

**CONNECT TRANSIT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PROCEEDINGS OF SEPTEMBER 27, 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 September 27, 2016 at 4:30 p.m.

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

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Bill Wilson, Chairman
 Jennifer McDade
 John Thomas

CITY MANAGERS: City of Bloomington Assistant City Manager Steve Rasmussen

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Johnson, General Manager
 Julie Beer, Executive Assistant
 Melissa Chrisman, Marketing and Business Development Manager
 Jerry King, Procurement Manager

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 4:33 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy opened the meeting. He stated there were several members of the public in attendance. He noted eleven (11) individuals had completed a public comment card. Connect Transit's public comment policy allowed for fifteen (15) minutes for public comment at the beginning of each public meeting. He wanted to give an opportunity for the Board to hear from each of the eleven individuals. In order to allow each person to speak, he requested a motion to suspend the rules to allow additional time necessary for each individual to speak.

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, seconded by Trustee John Bowman to suspend the rules to allow time for all individuals who wish to speak to address the Board.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Richard Anderson addressed the Board. He stated he is a regular bus rider and has had an opportunity to ride many of the new routes with the exception of the Aqua and Teal routes. He noted many of the riders are not the same riders that he used to see on the old routes. He believed there had been too many changes made all at once. He stated the new route system

requires three (3) transfers for him to go to places the old route system only required one (1). He believed that the community did not need 40 foot buses. There were not enough transit riders in the community to warrant such large buses.

Trustee Jennifer McDade arrived at 4:39 p.m.

Liz Bearden addressed the Board. She stated her complaint concerns the lack of sidewalk infrastructure for persons with disabilities. Her mobility scooter weighs over 300 pounds. Her mobility scooter got stuck in the ground after getting off of a bus at the Bloomington Walmart. She challenged the Board of Trustees to ride the bus system using a walker or a wheelchair for one week, to better understand the difficulties disabled riders face using the new route system.

Joy Lunn addressed the Board. She has a son with a disability that prevents his ability to drive. She tries to ensure that her son is as independent as possible. He has a job at Kroger Grocery store and previously used the late night service to get home from work. The late night service is no longer available. The Connect Mobility service is not as convenient for her son, as those rides need to be scheduled 24 hours in advance. The new bus route system has limited her son's ability to be as independent as he could be.

Debbie Edwards addressed the Board. She stated the old route system should be restored. She is opposed to the new route system. The old routes included more stops at Eastland Mall and the Shoppes at College Hills. The old routes included front door service to the Walmarts, Meijer, Target, etc. The new routes do not include front door service, and now people must walk in order to get into the buildings. This is a hardship for the disabled and will be worse in the winter months. She stated she is glad for Sunday service but wants the old route system restored.

Dee Thompson addressed the Board. She echoed Ms. Lunn's comments. She is the store manager for Bergners at Eastland Mall. Some of her staff members are unable to work evening shifts due to the loss of the late night service. She believed that Connect Transit could have added more buses to the old route system instead of changing to the new route system. Many college student employees will not be able to work extended holiday hours since the late night service has been eliminated. She stated the new route system schedules were overplayed during the public hearing and listening sessions. The new route system is not effective for her or other riders. The public notices that were displayed on the buses were not easy for anyone to read, as the print was too small. She stated Connect Transit does not want to hear from its customers.

Margarite Brooks addressed the Board. She is a member of the Citizens to Ensure Fair Transit (CEFT) group. She noted that Connect Transit was a recipient of the American Public Transit Association (APTA) System of the Year award in 2015, which was based on the service that was provided in 2013 and 2014. Drastic changes were made to the system in 2016. She stated Connect Transit should restore the old route system as it was when it was awarded the APTA award. She noted the system was not broken, so it should not have been fixed.

Nancy Warner addressed the Board. She stated she is also a CEFT member and a client of LifeCil. She is as a person with disabilities. She previously used the Connect Mobility service. During the public hearing and listening sessions, riders were told the system would be improved. She stated

the new routes are not convenient or working for the ridership. She noted in some places, bus stops are not located near shelters.

Vincent Radcliff addressed the Board. He is the Chairman for CEFT. He noted the early problems with the head signs on the buses showing "Not in Service". He noted that this problem did not exist with the old route system. Connect Transit's riders need to be able to get from point A to point B efficiently. He stated Connect Transit should restore the old route system.

Gary Lambert addressed the Board. He stated he has been fortunate enough to never have to use the Connect Transit system and hopes he will never have to use it. He stated he has listened to several of the riders' complaints regarding the new routes and he has never heard from so many underserved people. He believed the Board of Trustees is more concerned with new buses than with the people it is supposed to serve.

Michael Davey addressed the Board. He is a resident of Lincoln Towers. He noted more residents from Lincoln Towers would have attended the evening's meeting, however, they were unable to catch a bus in order to attend. He noted that many people have invisible disabilities, such as asthma, COPD, etc. The distance that the residents of Lincoln Towers must walk in order to get to the nearest bus stop is dangerous. The residents of Lincoln Towers would like to work with Connect Transit staff to find a solution.

Kaden O'Madden addressed the Board. He does not like the new route system. Due to the new route system, he communicates with Connect Transit staff members more than he does with his own family. He preferred the DoubleMap mobile application better than the new mobile application. He stated Connect Transit should restore the old route system. He encouraged the Board to use the bus exclusively to get where they need to go in order to have a better understanding of the challenges many riders face.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy stated that the public comment portion of the meeting would conclude.

Time: 5:03 p.m.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager stated Connect Transit staff had received the letter that CEFT had sent, and would be reaching out to CEFT to identify connection problems. Additional outreach will be conducted.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting of August 23, 2016
2. Disbursements for Month of August, 2016
3. Financial Report for Month of August, 2016
4. Capital and Self Insurance Reserve Fund Balances for month of August, 2016
5. Monthly Statistical Report for month of August, 2016

Trustee John Thomas arrived at 5:08 p.m.

Trustee Jennifer McDade noted that ridership continues to decrease. She suggested that staff continue to research this trend.

Trustee McDade questioned the need for a more reflective report that would track complaints, and how the complaints were resolved. The Board is committed to making improvements to the system.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager agreed with Trustee McDade's suggestion and staff would look into creating such a report right away.

Secretary Ryan Whitehouse echoed Trustee McDade's comments. The Board would be interested in knowing how complaints are handled.

Mr. Johnson noted that Melissa Chrisman, Marketing and Business Development Manager had been working on a tracking mechanism for complaints. Mr. Chrisman addressed the Board. She noted that complaints are logged into a database, Operations Supervisors would address the complaint and have five (5) days to review the audio/video related to the complaint if it exists. Most complaints often involve connection problems, timing problems, and head sign issues.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy noted that an uptick in complaints was anticipated with the implementation of the new route system.

Trustee John Bowman stated the report could be broken out to include operational complaints, customer service issues, and suggested that employee opinion surveys would allow for expanded opportunities for new metrics.

Vice Chairman McCurdy questioned if a future meeting should be scheduled to discuss complaint reporting metrics. Andrew Johnson, General Manager stated that it was a good idea to track complaint trends.

Trustee John Thomas suggested that a Work Session be scheduled to discuss complaint tracking reporting metrics as well as a review of strategic planning. Trustee Judy Buchanan agreed, noting the Board typically holds a Work Session in November to talk about strategic planning and discuss General Manager goals.

Trustee John Thomas stated a Work Session would be scheduled for November.

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

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance Grant Agreement

Andrew Johnson, General Manager introduced this item. He stated the Board approves this grant agreement each year. The terms are the same as previous years, with the exception of new language that provides for more grant accountability to ensure compliance. He recommended the Board approve the Agreement and adopt the Resolution that is included within the Agreement.

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, Seconded by Trustee John Bowman that the Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance Grant Agreement for fiscal year 2017 be approved, the necessary documents executed, and the Resolution adopted.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

(Agreement and Resolution on file at the Connect Transit office)

Recommendation for Purchase of Bus Operator and Dispatcher Uniforms

Andrew Johnson, General Manager introduced this item. He noted that part of Connect Transit's contractual obligation to the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 752 is to provide uniforms for Bus Operators, Dispatchers and Customer Service Representatives. Bids for same were solicited, with only one responsive bid received. Staff recommends that the Board approve the agreement with Minerva Promotions.

Trustee John Bowman noted that the prices for uniforms are decreased from the previous agreement with Minerva Promotions. He questioned the quality of the products. Jerry King, Procurement Manager stated the quality was the same as previously provided. He noted that competitive bids had not been solicited in the past. Staff suspected that although Minerva Promotions was the sole bidder, the company had sharpened its pencils with perceived competition.

Motion by Trustee Jennifer McDade, Seconded by Trustee Judy Buchanan that a five (5) year agreement with Minerva Promotions to provide uniforms for Bus Operators and Dispatchers under the Request for Proposal 16-04 be approved. The estimated annual cost is \$12,500 per year and a total of \$62,500 for the five (5) year agreement.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Recommendation for Purchase of Propane Fuel

Andrew Johnson, General Manager introduced this item. Connect Transit is anticipating the delivery of propane fueled demand response buses. In order to prepare for those vehicles, a propane fueling station will be built and a contract for propane fuel must be made. Evergreen FS is the winning bidder for this service. Staff anticipates a cost savings of \$6,000 to \$7,000 per vehicle per year over the gas and diesel vehicles. Staff recommends approval of this agreement.

Motion by Trustee Ryan Whitehouse, Seconded by Trustee Jennifer McDade that a fixed unit price contract for the Purchase of Propane Fuel FB 16-08 be awarded to Evergreen FS to provide and deliver propane fuel during a five (5) year contract term. The total for the first year is estimated to be \$14,350.36.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Recommendation for Purchase of Oils and Lubricants

Andrew Johnson, General Manager introduced this item. The five (5) year contract has expired. Bids were solicited with multiple responses. Ken's Oil Service was the lowest bidder and staff recommends that the contract be awarded to same. This company is a new vendor for Connect Transit but has been fully vetted.

Secretary Ryan Whitehouse questioned if this company was a local provider. Jerry King, Procurement Manager affirmed, noting that this company also provides oils to the local school systems as well as other local governing bodies.

Motion by Trustee Jennifer McDade, Seconded by Trustee Judy Buchanan that a fixed unit price contract under the Purchase of Oils and Lubricants IFB 16-12 be awarded to Ken's Oil Service Inc. to provide and deliver miscellaneous oils and lubricants during the five (5) year contract term. The total for the first year will be \$54,160.08 for a total of \$270,800.40 over the five years.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Andrew Johnson, General Manager stated that he and other Connect Transit staff members had the opportunity to attend the American Public Transportation Association's Annual Conference in Las Angeles. He gave a presentation regarding Connect Transit's Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) and the system's many upgrades and route changes. Additionally, Kyle Boehm, Connect Transit's Planner gave a presentation on Remix, Connect Transit's planning software.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Bloomington City Council had discussed the status of Connect Transit's Oakland Avenue property at its regular Council meeting the previous night. Staff was currently soliciting bids for the demolition of the building on the property. The hope is that once the building is demolished, the property will be sold.

Mr. Johnson reminded the Board that Congressman Rodney Davis would be visiting with Connect Transit staff on Tuesday, October 4, 2016 at 9 a.m. at Uptown Station. The Board has been sent invitations prior to this evening's meeting.

TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS

Trustee Jennifer McDade stated her appreciation for the attendees at this evening's meeting. She thanked the Board for allowing them all to speak, and thanked them all for coming.

She noted her interest in discussing a reporting mechanism for tracking system improvements and responsiveness to riders.

Secretary Ryan Whitehouse echoed Trustee McDade's comments.

City of Bloomington Assistant City Manager Steve Rasmussen left the meeting at 5:46 p.m.

Trustee Judy Buchanan stated her appreciation for the feedback received from the riders in attendance. She reminded the Board of its history of listening and partnering with the public. She looked forward to a future discussion regarding Connect Transit's strategic goals, General Manager's goals, etc.

Trustee John Thomas noted that hours of thought, planning and scientific measurements were used by the consultant during the COA process. He stated returning to the old route structure before the new route structure had been fully adopted would be unwise.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy agreed with Trustee McDade's comments, he thanked those who attended the meeting and provided their comments and feedback. He noted that the new route structure has been in place for only six (6) weeks. He did not believe that the new system should be tweaked too much. Secretary Ryan Whitehouse agreed, however, customers complaining about dwell time at stops were valid. Trustee John Bowman agreed, noting he rides the buses every day. He has heard compliments but has also heard complaints about the excessive dwell time. This issue needs to be addressed.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy stated staff is aware of the dwell time issue. He reminded the Board a meeting would be scheduled in November to discuss a reporting mechanism that shows issues, complaints and responses to same.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy stated Chairman Bill Wilson was unable to attend the Board meeting and had provided him with a letter of resignation. Vice Chairman McCurdy read the following letter from Chairman Bill Wilson:

As you probably know, I recently accepted a position with a medical practice based in Peoria.

My one-minute commute for 11 years is now closer to :50 minutes, each way.

My time not only on the road but on the new job is pretty demanding, both of time and energy and focus.

The time, engagement and energy that is appropriately required for a Trustee, especially Chair, is not excessive by any means, but does require some focus and attention.

My ability to place the proper level of attention and priority is very limited, so I feel it is necessary for me to submit my resignation as a Connect Trustee effective October 1st.

Not an easy decision, its been over five years, but its appropriate.

I have many thanks to sincerely extend: Mayors Stockton and Renner, City Managers Hales and Peterson, Andrew Johnson, who is a remarkable General Manager, and his tremendous management staff and the remarkable Connect employees.

I am grateful for the opportunity to learn, serve and give back to this great community. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve as Trustee.

Thanks to a tremendous Board of Trustees. Remarkable individuals who have been a pleasure to work with and be part of some remarkable accomplishments. I've learned so much from so many of you and I thank you.

I am proud to have been a part of an amazing organization and amazing public service to an amazing community.

Bill Wilson

Vice Chairman McCurdy stated that Chairman Bill Wilson was very disappointed that he was unable to make the meeting and submit his resignation in person. He invited Chairman Wilson to come back at a future meeting so that the Board could share comments and wish him well. Vice Chairman McCurdy stated per the Connect Transit Board of Trustees By-Laws, he would serve as acting Chairman of the Board until the March, 2017 Annual meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Time: 6:09 p.m.

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

Time: 7:13 p.m.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Julie Beer, Executive Assistant