



MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

- 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 located at 211 Athens Way, Nashville TN 37228 on Wednesday, September 18, 2019. A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Chair Mayor Randall Hutto.

Executive Committee Members in Attendance:

Mayor Randall Hutto, Chair – Wilson County
Governor’s Appointee Ed Cole, Secretary – Davidson County
Mayor Anthony Holt – Sumner County
Mayor Bob Rial – Dickson County
Mayor Ken Moore – City of Franklin
Mayor Bill Ketron – Rutherford County
Mayor Rick Graham – City of Spring Hill
Mayor Jerry Kirkman – City of Westmoreland
Governor’s Appointee Kelly Dannenfelser – Williamson County
Governor’s Appointee Ken Davis – Wilson County

Others in Attendance:

Mayor Paige Brown – City of Gallatin
Jim Kerr, Jr. – City of Murfreesboro (Alternate)
Victor Lay – City of Spring Hill (Alternate)
Governor’s Appointee Lee Zoller – Sumner County
Mayor Rogers Anderson – Williamson County

II. **Approval of the May 15, 2019 Minutes**

There was a correction to the minutes to reflect Jim Kerr as the City of Murfreesboro Alternate for Mayor Shane McFarland.

III. **Public Comments:**

Jessica Dauphin

Ms. Dauphin reported the following:

- Ms. Dauphin, President of Transit Alliance stated that Transit Alliance is a 501c3 company with a mission to build support for the connected regions via a robust transit system with its’ own dedicated funding. She stated that appreciates the support that they receive from the cities and counties.
- To date Tennessee Leadership Academy (TLA) has over 400 regional alumni and she hopes to have more participation in their next class that will run from October 16- November 20th. She asked if there are those that want to participate to let her know.

- TLA is a part of a new organization called Connected 10, formerly known as CMT, a diverse coalition of businesses dedicated to better transportation for all.
- TN Dept of Environment Conservation Expo in Knoxville Oct 1-2, 2019. One of our Middle Tennessee Cities a winner of the 2019 Sustainable Transportation Awards. and she hopes to see everyone there.

There were no other comments to come before this board.

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

- a. State Comptroller's Sunset Performance Audit Report (EXC-A-19-012):** Pursuant to the Tennessee Governmental Entity Review Law, the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) must go before the Joint Government Operations Committee of the Tennessee State Legislature periodically for a sunset performance review to determine whether the RTA should be continued, restructured, or terminated. In preparation for the sunset review, the Department of Audit within the State Comptroller of the Treasury conducted their sunset performance audit which concluded in July 2019. All RTA Board members should have recently received a copy of the Performance Audit Report. As Steve Bland reported to the RTA Board in August, he and Sumner County Mayor Holt went before the committee on August 21, 2019 to discuss the findings and observations that came out of the audit and seek RTA reauthorized for another four years. The Committee voted to make that recommendation which will be taken up in next year's legislative session.

The performance audit resulted in one repeat finding and two observations. Findings are required to be addressed in an action plan to cure the deficiencies noted while observations are only recommendations that do not reach the level of a finding and do not necessarily have to be addressed. We felt that all the findings and observations were reasonable and were addressed in our responses which are included in the Performance Audit Report. One requirement of the audit is to submit a corrective action plan to the Comptroller's office and to have an update meeting with the Comptroller's office six months later as to the progress of the plan. We submitted a Corrective Action Plan on August 28, 2019, which is attached.

The Audit Committee recommended to the Executive Committee that this audit report be accepted.

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

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

- a. Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget (EXC-D-19-010):** Sumner County Mayor Anthony Holt reviewed the year-to-date data of the statement of operations for the month of July 2019 compared to the FY2019 budget and the balance sheet as of July 31, 2019. Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Ed Oliphant was present to answer any questions. There were none at this time.

- b. FY2020 Proposed Operating Budget Adoption (EXC-A-19-013):** In the June 2019 RTA board meeting, a continuation budget was adopted to maintain the authorized spending levels at the FY2019 budget levels until all FY2020 operating budget revenues could be confirmed. Many jurisdictions do not have their local budgets approved until after June 30. We now have all revenues confirmed and are ready to move forward with approval of the FY2020 Operating Budget.

RTA's budget proposal for FY2020 has an overall increase of \$61,000, or 0.6%, to \$10.2 million compared to \$10.1 million in FY2019. This includes an increase of approximately \$347,100, or 7.5%, to \$5.0 million in the commuter train services budget being partially offset by a decrease of approximately \$286,200, or 5.2%, to \$5.2 million in the regional bus

services budget. The increase in train services is primarily due to a 4.1% contractual increase from Transit Solutions Group, our train operator, and a 21.6% increase in fuel costs related to our fuel hedging program and overall expected increases in fuel prices during FY2020. We have also included additional state of good repair maintenance expenses and utilities related to the train stations. The increases to train expenses were partially off-set by a decrease in insurance costs due to lower premiums for our train liability policy. The offsetting decrease in regional bus services is primarily attributable to contractual rate decreases from Gray Line related to RTA purchasing 10 new commuter buses for Gray Line to operate on behalf of RTA on the regional bus routes and a decrease in the amount of reserve being set aside in FY20 compared to FY19.

The attached proposed budget also includes the following assumptions that have both increased and decreased certain revenues and expenses that are presented in the proposed budget:

- Local governments will continue at the same or higher levels from FY2019 for their operating support;
- There is additional WeGo bus shuttle service between Riverfront and WeGo Central being implemented September 30, 2019;
- The State will continue their operating subsidy as well as support for the regional bus services and,
- That the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) will continue the support for the EasyRide program (payment for state employees to ride transit services).

The revenues needed to cover the operating expenses will come from fare revenues; advertising and rental revenues; Federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality grant funding; state, local, and regional subsidy support; and federal formula 5307 capital funding that will be converted to operating revenue through the preventive maintenance and capital cost of contracting process.

This proposed budget also assumes that the \$3.0 million line of credit will be available for use throughout the fiscal year. This is for cash flow purposes only.

The Finance Committee recommended that the Executive Committee adopt the attached FY2020 Operating Budget.

Finance Committee Chair Anthony Holt stated that the Finance Committee had discussions about some entities that have not built in reserves into their operating budget and that they may be looking at having to increase their operational budget, as far as their contribution to the Regional Transportation Authority. He stated that he had a conversation with CEO Bland and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Ed Oliphant about how well we were currently doing with fuel gauge and if things turned out not so favorable that adjustments will need to be made to the budget.

Secretary Cole agreed with Chair Anthony Holt and stated that he was present at the Finance Committee meeting and thought that it was a thorough discussion. He stated that there are some real concerns and we need to have more of those discussions as we go forward.

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

- c. Resolution of FY2020 Annual Grant Applications (EXC-A-19-014):** The Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) has the authority to receive federal, state and local financial assistance for transportation projects.

In order for the RTA to apply and receive federal funds, RTA must comply with Federal Certifications and Assurances and annually submit compliance in accordance to these terms.

The attached resolution comprises the annual submittal of Certifications and Assurances for FTA funds and authorization to submit applications for grants with the FTA, the Tennessee Department of Transportation, and other grant funding entities.

The Finance Committee requested that the Executive Committee:

- Adopt the attached resolution;
- Authorize the applications for 5307, 5337, CMAQ, and STP funding and State/Local match;
- Authorize the submittal of the application for State Operating Assistance funding; and,
- Authorize the submittal of applications and execution of contracts for any other federal, state, or local grant funding that may become available during the fiscal year 2020 for the benefit of RTA.

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

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

- a. **RTA Monthly Operational Statistics (EXC-D-19-011):** Mayor Kirkman reviewed the RTA Monthly Dashboard Report through the month of July 2019 with the Executive Committee. Director of Quality Service Dan Freudberg was present to answer any questions. There were none at this time.

Mayor Jerry Kirkman reported Train 155 was returning to Lebanon train yard after morning commuter service, traveling at approximately 18 mph through downtown Lebanon (within yard limits), when it came into contact with a red pickup truck at the West Spring Street crossing. The crossing does not have bars that lower, but the bells were ringing and lights flashing normally, while the locomotive was sounding its horn through each of the preceding intersections and through the West Spring Street crossing.

The pickup truck claimed it did not see the lights or hear the bells or train horn and made direct contact with the locomotive. The pickup truck was pushed along the tracks approximately 173ft to final rest. The driver of the pickup truck refused medical attention and was able to get out of the truck and walk away.

No passengers on board (just engineer and conductor from TSG), minor damage to the train.

The Titans renewed their sponsorship for the Titans Express on the Star this season. The first express train operated and transported a total of 784 riders this past Sunday.

There was no other discussion to come before this board.

VII. Other Business:

- a. **Title VI Program Update (EXC-A-19-015):** Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that "No Person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance". The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires all recipients of federal funding to adopt and submit an agency Title VI Program every three years. The RTA Board approved the current RTA Title VI Program in September 2016 and submitted the Program to the FTA in October 2016. The updated Title VI Program is required to be submitted to FTA in October 2019 upon approval by the recipient's Board of Directors, appropriate governing entity, or official(s) responsible for policy decisions.

The RTA Title VI Program establishes specific system-wide service standards and policies

as well as a Major Service Change Policy, a Disparate Impact Policy, Disproportionate Burden Policy, policies for oversight of sub-recipients, and a Public Participation Plan (PPP). The PPP describes RTA's plans and strategies to engage minority and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations in its planning and programming activities. The PPP also details what shall be placed in RTA's notices to the public, as well as the methods by which we communicate with the public. Additionally, the PPP defines what constitutes a Major Service Change (this includes changes to fares) and includes a description and explanation of how comments are considered through the service planning process for all proposed service changes. The final document can be viewed here: <https://www.rtarelandride.com/pdf/RTA-TITLE-VI-PLAN-2019-DRAFT-8-13-19.pdf>.

The FTA submitted comments on the 2016 Title VI Program to the RTA that were addressed in full when completing the 2019 update.

The Draft Program was released for a 30-day public review and comment period beginning on August 1, 2019 and ending on September 1, 2019. The public was given the opportunity to provide comment via phone, email, and at two public hearings held at WeGo Central. Public notice was provided on the RTA website; a media advisory; social media; and in three local newspapers, including one Spanish language publication. The document was made available online and hard copies were made available at the public hearings.

Upon review and revision of the Title VI Program, the committee recommended that the RTA Executive Committee approve the 2019 update to the RTA Title VI Program to be submitted to the FTA in October.

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

VIII. CEO's Report: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Stephen Bland gave the following report:

1. CEO Bland asked everyone to make sure that they signed in and check the attendance sheet in the minutes so we can make sure we have an accurate recording of attendance. Next month, we will be reviewing a summary of Member attendance with the Executive Committee as part of our requirements under the Office of State Comptroller Performance Audit.
2. CEO Bland stated that we received the first of our rehabilitated locomotives and it is undergoing dynamic testing prior to entering revenue service in the next few weeks. Once that locomotive has been accepted, the second will be released to go through the process.
3. All 10 of our new commuter buses have entered Gray Line service on various routes in the RTA system.
4. HDR is finalizing a draft report examining the feasibility of various Star improvements. This report is being reviewed by RJ Corman for accuracy, after which time we will present to an RTA Board committee.
5. CEO Bland introduced Bill Miller, the new Chief Operating Officer for the RTA. Bill comes to us after a number of years of experience as the Chief Operating Officer for the transit agency in Pittsburgh, PA, where he oversaw bus and rail operations.
6. The Federal Transit Administration completed their triennial review report for program compliance. They should be issuing their final report during the next month.
7. Unfortunately, we were notified by Mayor McCarver that Cheatham County will not be renewing their membership in the RTA. Mayor McCarver indicated that the County did not have any specific issues with how the RTA works, but that he was not hearing any requests from his constituents for transit services. Cheatham County is the only member county that does not currently have any commuter bus or rail service.

Secretary Cole provided an update from the Cheatham County Rail Authority (CCRA). He stated that there is a major study that is underway and that is being sponsored by Greenways of Nashville and the Metro Parks and Recreation, to look at the feasibility of a greenway connecting Centennial Park with Bicentennial Mall using the Nashville and Western Rail Corridor. This approach is consistent with the RTA Board's previously adopted policy to work with CCRA to maintain the continuity of the Nashville and Western Corridor. Mr. Cole indicated that he would keep the RTA informed of progress.

- VII. Chair's Report:** Mayor Hutto asked members if they had an interest in serving on the Committee, to please let him or CEO Bland know, and he will also reach out to the full board regarding anybody that wants to serve.

Mayor Hutto thanked CEO Bland and Mayor Holt for going to the oversight committee and stated that they did an outstanding job. He stated that he's thankful to hear these reports on a monthly basis but appreciates the staff and the work that they do daily.

Mayor Hutto stated that he plans to appoint a Planning Committee to advance short-medium-and long-term strategies for the RTA to pursue. This committee will examine and recommend changes to by-laws, advance planning for long-term funding, develop expanded park-and-ride capacity, and other initiatives deemed in the best interest of furthering the mission of the Authority.

In closing, Mayor Hutto stated that it was good to have the Titans Express train up and running again.

- IX. Adjournment:** Proper motion was made and seconded to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Ed Cole, RTA Secretary &
Davidson County Governor Appointee