will recommend an award.
- Work on the Hamilton Springs station, including the landscaping we had deferred until conducive weather has been completed.
- We were verbally notified that TSG is going through a transfer in ownership. We have been discussing this process with the RTA's

General Counsel, as well as coordinating with CCRA, NERA and TDOT.

- We are advancing a contract amendment with Gray Line to account for the RTA purchasing 10 commuter buses to be operated on Relax and Ride service, and hope to have a contract recommendation back to you next month.
- As Ed reported, we are scheduled to appear again before the Senate's Local Government Oversight Committee to follow up the Comptroller's Sunset Audit. We would appreciate any Board member attendance we can get.
- I'd like to introduce Monica Howse, who has been selected to fill my Assistant's position, previously held by Kathy Owen.
- Our ad hoc marketing and branding committee will convene before the December Board Meeting.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT: In the absence of Chair McMillan, Vice Chair Mayor Randall Hutto stated that we will accept nominations for the 2019 slate of RTA officers in the December meeting. Interested persons should contact CEO Steve Bland.

In closing, Vice Chair Mayor Randall Hutto recognized Mayor Briley for the success he had with Amazon, and the improvements and enhancements in the surrounding counties. He also gave congratulatory remarks to Mr. Gabriel Burgess for being voted Employee of the Month in Wilson County.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: Proper motion was made and seconded to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Ed Cole, RTA Secretary &
Davidson County Governor Appointee