

**CONNECT TRANSIT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PROCEEDINGS OF MAY 27, 2014**

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 May 27, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Bill Wilson, Vice-Chairman
Mike McCurdy, Secretary
John Bowman
John Thomas
Ryan Whitehouse

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Judy Buchanan, Chairman
Felicia Shaw

CITY MANAGERS: Mark Peterson, Town of Normal Manager

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Johnson, General Manager
Jennifer Sorenson, Community Relations Manager
Julie Phillips, Executive Assistant - Labor Relations

The meeting was called to order by the Vice-Chairman at 4:32 p.m. Roll call was taken.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Trustee Felicia Shaw arrived at 4:33 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting of April 22, 2014, Board of Trustees Advocacy Committee Meeting of May 13, 2014 and Board of Trustees Board Manual Meeting of May 15, 2014
2. Disbursements for Month of April, 2014
3. Financial Report for Month of April, 2014
4. Capital and Self Insurance Reserve Fund Balances for month of April, 2014
5. Monthly Statistical Report for month of April, 2014

Motion by Trustee John Bowman, seconded by Trustee Felicia Shaw that the Consent Agenda items be approved as presented.

AYE: All

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Secretary Mike McCurdy abstained from item #2 ó Disbursements for the Month of April, 2014.

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

General Manager Andrew Johnson addressed the Board. Chairperson Judy Buchanan was due to arrive for the meeting at any moment. He requested that the Executive Session and New Business item G1, Ratification of ATU Local 752 Collective Bargaining Agreement ó January 15, 2014 to June 30, 2017 be delayed until Chairperson Buchanan's arrival. He requested that the Board consider item G2, Review and Approve ó Heartland Community College Universal Access Agreement first. The Board agreed.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Review and Approve ó Heartland Community College Universal Access Agreement.

General Manager Andrew Johnson stated that Connect Transit and Heartland Community College have partnered in a Universal Access Agreement for a number of years. Heartland has a high volume of users. The 2014 Agreement represents at 9.1% fee increase over the previous year for a total contract amount of \$120,000 per year.

Secretary Mike McCurdy questioned if the cost per ride was comparable with Illinois State University Universal Access Agreement. Mr. Johnson responded that it was. Secretary McCurdy questioned if the payment for the Universal Access Agreement was funded by student fees. Mr. Johnson responded that it did, however, it did not show as a line item in the student's overall tuition and fees bill.

Chairperson Judy Buchanan arrived at 4:36 p.m.

Motion by Trustee John Thomas, Seconded by Trustee Felicia Shaw that the Heartland Community College Universal Access Agreement be approved.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Chairperson Judy Buchanan, seconded by Secretary Mike McCurdy to adjourn to Executive Session.

Time: 4:40 p.m.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Secretary Mike McCurdy, seconded by Chairperson Judy Buchanan to adjourn the Executive Session and return to Regular Session.

Time: 5:35 p.m.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA ó CONTINUED:

1. Ratification of ATU Local 752 Collective Bargaining Agreement ó January 15, 2014 ó June 30, 2017.

Motion by Secretary Mike McCurdy, seconded by Chairperson Judy Buchanan that the ATU Local 752 Collective Bargaining Agreement ó January 15, 2014 ó June 30, 2017 be ratified and the General Manager be authorized to execute the necessary documents.

General Manager Andrew Johnson thanked Connect Transit staff members, Jenifer Clark, Human Resources Director, Roy Rickert, Transit Operations Director, Pat Keubrich, Finance Director, Tom Crouch, Interim Maintenance Director and the members of the ATU Local 752 Bargaining Committee, Mick Ferrell, Orhan Brian Enata and Andy Moore for their cooperation and hard work with putting the Agreement together. Chairperson Judy Buchanan echoed Mr. Johnson's statement on behalf of the Board of Directors.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

3. Review and Approve Lincoln College Normal Universal Access Agreement.

General Manager Andrew Johnson stated that this Universal Access Agreement with Lincoln College-Normal is the smallest of the three agreements. Although it is the smallest, ridership has been increasing steadily. As Lincoln College-Normal's ridership has increased, this Agreement represents a 35.2% increase from the previous year. Lincoln College-Normal is aware of their increased ridership and is evaluating and preparing for continued increased ridership.

Motion by Trustee John Thomas, seconded by Trustee John Bowman that the Lincoln College-Normal Universal Access Agreement be approved.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

4. Radio Advertising Agreement.

General Manager Andrew Johnson introduced this item. He stated that staff has been working toward promoting awareness of Connect Transit and its services throughout the community and would like to begin utilizing different sources to convey that message. Mr. Johnson requested that Jennifer Sorenson, Community Relations Manager address the Board to further explain the Radio Advertising Agreement.

Ms. Sorenson addressed the Board. She stated that she had been speaking with Great Plains Media a great deal regarding radio advertising. The agreement includes air time and twenty-five commercials per week on two different radio stations. Additionally, Great Plains Media partners with Connect Transit for its annual "Stuff the Bus" event. Some Great Plains Media's popular radio personalities will also participate in and promote Connect Transit events.

Motion by Trustee Ryan Whitehouse, seconded by Vice Chairman Bill Wilson that the Radio Advertising Agreement be approved.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

5. Advertising Rate Sheet.

General Manager Andrew Johnson reminded the Board that an Advertising Guidelines policy had been passed by them previously on June 22, 2012. Allowing advertising on the buses would be a revenue generating tool. Mr. Johnson requested that Melissa Chrisman, Business Development Manager describe the Advertising Rate Sheet and the advertising process.

Ms. Chrisman addressed the Board. Connect Transit had allowed an advertisement to be placed on some of the buses as a pilot program. As a result there were ten companies waiting to purchase advertising space. The Advertising rate sheet was based on what size buses are available for advertising and in comparison to other transit systems. The rates are slightly higher than other transit systems due to the current demand, but also to allow for negotiating room.

Trustee John Thomas questioned if the clients would be responsible for the cost of installing the advertising. Ms. Chrisman affirmed. Mr. Johnson noted that the client would also be responsible for its removal.

Secretary Mike McCurdy questioned the advertising rate for non-profit organizations. Ms. Chrisman responded that the current rate sheet did not include a discount for non-profit organizations. She found during her comparison analysis that some systems allow a 10% reduction in the rate, other systems do not.

Mr. Johnson stated that further research could be conducted on a discounted rate for non-profit organizations and the Advertising Rate Sheet could be amended by the Board at a future Board meeting.

Town of Normal Manager Mark Peterson left the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Motion by Vice Chairman Bill Wilson, seconded by Secretary Mike McCurdy that the Advertising Rate Sheet be approved.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

6. Revised Sick Time Policy.

General Manager Andrew Johnson stated that the current non represented employee sick time policy does not match the sick time policy of the newly ratified ATU Local 752 agreement for represented employees. This revision will equalize the sick time policy for both the represented and non-represented employees.

Secretary Mike McCurdy questioned if the intent was to match the collective bargaining agreement. Mr. Johnson affirmed.

Trustee Ryan Whitehouse questioned if a Paid Time Off (PTO) policy for all employees had been considered. Mr. Johnson stated that it had not. Trustee Whitehouse suggested that a PTO policy may have some benefit to the system. He recommended that staff research and consider such a policy. Trustee Whitehouse stated that he would be would like to be involved in the process.

SICK LEAVE

ENTITLEMENT: It is the policy of Connect Transit to provide protection for its fulltime and employees against loss of income because of illness. All eligible employees are encouraged to save as much sick leave as possible to meet serious illness situations. It is a self-insurance program provided by Connect Transit and earned by the employee

SICK LEAVE BENEFIT: All regular full-time, non-union Connect Transit employees receive (12) days sick leave credit at the beginning of the calendar year. A pro-rata amount will be granted to all newly hired employees based on their individual date of hire. At the end of the calendar year, an employee may carry over any unused sick days from the prior year. Sick leave may be accumulated to the maximum of (45) days. When an employee is eligible to begin receiving payments from Connect Transit's Section 457 Deferred Compensation plan without any penalty and the employee files official notice of intent to retire and/or resign in good standing from Connect Transit, the employee may elect to have their accumulated sick leave balance paid to the Section 457 Deferred Compensation plan.

TAKING UNEARNED SICK LEAVE NOT PERMITTED: No employee will be permitted to take leave not yet earned. Sick leave shall be paid at full pay at the employee's current rate of compensation.

PURPOSE OF SUCH LEAVE: Employees may utilize sick leave when they are too ill to report to work, in the event of injury, or for routine medical and dental appointments. Employees may also use sick leave to care for other ill persons within the employee's immediate family. The immediate family shall be defined as an employee's spouse and children within the home. All foreseeable leave for such purposes shall require specific prior approval of the Department Head. In the event of sick leave usage for any purpose, the Department Head may require certification of a medical doctor confirming validity of the illness/injury.

NOTIFICATION: An employee must contact their direct supervisor at least one hour prior to their scheduled start time to request the use of sick leave. During authorized sick leave, an employee must notify the Department Head periodically so that the Department Head may plan on the return. This may be waived in the event of confinement or illness for a specific period of time as indicated in a physician's statement. The standard procedure for use of sick leave benefits is as follows:

A) An employee on sick leave shall inform the Department Head or designated supervisor of the facts and the reason for the absence as soon as possible. Failure to do so on the first (1st) day of illness may be cause for denial of the sick leave pay for the period of absence.

B) Absence for part of a day that is chargeable to sick leave shall be charged proportionately in an amount not less than one (1) hours per day.

C) An employee returning to work after an extended illness of longer than three (3) consecutive days may be required to provide a physician's statement substantiating that the employee may return to work.

Failure to apply for a leave of absence for extended illness upon expiration of all such benefits will result in automatic termination.

D) Notice of an employee's desire to return to work after an illness of one week or more must be given to the Department Head no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, on the workday prior to the date for return to work. The employer may request a physician's note to verify propriety of returning to work and noting any restrictions which the employer will consider and accommodate when appropriate.

AUTHORITY TO SEND HOME: The General Manager and/or the Department Head may direct an employee who appears ill to leave work. In such instances, this time off shall be charged to available sick leave.

EXCLUDED FROM OVERTIME BASE: Sick pay for hours not worked will be excluded when computing overtime for the workweek in which it was taken.

RATE OF PAY FOR SICK TIME: An employee shall be paid sick leave equivalent to their normally scheduled straight time pay.

RESULTS OF IMPROPER USE OR REPORTING: An employee who uses sick leave for purposes other than those authorized by this policy or who otherwise use sick leave in a manner inconsistent with this policy or a Department Head who falsely certified sick leave allowance for absence from work may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

EFFECT OF WORKER'S COMPENSATION PAYMENTS: Employees who are injured on the job and have lost time from the job because of their injury may not receive sick leave payments once Worker's Compensation Insurance payments begin.

BALANCE NOT PAID UPON TERMINATION: Upon termination from Connect Transit service, accumulated but unused sick leave benefits will not be paid, except in the case of an employee who is eligible to receive benefits without penalty under Connect Transit's Section 457 Deferred Compensation plan and who files notice of intent to retire from Connect Transit.

Motion by Vice Chairman Bill Wilson, seconded by Secretary Mike McCurdy that the Revised Sick Time Policy be approved.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Website Update.

Mr. Johnson stated that Connect Transit's new website had an anticipated go live date of June 23, 2014. He requested that Jennifer Sorenson, Community Relations Manager present a snapshot of what the new website's home page would look like.

Ms. Sorenson provided two pages of what the new website's home page would look like as well as a snapshot on the overhead computer screen. She noted that all of the features on the new website would be shown in real time including emergency alerts. Additionally, any alerts would appear on both Twitter and Facebook. There is an area that will show links to up to nine Connect Transit partners. Ms. Sorenson also noted that the new website has several additional exciting features including being Americans with Disabilities (ADA) equipment compatible, such as a vibrations feature for the visually impaired, (similar to braille). It also has the ability to be shown in different languages, in different font sizes.

Advocacy Update.

Mr. Johnson stated that with thanks to Trustee Ryan Whitehouse, Connect Transit and staff had the opportunity to meet and spend time with Congressman Rodney Davis. Connect Transit staff attended a press conference Congressman Davis held at the Normal Uptown Station on May 14, 2014 and Connect Transit hosted Congressman Davis at its Wylie Drive facility on May 23, 2014 for a tour of the facility. Both events provided decent media attention for Connect Transit and also the opportunity to talk about the new Front Street Transfer Station in Bloomington, and to discuss the many challenges the transit faces with things such as funding and procurement processes.

Additionally, several ride alongs have been held with the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal officials. Both mayors had recently participated. These events have provided a good platform and opportunity to explain some anticipated improvements and funding challenges.

Mr. Johnson stated that he is composing a letter for the Board to authorize and sent on their behalf that will push for Congressional support for the successful replenishment of the Highway Transit Fund and push for a multi-year transportation bill. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) has a strong recommendation for public transportation funding which is line with other means of surface transportation. Staff will continue working toward these efforts.

Finally, Connect Transit has been garnering a lot of notice among the industry for its embrace of and utilization of APTA's advocacy campaign, "Where Transportation Goes, Community Grows". Connect Transit has been using the campaign slogan for its own advocacy programs and has been successfully pushing the campaign slogan.

TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS

Chairperson Judy Buchanan stated that ride alongs with City of Bloomington Council members were slated to be held in June and July in the 11:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. timeframe.

Trustee Felicia Shaw reminded the Board that the 2014 Board Members ATPA seminar would be held in Cleveland, OH in July. She encouraged Board members to consider attending.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Secretary Mike McCurdy, Seconded by Trustee Felicia Shaw to adjourn.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Time: 6:43 p.m.

Mike McCurdy, Secretary