

**CONNECT TRANSIT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PROCEEDINGS OF JUNE 24, 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 at 4:30 p.m.

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

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Felicia Shaw

CITY MANAGERS:

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Johnson, General Manager

OTHERS PRESENT: Marc Rowe Nicor Gas

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 4:35p.m. Roll call was taken.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Marilyn Evans Normal Illinois, addressed the Board. She noted that some of the Board members, Connect Transit staff and City of Bloomington Councilmen had been participating in ride alongs. She thanked the Connect Transit Board and staff for participating.

She was concerned that there is not enough advertising for the bus system. She had been unaware of the free ride for th. She was told by a bus driver. She suggested that to increase ridership more advertising would be helpful.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting of May 27, 2014 and Executive Session of April 22, 2014.
2. Disbursements for Month of June, 2014
3. Financial Report for Month of May, 2014
4. Capital and Self Insurance Reserve Fund Balances for month of May, 2014
5. Monthly Statistical Report for month of May, 2014

Motion by Secretary Mike McCurdy, seconded by Vice Chairman Bill Wilson that the Consent Agenda items be approved as presented.

AYE: All

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Secretary Mike McCurdy abstained from item #2 Disbursements for the Month of June, 2014 with regard to any bills pertaining to WGLT.

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Felicia Shaw arrived at 5:01 p.m.

Compressed Natural Gas Assessment

Andrew Johnson, General Manager addressed the Board. He stated that the Economic Development Council (EDC) had previously recommended that Connect Transit research Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as a fuel alternative. After discussion with local leaders, elected officials and the EDC, Connect Transit requested that a CNG Assessment be conducted. Nicor Gas conducted such an assessment and its representative, Marc Rowe was present to discuss the assessment with the Board.

Marc Rowe Nicor Gas addressed the Board. He thanked the Board and Connect Transit the opportunity to present the CNG Assessment. He introduced two colleagues also present, Ian Skelton, Director, Natural Gas Vehicle Markets, AGL Resources, and Bernie Anderson, Manager, Community Relations & Economic Development, Nicor Gas.

Mr. Rowe stated that there is a large group that is interested in CNG as a fuel alternative. He and other Nicor personnel toured Connect Transit information to conduct the CNG Assessment.

He stated that natural gas is an abundant fuel source found in North America and the United States. Burning natural gas produces considerably less carbon emissions compared to gasoline and diesel fuel. Replacing aged buses with new CNG buses and integrating a CNG fueling strategy presents a large fuel savings opportunity on an annual basis along with a lower life cycle cost of the CNG buses. Mr. Rowe reviewed the Vehicle Replacement Strategy and Incremental CNG Bus Costs, and CNG Fueling Considerations. He provided an overview of a transit system in Atlanta, GA that utilizes CNG fuel.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager requested that Mr. Rowe explain how a CNG Fueling Station could service not only transit but outside fleets. Mr. Rowe responded that a CNG Fueling Station could be built to accommodate not only Connect Transit Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles (CNV) but would also have the capability of accommodating additional CNV. The Fueling Station would be modeled in such a way that it would be available for other CNV users but separated to prevent any interference with Connect Transit

Mr. Johnson noted that the current ongoing bus procurement process allows the option to purchase CNVs and hybrid vehicles. There would be a great deal of flexibility in the purchase of these alternative fuel vehicles so there is the potential to build a CNG Fueling Station. The ongoing bus procurement is a five (5) year process. Funding for building a CNG Fueling Station is at question. A privately funded and built CNG fueling station would fit into the five (5) year bus procurement process, however, a Federal Transit Authority (FTA) built station would not likely fit due to the FTA application/grant/build process.

There is the possibility of a private/public partnership. The Federal Government encourages private/public partnerships. Bernie Anderson, Nicor Gas addressed the Board. He stated that CNG fuel alternative is trending quickly across the country and is coming to our community. Connect Transit would be wise to consider when it should prepare for it, now or later. The current bus procurement process would be a key factor in preparation. Mr. Johnson concurred. He stated that it was important that Connect Transit make wise decisions now in order to best plan for the future. The new buses procured will become part of Connect Transit fleet for at least 15 years. Chairperson Buchanan questioned if other transit systems had private/public partnerships. Mr. Johnson stated that some did. He would reach out to those communities to gather information regarding the pros/cons of a partnership.

Further discussion centered on fuel savings and how soon an agency would begin realizing the benefits of a CNG fueling system, the volatility of natural gas prices and the difference in price over petroleum based fuel products.

Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance Agreement

General Manager Andrew Johnson introduced this item. He stated that the Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance Agreement is an annual agreement that allows Connect Transit to receive funding from the State of Illinois. The State funding provides the agency 65% of its operating cost. Each year, Connect Transit must adopt a Resolution and execute the Agreement in order to receive the funds.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION AND AMENDMENT OF DOWNSTATE OPERATING ASSISTANCE GRANT AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the provision of public transportation service is essential to the people of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Downstate Public Transportation Act (30 ILCS 740/2-1 *et seq.*) (State of Illinois, acting by and through the Illinois Department of Transportation, to provide grants and make funds available to assist in the development and operation of public transportation systems; and

WHEREAS, grants for said funds will impose certain obligations upon the recipient, including provision by it of the local share of funds necessary to cover costs not covered by funds provided under the Downstate Public Transportation Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM:

Section 1. That the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System enter into a Downstate Public Transportation Operating Assistance Agreement (State of Illinois and amend such Agreement, if necessary, for fiscal year 2015 in order to obtain grant assistance under the provisions of the Act.

Section 2. That the Chairman, Judy Buchanan of the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement or its amendment(s) on behalf of the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System for such assistance for fiscal year 2015.

Section 3. That the General Manager of the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System is hereby authorized to provide such information and file such documents as may be required to perform the Agreement and to request and receive the grant funding for fiscal year 2015.

Section 4. That while participating in said operating assistance program the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System shall provide all required local matching funds.

PRESENTED and ADOPTED this 24th day of June, 2014

Judy Buchanan

Chairman

Attest:

Mike McCurdy

Secretary

Motion by Trustee John Bowman, Seconded by Vice Chairman Bill Wilson that the Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance Agreement be approved and the Resolution adopted.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

General Manager, Andrew Johnson updated the Board regarding the Highway Trust Fund and Mass Transit Account. Currently it remains unclear how Congress will act on these items. It remains projected that the Mass Transit Account funds will run out at the end of the year. He informed the Board that Connect Transit staff would be watching this situation closely and would keep the Board updated.

The Business Development Manager, Melissa Chrisman has been successful at securing a pilot project for Universal Access with Country Financial.

Staff has been meeting with Economic Development Council (EDC) and the Chamber of Commerce to discuss how Connect Transit can be a bigger part of the selling package when businesses are considering the Bloomington/Normal area.

Staff has been conducting ride alongs with the City of Bloomington Council members. They have been going well. The Council members have asked a lot of questions and had some really good conversations regarding projects and priorities. More ride alongs will be scheduled.

Finally, Mr. Johnson presented Chairperson Judy Buchanan with a plaque of appreciation. This would be the last meeting that she would preside over as Chairman. Mr. Johnson thanked Chairperson Buchanan for her great leadership during her time as Chairman. Chairperson Buchanan thanked Mr. Johnson and congratulated Vice Chairman Bill Wilson, Secretary Mike McCurdy and Trustee John Bowman for their future roles as Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, respectively.

TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Felicia Shaw, Seconded by Vice Chairman Bill Wilson to adjourn to Executive Session.

Time: 5:33 p.m.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Vice Chairman Bill Wilson, seconded by Trustee Felicia Shaw to return to Regular Session and adjourn.

Time: 6:06 p.m.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Mike McCurdy, Secretary