

**CONNECT TRANSIT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PROCEEDINGS OF MARCH 27, 2018**

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 March 27, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Mike McCurdy, Chairman
Ryan Whitehouse, Vice Chairman
John Thomas, Trustee
Judy Buchannan, Trustee
John Bowman, Trustee
Monica Bullington, Trustee

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Jennifer McDade, Trustee

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

STAFF PRESENT: Isaac Thorne, General Manager

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike McCurdy at 4:30 p.m. Roll call was taken. Trustee Jennifer McDade was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

AWARD OF FINANCIAL REPORTING ACHIEVEMENT

The Board recognized Patrick Kuebrich, Connect Transit's *Finance Director*, and congratulated him for the award recently presented to him by *The Government Financial Officers Association*. Connect Transit has been awarded this recognition by the *Association* two (2) years in a row.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting of February 27, 2018.
2. Disbursements for Month of February, 2018
3. Financial Report for Month of February, 2018

4. Capital and Self Insurance Reserve Fund Balances for month of February, 2018
5. Monthly Statistical Report for month of February, 2018
6. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report

Motion by Trustee John Bowman was made to approve the *Consent Agenda* of the February 27, 2018 Board Meeting. Motion was seconded by Trustee Judy Buchanan

There were no questions or discussion regarding the *Consent Agenda*.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried that the *Consent Agenda* of the February 27, 2018 Board of Trustees meeting be approved.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Recommendation for the Connect Transit Facility Guide and Three (3) Year Bus Stop Improvement Plan

General Manager Isaac Thorne reported that the Connect Transit Staff, together with the *Connect Transit Advisory Committee*, have been working on the *Facility Guide* and *Three (3) Bus Stop Improvement Plan* for many months. After careful consideration a list of locations has been comprised to place shelters, benches or ADA landing pads. A recommendation was made that the Board approve the *Plan*.

DISCUSSION

During discussions between the Trustees and the General Manager, it was explained that during the first year of the *Plan*, building would begin on the stops where landing pads can easily be connected with sidewalks and shelters and benches would begin to be built where Connect will not have to obtain an *Easement* from another party. In years two (2) and three (3), Connect is allowing more time to work together with the *Town of Normal* and *City of Bloomington* where a sidewalk will be required to be built before it can move forward in placing a shelter at that location. Regarding the location of Walmart at Parkway Plaza, Connect desires to place a "cut-in" so the buses are off the street. In order to do that, there is enough right-of-way to place two (2) shelters without having to sign an *Easement Agreement* with Walmart. However, an *Easement Agreement* will have to be

executed with the Walmart in Normal. In the meantime, our talks with the representatives from the Normal Walmart about what our plans are to improve that bus stop still need to happen. Both stops have about an average of 400 drop-offs per day.

Connect has identified about 200 stops out of 600 that need improvement under the recommended *Three (3) Year Plan*. The *Plan* projects the total cost around \$300,000 over a period of three (3) years. The first year projected cost for FY 2019 is \$212,000. Moving forward into years two (2) and three (3), Connect will re-prioritize FY 2020 and 2021 with CTEK, and then take a look at the stops again to make certain ridership has not fluctuated from those specific stops. We are all set to move forward in FY 2019 with the prioritized stops.

Trustee Judy Buchanan moved that the Board approve the *Connect Transit Facility Guide and Three (3) Year Bus Stop Improvement Plan*. The Motion was seconded by Trustee Monica Bullington.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion was carried and the *Connect Transit Facility Guide and Three (3) Year Bus Stop Improvement Plan* was approved by the Board.

Recommendation of Fiscal Year 2019 Operating and Capital Budget

The *2019 Operating and Capital Budget* was presented to the Board of Trustees by General Manager Isaac Thorne for approval. Pat Kuebrich, Connect Transit's *Finance Director* discussed a few of the items on the budget and was also available during the meeting to answer any of the Board's questions.

DISCUSSION

A main point of discussion related to the UBER displays. UBER will install the LED display screens on five (5) buses (at their expense) on which Connect is responsible for selling the advertising slots on each display which holds up to seven (7) rotating ads. Each rotating ad slot will cost \$200 and Connect will receive 50% of that revenue. Once 75% of the ad slots are sold, UBER will install another five (5) LED display screens (at their expense) on an additional five (5) buses.

Chairman Mike McCurdy entertained a Motion and a second for the Board's approval of the *Recommendation of Fiscal Year 2019 Operating and Capital Budget*.

Trustee Judy Buchanan moved for the Board's approval of the Recommendation, and the same was seconded by Trustee John Thomas.

AYE: All

NAY: None.

Motion carried and the Board approved the Recommendation of Fiscal Year 2019 Operating and Capital Budget.

Connect Mobility No-Show Policy (Discussion Only)

For the sake of discussion, the definition of a "no-show" was explained by General Manager Isaac Thorne as follows:

A customer calls *Connect Mobility* to request a pre-arranged date and time (a reservation) for *Connect Mobility* to come to the customer's residence, pick them up and transport them to a certain destination at the pre-arranged time. When *Connect Mobility* arrives at the residence of the customer and the driver is then informed by the customer that they do not need a ride. When the customer fails to cancel the prior reservation, this is called a "no-show". The failure of our passengers to cancel pre-arranged reservations is a great inconvenience not only to the driver but also to the other riders.

General Manager Thorne further explained that Connect's only intention is to deter the customers who make pre-arranged reservations and then cancel without letting Connect know in advance of our driver arriving at the customer's home. This Policy is not intended to be a punishment. Connect wants to establish a more efficient program by eliminating this inconvenience to the driver and other passengers who are affected by this inefficiency caused by those customers who make a prior reservation to ride and then fail to cancel the reservation.

Martin Glaze, the *Operations Manager* of Connect Transit was also in attendance and explained that the proposed *Policy* is guided by the *ADA* regulations as well as *FTA* guidelines. *Policy* enforcement would begin by looking at a *Connect Mobility* customer when he or she had an accumulation of five (5) no-shows within a 30-day period. If those five (5) no-shows represented five percent (5%) or more of their total rides during the month, then they would be issued a 5-day suspension from riding. However, the first month they would only get a warning – then a 5 day – then a 10 day, and so on. The purpose of this process is only to deter people from no-shows. Mr. Glaze stated that this new *Policy* would create better customer service experience and would prove to be more time-efficient. Mr. Glaze reiterated that Connect's ultimate goal in creating and enforcing

this *Policy* is to deter people from no-shows rather than a punitive action to the customers in any manner.

General Manager Thorne continued by stating that the *Connect Transit Advisory Committee* is in agreement with the proposed *Policy* and would like to see it put in place immediately. Keep in mind that *Connect* is regulated by *ADA* that once you pick that passenger up – they can only be on the bus for 60 minutes.

Mr. Glaze added that the average ride right now is about 40 minutes and by enforcing the proposed *No-Show Policy* should bring that rider time down. Mr. Glaze further added that the customers will also have an appeal process and it can either be formal or informal. If there are extenuating circumstances, the appeal can be handled at that moment and the no-show can simply be discounted. If it is something that we cannot handle in a simple fashion, then it will go to the appeal level where it is placed in front of the appeals panel. Mr. Glaze continued by stating that many transit companies around the country have adopted this policy. However, the *FTA* wants to make certain it is not an overly strict *Policy* for the riders. Once this *Policy* is fully discussed, the process going forward would be to send out an informative mailing to all of our active riders who have ridden our buses within the last year. The mailing would outline the entire *Policy* and list specific dates for public meetings for discussion. Currently, we plan on around five (5) public meetings. Then we would gather the feedback from the public and bring our findings back to the Board. If approved, then all of the active riders would receive another letter informing them of the “*No-Show Policy*” and how it would be applied.

General Manager Thorne added that we hope to bring the results of our public meetings regarding the new policy back to the Board in May. If the Board chooses to approve it, we would send out another letter to all of our customers setting out a specific date that the *Policy* will become effective.

GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

General Manager Thorne reported that on the recent *One-Voice* trip we spoke with the *U.S. Department of Transportation* about the *Downtown Transfer Center* and the project received some very good feedback. He also recently met with the *City of Bloomington* staff and discussed the locations for the placement of the *Downtown Transfer Center*.

He further stated that the Omnibus Bill that just passed gives reason for excitement because it will be a \$1Billion increase in TIGER funding and the funding for bus and bus facilities will be \$408Million. This presents a great opportunity for *Connect Transit* to apply for both of those Grants for our *Downtown Transfer Center* project.

General Manager Thorne added that *Connect* has now taken delivery of 10 *New Flyer* diesel buses and is currently installing the fare boxes and other hardware with hopes of putting them into service in May.

In closing, the General Manager introduced Brady Lange, Connect's *Maintenance Manager* and Julie Dockham, Connect's *Human Resources Director* to the Board of Trustees.

TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS

The Trustees were appreciative of the letter of support received from Congressman Darin LaHood regarding the new bus facility and publicly stated a thank you to him to let us know he is taking public transit seriously and was willing to write a letter on our behalf.

Trustee John Bowman commented that he was honored to accompany Isaac on the *One Voice* trip earlier this month. He further stated that it was interesting visiting the *Federal Transportation Administration* and that opportunity to be able to talk with those folks and share with them was of great benefit to him.

Chairman Mike McCurdy commented that we still need to look at increasing more revenue and that we should continue to look at the ways we can trim costs. As a reminder, the first *Ad Hoc Budget Committee* is to begin examining our budget and some of our outlying years where we may begin difficulties with meeting our capital budget. The first *Ad Hoc Budget Committee* meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 3rd. Both of our Ex-Officios have agreed to serve on that Committee, along with Vice Chair Ryan Whitehouse and myself. We will be reporting back to the Board regularly about our discussions regarding FY 2020-2021, looking at ways to keep the system moving forward in a strong fashion.

The Board thanked Mark Peterson for his service and political mentorship as he retires from the Board. The Board presented Mark with a gift card and thanked him for his service to the Board from 1999-2018.

Chairman McCurdy informed the Board that over the coming month, he will be circulating the *By-Laws* of Connect Transit for review. Some minor edits need to be looked at and discussed. We will be asking for input from the Trustees and the Ex-Officios with hopes that we will be able to discuss and vote on the updated *By-Laws* at either the next meeting or the meeting after.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – cite section

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn by Trustee John Thomas and Seconded by Trustee John Bowman.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.