

## **CONNECT TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**

**Connect Transit Board Room #135  
351 Wylie Drive - Normal, Illinois 61761**

The Connect Transit Advisory Committee meeting was held at the Connect Transit Board Room #135, 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, Illinois 61761 on September 18, 2019 at 4:17 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:            Emory Davis  
                                     John Corey (arrived at 4:24 p.m.)  
                                     Linda Foster  
                                     Shirley Craig  
                                     Noha Shawki  
                                     Elaina Von Qualen (arrived at 4:36 p.m.)  
                                     Evelyn Johnson

MEMBERS ABSENT:            Leon Kaeb

Chief Operations Officer, Martin Glaze, chaired the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 4:17 p.m. with rollcall. Motion for Approval of the *Minutes* of the last meeting held on July 17, 2019, by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Foster.

AYE:    All.

NAY:    None.

*Minutes* of the last meeting held on July 17, 2019 was approved by the Members.

#### **Marketing Update**

Chief Operations Officer, Martin Glaze gave the floor to Marketing Manager, Jeff Holtke. Mr. Holtke stated Connect has held several events on the ISU campus and Illinois Wesleyan for incoming students. Connect has a lot of events scheduled in October for Halloween. Mr. Holtke stated these events have proven to be excellent opportunities for members of the community to explore the bus for the first time and see what riding the bus is all about. Connect makes a dedicated effort to get out at tabling events to try to reach as many people as possible. Mr. Holtke and Mr. Glaze explained to the Members exactly what a tabling event was and how Connect utilizes these events. Ms. Johnson suggested that Connect look into the possibility of providing a bus to take people from Woodhill Towers (and the surrounding complexes) to a Cornbelter's baseball game.

### **Ecolane Mobile App Presentation**

Mr. Glaze introduced Brandon Miles, one of Connect's Operations Supervisors, to introduce the *Ecolane Mobile App*. Mr. Miles explained how to set up the app on an individual phone and how to:

1. Log in;
2. View "Home Screen";
3. View upcoming trips;
4. View cancelled trips;
5. Book/schedule a trip;
6. Add driver's notes for a specific trip;
7. View the fare for the trip; and
8. Schedule a return trip.

A member asked about "will-calls" after a doctor's appointment. Currently, will-calls cannot be scheduled, but can be "noted" in the driver's notes. Mr. Miles stated that he will have to follow-up with the Members on how to schedule "will-calls". Mr. Glaze stated a change in text messages regarding the arrival time of your bus will be a "window of approximate time" as opposed to an exact time, adding another feature is that if as a rider you are the next person to be picked up, a pop-up will show you where the bus is currently located. In response to a Member's question, Mr. Glaze stated that equivalent access to the app can be used through a tablet or any other "mobile" device, but not a computer.

Mr. Miles stated that it is difficult to tell how many people will use the app as opposed to calling in to Dispatch to talk to a live person. Mr. Glaze continued by stated that Connect's goal is to try to help people in one way or another, adding that some people may just use the app to cancel a trip as it eliminates the call and being placed on hold. With a couple of clicks, a trip can be cancelled through the app and it's done.

### **ISU Flyer**

Mr. Glaze stated that Staff has been working on drafting a flyer for ISU students and was presented to the Members by Maddie Lehman, a Connect Operations Supervisor, for Member's questions and comments. Ms. Lehman stated that Connect has received feedback from some of the student riders regarding Connect's Rider's Guide, adding that a great majority of students are not from this area, so a *Student Rider Guide – Redbird Express* has been drafted to better assist students. The flyer sets out Connections to Main Locations (such as Walmart; Hospitals; Theatres; etc.); the Redbird Daily and Late Night Schedules; Service Schedule for Redbird; and a Redbird map with Weekday Times and Redbird Week-end Times.

A Member suggested adding the Post Office in Bloomington on the main location list for international students.

Mr. Glaze stated that Connect's goal with this new flyer is that our students are a large portion of our ridership and we are trying to identify a few high ridership areas that they may take and give them a very quick explanation how to get there to assist them in the ability to get around town.

Members suggested that the flyer should state when the last bus leaves for Uptown so that the students know when they can catch the bus to get back and to also add the Bloomington Library to the Main Locations and placing some kind of revision and/or expiration date on the flyer and stating somewhere on the flyer a "reminder" to bring their Student ID card.

### **Better Bus Stops Campaign**

Mr. Glaze shared with the Members that the first 20 bus stops were completed in Normal and the Civil Engineer is currently working on Bloomington sites. Out of the 20 Normal stops, 9 are ready for construction. College Avenue/Young Drive, behind the Dairy Queen Connect will be adding a sidewalk and a shelter; Cottage Avenue/Ashbrook Connect will be adding a connecting curb to the sidewalk; Gregory Street/Adelaide Street will have a connecting pad added; University/Willow Street will have a pad added with repair to the curb cut; Shellbourne/Charlotte will have a connecting pad and semme seats added. Mr. Glaze added that these should all be completed by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Landmark/Kroger will be getting a connecting pad; Portillo's will be getting a connecting pad; Advocate BroMenn (Virginia/Franklin Ave.) – Advocate is going to put in a shelter at its own expense; across the street Connect will place a connecting pad for this stop; OSF/Ft. Jesse will also be getting a shelter. The remaining 11 stops on the list of the 20, most will need *Easement Agreements* which will take a little bit longer to achieve completion. Mr. Glaze stated that the new VA Clinic on Hamilton Road, Connect is placing a shelter at that stop and also on the corner of Southgate, a shelter will be placed there. In the Orlando area where the PINK runs, just to the West of the Bayberry Complex, there will be a shelter placed there as well. In closing, Mr. Glaze stated that the biggest hurdles have been the lack of space at some stops to place a shelter and in other places the grade of sidewalks and curbs are located in positions not conducive to a shelter. As a reminder, Mr. Glaze stated that IDOT and ADA guidelines require a shelter to be 8' back from the curb and 5' wide.

A Member mentioned that the Corncrib stop tends to be a muddy mess and Mr. Glaze responded that there is no sidewalk on the South side heading back to Uptown, this will have to be a combined effort to improve that stop. He added that the Town and City have been very helpful with Connect's endeavor of improving all of the targeted stops. IDOT has been in touch with Mr. Glaze and stated that it will be resurfacing and adding sidewalks along Empire Street from West Market almost to the airport and stated that any of our stops that are not accessible, IDOT will improve or construct for Connect.

### **Member Update on CTTF Working Group**

Member Linda Foster presented an update to the CTTF Working Group and its progress as she is also a Member of the Working Group. She stated that the Facilitating Group, *Smart Growth America*, is guiding the Working Group by taking what we have in our own community and helping us to see how the Group can improve it. The concerns that were brought up were: accessibility; ridership; affordability; and safety. She stated the Group discussed Bloomington-Normal transit history over the years and



giving background of the improvements and direction of what is now Connect Transit. From the history discussions, four (4) different sub-committees were developed:

- 1) Ridership/Accessibility;
- 2) Land Use and Development – making sure Connect Transit is at the table;
- 3) Sustainable funding – taking what we have and make it last. Making certain that the purchases made will take it to the next level;
- 4) Economic Partners/Community Partners – those entities who have employees using transit to get to the business establishment – employers should buy-in to transit and help support transit in a similar way that ISU and other educational entities participate.

At this point, Member Foster stated that each sub-committee is working toward evaluations and recommendations to bring to the whole Group. She added that the CTTF Members are very engaged and committed to the recommendations based on what will be brought to the table and help Connect move forward.

#### **CTAC Member Comments/Suggestions**

Member John Corey reported that the *Pilot* is the new bus station – 4 Mega buses and 2 Greyhounds per day.

Member Shirley Craig commented on Willow Street's problem with student traffic during certain parts of the day and asked if the YELLOW route drivers are reporting any problems with staying on schedule because of the long waits to get through the stop signs?

Mr. Glaze stated that the YELLOW has always been a very tight route makes most of its connections with the RED and GREEN – with all three (3) of those being 15-minute service, the wait is at max only 15 minutes for the next bus.

#### **Adjournment**

Member Evelyn Johnson moved to adjourn, seconded by Member Linda Foster.

AYE: All.

NAY: None.

The CTAC meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

  
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Jill Bower, Connect Transit Board Clerk