

**CONNECT TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING - September 19, 2018**

The Connect Transit Advisory Committee meeting was held at the Connect Transit Board Room #135, 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, Illinois 61761 on September 19, 2018 at 4:15 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Emory Davis
 Shirley Craig
 Linda Foster (arrived late)
 Evelyn Johnson
 John Corey (arrived late)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Elaina VonQualen - excused
 Wayne Layton – excused
 Noha Shawki - excused

STAFF PRESENT: General Manager, Isaac Thorne
 Transit Operations Manager, Martin Glaze
 Marketing Manager, Jeff Holtke
 Safety and Training Director, Dave White

General Manager Isaac Thorne opened the meeting with rollcall. Members approved the *Minutes* of the last meeting held on July 11, 2018 by Motion of Member Evelyn Johnson, seconded by Member Emory Davis.

There were no public comments.

General Manager Thorne stated that CTAC has open positions on the *Advisory Committee* and that Connect is currently accepting applications for replacements.

Members unanimously approved the *Minutes* of the last meeting held on July 11, 2018 by Motion of Member Evelyn Johnson, seconded by Member Emory Davis.

Customer Training Program

General Manager Isaac Thorne requested Connect Transit's Safety and Training Director, Dave White, to present the new in-house program to the *Advisory Committee*.

As background to the Members of the Advisory Committee, Director White stated that in July he received an email from a Director at *Marcfirst*, who was also a member of an autism-friendly community group. Director White continued to state the Director at *Marcfirst* reached out to Director White to inquire whether Connect had any specific provisions in its training for autistic or individuals in the autistic spectrum. Director White continued to state that after the discussion with the Director at *Marcfirst*, Connect staff members moved toward the creation of a training program

in which Connect would teach its employees, bus operators, customer service personnel, dispatchers and maintenance personnel to have a better understanding of the many reasons certain reactions or responses may be or are exhibited by some of our customers in the midst of situational circumstances. Director White added that Staff is also in the process of re-writing all training materials related to customer service which will prove to be much more detailed than what is mandatory under the ADA standards. Director White continued to state that this training would be all-inclusive to any customers that might be hesitant or uncomfortable to ride the buses for one reason or another. Director White also added that this training would be open to the public.

General Manager Thorne added that Connect will also “train the trainer”. General Manager Thorne explained that Members of CTAC or other individuals in the community will be given the opportunity to train other individuals on how to use the bus system in an effort to assist new riders who would not ordinarily see riding buses as an option.

Phase II - Better Bus Stops Campaign

General Manager Thorne stated that Connect is currently in Phase I of the Campaign. Connect previously identified an additional 15 bus stops listed for improvement this year whether it be a new pad, shelter, or a bench. Connect is now working with the City and Town to take steps toward making all the bus stops ADA compliant. General Manager Thorne stated that Connect’s plan is to start early on 2020 bus stop improvements and getting those to the City and Town well in advance to confirm there will be no issues to delay Connect proceeding into Phase II. General Manager Thorne added that the bus stops that are not completed by winter will be carried over into next spring. General Manager Thorne reported that the bus stop at Wal-Mart in Normal has received approval by the Wal-Mart executives; the design plan is complete and Connect is now in the process of obtaining bids. General Manager Thorne stated that Connect will obtain an *Easement Agreement* with Wal-Mart in Normal to increase the size of the bus stop for Connect customers.

General Manager Thorne shared with each Member a list of the *FY 2020 Bus Stop Improvement Plan*, which he added may be updated by the next meeting. Some routes will have added and/or reduced frequency with a small fare restructure as well in *FY 2020*, if approved. General Manager Thorne added that fare rates have not increased since 2007.

The CTAC Members thanked General Manager Thorne for the bus stop at McArthur.

General Manager Thorne reminded the Members that the next CTAC meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2018 at 4:15 p.m.

Adjournment

Member John Corey moved that the meeting adjourn, seconded by Member Linda Foster.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.