

**CONNECT TRANSIT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PROCEEDINGS OF AUGUST 23, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was held at the Connect Transit Board Room #135, 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, Illinois 61761 on August 23, 2016 at 4:30 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Mike McCurdy, Vice-Chairman
 Ryan Whitehouse, Secretary
 Jennifer McDade
 John Bowman
 Judy Buchanan
 John Thomas

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Chairman Bill Wilson

CITY MANAGERS: Town of Normal Manager, Mark Peterson
 City of Bloomington Assistant City Manager Steve Rasmussen

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Johnson, General Manager
 Isaac Thorne, Chief Operating Officer
 Julie Beer, Executive Assistant
 Melissa Chrisman, Marketing and Business Development Manager
 Martin Glaze, Transportation Operations Manager

The meeting was called to order by the Vice Chairman at 4:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Patricia Marton addressed the Board. She stated that she is happy about the newly offered Sunday service. She has had many concerns regarding the unsanitary conditions at the Front Street transfer center, however, she has noted that improvements have been made. She voiced her preference for the previous flag stop method of service over the fixed stop method. She believes that the flag stop method focused more on the passenger and their particular needs. She hoped that the Connect Transit Bus Operators would be allowed to use their own discretion in the case of obvious need or emergency. Finally, she was disappointed to hear that the fee for the unlimited ride Connect Mobility passes was increasing.

Joan Crooks addressed the Board. She stated that she was appreciative of the new Sunday service. She stated that she previously used the Lime I route on west Hovey prior to the new route structure. She now must walk 10 minutes to and from the Jewel Grocery Store in order to catch the bus on the new route. She was concerned about having to walk that distance in the winter months during inclement weather. She questioned why the Brown route now crosses railroad tracks. She questioned if there would be any changes to the routes.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager responded that Connect Transit fully expected that there would be tweaks to the routes in the future, however, additional monitoring time was needed.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting of July 26, 2016
2. Disbursements for Month of July, 2016
3. Financial Report for Month of July, 2016
4. Capital and Self Insurance Reserve Fund Balances for month of July, 2016
5. Monthly Statistical Report for month of July, 2016

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, Seconded by Trustee John Bowman that the Consent Agenda be approved.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation – Syncromatics – Martin Glaze

Martin Glaze, Transportation Operations Manager addressed the Board. He provided an overview of the Syncromatics Power Point presentation. Syncromatics is the Automatic Vehicle Location Service (AVL). The system includes features such as vehicle tracking, vehicle assignments, alerts, on time performance measures, schedule analyzer and a new mobile application.

Trustee John Bowman questioned if pre-trip and dead-head time were built into the Syncromatics schedule analyzer. Mr. Glaze responded that Bus Operators were allowed ten (10) minutes of pre-trip time and a “paddle” (a detailed description of their schedule) that provides information about their day’s schedule which includes deadhead time. Neither are built into the Syncromatics schedule analyzer.

Trustee John Bowman noted early problems with the digital head sign on the New Flyer and newer Gillig buses and questioned if they were resolved. Additionally, he questioned if the head signs would automatically change as the routes changed or if the Bus Operators would manually update them to read the route it was currently running. Mr. Glaze responded that staff was working to address all known issues with the head signs and that the head signs were not capable of automatically changing. The Bus Operators would manually update them to reflect its current route.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager noted that Syncromatics was currently developing a feature that would allow for programming the head signs to change automatically.

Mr. Glaze provided an overview of the mobile application. Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy questioned any feedback from the public regarding same. Mr. Glaze responded that feedback has been positive.

Trustee John Bowman questioned if the new mobile application could show more than one (1) route. Mr. Glaze responded that it is designed to only show one at a time. The common user would only need to view one (1) route at a time. Staff has suggested to the developer that the application be opened up to allow up to 2 (2) routes for those wanting to make transfers, however, minimizing the number of routes open ensured that it would function efficiently; too much data may cause the application to lag.

There were no additional questions or comments regarding the Syncromatics presentation. Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy thanked Mr. Glaze for the presentation.

Recommendation for the Construction of Bus Pads, RFP 16-13

Andrew Johnson, General Manager introduced this item. These pads will be constructed ahead of bus shelters being placed. Secretary Ryan Whitehouse questioned the location of the new bus pads. Mr. Johnson responded that the pads would be placed at the stop locations that had the highest usage. The stop locations were part of the previous route system and remain part of the new route system. There would be no concern that the stop locations would change unless there were a total reconstruction of the geography at that specific location.

Mr. Johnson stated that twenty-five (25) pads would be installed now, and an additional 25 next year. Once the Board approves the construction of the pads, the project would start and completion anticipated by the end of the calendar year.

Trustee John Bowman requested that the Board be provided with a list of the pad locations.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy questioned the industry standard for covered shelters at bus stops. Mr. Johnson replied that about 20% of systems have covered shelters. He believed that 20% was a reasonable goal. Vice Chairman McCurdy questioned if any of the new bus shelters would be wired for electricity. Mr. Johnson replied that it would be possible, however, easements may be required, etc.

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, Seconded by Trustee John Thomas that the General Manager be authorized to execute a two (2) year agreement with Knapp Concrete Contractor, Inc. for the construction of bus pads. The construction agreement will allow bus pads to be built at per-determined heavy use stops. Bus shelters will be built later on many of these concrete pads.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Andrew Johnson, General Manager requested that Isaac Thorne, Chief Operations Officer and Martin Glaze, Transportation Operations Manager provide the Board with an overview of the new route system rollout, and "Back to School" student outreach.

Martin Glaze, Transportation Operations Manager addressed the Board. He stated the roll out of the new routes were very successful. Every Bus Operator understands their route and schedules and have relief car schedules, which were not available in the past. The new rollout went as smoothly as possible considering the many drastic changes. Additional changes include more Bus Operator time onsite at the Connect Transit facility which helps build relationships and camaraderie. There are now 57 bid runs and 15 extra board runs. This is a huge increase. The extra board Bus Operators now know a week in advance what their schedules will be and are able to lock in those schedules for 3 to 4 months.

Mr. Glaze also noted that the call volume has increased substantially, however, two new Customer Service Representatives had been hired and were able to help answer the calls.

Isaac Thorne, Chief Operating Officer echoed Mr. Glazes' comments. He stated the entire system was turned upside down in one day, with brand new routes, a brand new schedule and many new employees. Staff has been working and dealing with issues as they arise. A lot of hard work has been put in by everyone within the organization and everyone has ensured that all of these changes have been conducted in a positive manner.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager stated there were a few minor issues, which have been resolved. He stated he could not be prouder of all of Connect Transit's staff; everyone, Bus Operators, Maintenance staff and Administrative staff really stepped up to make a challenging situation a success.

Trustee John Bowman extended his thanks to the Connect Transit staff. He noted that the Bus Operators are a great on street resource. He hoped that their input is actively mined and used.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy questioned the usage of the new Tripper Routes and the Gold Route. Melissa Chrisman, Marketing and Business Development Manager responded that more customers are riding on the Gold route than anticipated. Andrew Johnson, General Manager responded that the Tripper Routes are being used, however, used lightly.

Mr. Johnson requested that Melissa Chrisman, Marketing and Business Development Manager provide an overview of the "Back to School" student outreach.

Ms. Chrisman addressed the Board. She stated it is a very busy time with a lot of student outreach events planned. Staff has already hosted an information table at Illinois State University's Watterson Towers. Additional events are planned in the coming weeks with a heavy focus on student outreach. Feedback from the students include being very excited about the new Green Route which provides 15 minute service between Uptown Normal and Downtown Bloomington.

TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS

Trustee John Bowman questioned the notion that ridership numbers were declining due to the old routes being inefficient. The old routes served their purpose and functioned. He noted that the new routes leave some in the community out of the transit system or must walk long distances to reach the nearest bus stop. He noted that he carries his running shoes with him due to having to walk the mile and a half to and from the stop at Central Illinois Regional Airport terminal to his home. He challenged the Board to keep in mind that Connect Transit's work is not done regarding the new route structure. There are still opportunities to bring people into the transit system.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy stated that he was very happy to participate in the rollout of the new service. It was his hope that the new routes will serve more people.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, Seconded by Jennifer McDade to adjourn to Executive Session.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Time: 5:32 p.m.

Motion by Trustee John Thomas, seconded by Trustee John Bowman to return to Regular Session and to adjourn.

Time: 7:04 p.m.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Julie Beer, Executive Assistant