

Connect Transit Board of Trustees
May 23, 2023, 4:30pm
351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761 – Board Room
Regular Session Minutes – Approved at 6/27/23 Meeting

Chairman Ryan Whitehouse called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
Board Clerk, Janice Crago, recorded attendance via roll call.

Trustees Present: Trustee Judy Buchanan (4:31 p.m.)
Vice Chair Julie Hile
Secretary Tim McCue
Trustee Mandava Rao
Chairman Ryan Whitehouse

Trustees Absent: Trustee Linda Foster
Trustee Barbara Singer

City Managers Present: None

Staff Present: David Braun, General Manager
Aubrey Staton, Marketing Manager
Brady Lange, Procurement Director
Charlie Busse, Maintenance Manager
Janice Crago, Board Clerk
Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director
Shelly Perry, Operations Manager
Stephanie Butler, HR Manager
Steve Stockton, IT Manager

Guest(s) Present: David Perlmutter, Via Mobility (Virtual)
Peter Wajda, Via Mobility (Virtual)
Cathal O’Gorman, Via Mobility (Virtual)
Rachel Birnbaum, Via Mobility (Virtual)
Keith Dobrolinsky, Assurance Agency, Ltd. (Virtual)

Chairman Whitehouse led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Connect Transit Mission Statement.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
None

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approval of April 25, 2023, Annual Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of April 25, 2023, Regular Session Minutes
- c. Approval of Financial Information for April 2023
- d. Monthly Statistical Reports for April 2023
- e. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report
- f. Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update

Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda.

Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded by Secretary McCue Rao.

Discussion:

David Braun, General Manager, noted all of the statistical reports reflected data trending positively. Mr. Braun stated the Cardinal Infrastructure report does show some changes, but they are changes Connect is already aware of. Mr. Braun stated we are monitoring all of the bills in progress listed in the Cornerstone report.

Chairman Whitehouse stated the ridership numbers are up, service hours are down, and Connect Mobility is stabilizing.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse
NAY: None

Consent Agenda was **approved**.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Authorize the General Manager to renew the property and casualty insurance effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to renew the property and casualty insurance effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

Trustee Rao motioned; seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

Discussion:

Mr. Braun stated when we were preparing the FY24 budget we estimated the amount for this expense, and we now have the final numbers for Board consideration.

Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director, explained Connect is renewing the property and casualty insurance for the term of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. This renewal covers the following insurance coverage: workers' compensation, property, general liability, automotive liability, automotive comprehensive, umbrella liability, directors and officers liability and employment practices liability, fiduciary, cyber liability, and crime insurance.

The premium for the workers' compensation insurance renewal will increase \$45,605 (from \$263,104 FY23 to \$308,709 FY24). The increase is due to an increase in projected salaries for FY24 and an increased Experience Mod.

The premium for the Property and Casualty Insurance renewal will also increase. The total increase is \$50,164 (from \$451,563 FY23 to \$501,727 FY24). The majority of this premium increase (\$30,660) is from the automotive liability and comprehensive coverage. This increase is due to the new electric buses we purchased and an overall increase in rates in the industry.

Even though this is a significant increase, we feel this is a reasonable renewal. We will be working with Assurance for help with programs to mitigate our claims in the future.

The total cost for this renewal of all policies shown in the table below is \$810,436, a \$95,769 (13.4%) increase over FY23. The increase was anticipated and included in the FY24 Operating Budget.

Chairman Whitehouse stated Workman's Comp expense is unusually expensive in Illinois overall, so he is not surprised by this cost.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None

The motion to authorize the General Manager to renew the property and casualty insurance effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024 was **approved**.

- b. Authorize the staff to implement the first microtransit zone in the area identified by Via Mobility as the Southwest Zone.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the staff to implement the first microtransit zone in the area identified by Via Mobility as the Southwest Zone.

Secretary McCue motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

Discussion:

Mr. Braun stated that at our February Board of Trustees meeting, the Board approved a contract with Via Mobility to provide microtransit software and service planning. The service planning study is meant to identify methods to improve access to public transit service with an optimized mix of transit options, including on-demand microtransit, easy to use fixed route service, and ADA compliant Connect Mobility service. Since that time, members of the staff and Via have met weekly to define expectations, share data, and discuss observations made during the study. The focus of the first phase of the study was to identify zones with potential transit demand that could be operated efficiently with an on-demand microtransit service but did not have good access to fixed route transit. Four zones were identified and compared to one another in terms of potential demand, vehicle requirements, equity, and operating cost. The first phase of the planning study has been completed and multiple zones have been analyzed.

David Perlmutter of Via Mobility shared a presentation virtually that included travel pattern data to identify areas of unmet needs, goals for microtransit, makeup of a successful zone, service design considerations, potential zone boundaries, estimated zone performance and next steps.

Secretary McCue asked why the cost per trip in the northern zone is so much more expensive compared to the other zones? David Perlmutter with Via explained it is due to a smaller ridership in that zone.

Mr. Braun stated that given the findings, it appears the Southwest Zone would be the best zone to begin service, not only for the zone performance estimates, but also because the area is uniquely challenging to serve with fixed route bus service. Mr. Braun stated this zip code does not have access to health care, there are no hospitals, the bus route is somewhat infrequent, there are no grocery stores

and it serves a lower income demographic. In addition, Six Points Road is difficult to safely serve with our fixed route due to the nature of the road and this zone includes that area. Mr. Braun reminded the Board that this is only our first zone. As the Via study continues we will look for efficiencies in our fixed route service and as we become more efficient we will be able to apply those savings to more microtransit zones or increased frequency of our fixed routes, depending on what the study shows. The goal is to provide better service with fewer costs in the long run.

Chairman Whitehouse pointed out Ferrero keeps expanding, which might increase use of microtransit. Mr. Braun stated this might create a two way flow, with riders going to the fixed route system for shopping and health care, but also from the fixed route system to Ferrero.

Chairman Whitehouse stated this was also the largest zone of households without cars. Mr. Braun confirmed.

Chairman Whitehouse shared this area has always felt neglected in the past.

Trustee Buchanan confirmed this area has been neglected in the past.

Vice Chair Hile stated this is a great pilot and a nice complement to our other projects.

Mr. Braun stated there are still many steps to accomplish before launch, but they do intend to propose a fare solution at the June Board meeting and plan to run fare free until September.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if Mr. Braun had considered the potential ramifications of launching fare free and then charging fare, taking away the fare free structure? Mr. Braun stated the expectation of being fare free will be set from the beginning.

Trustee Buchanan asked if there have been any discussions with the Union regarding this service? Mr. Braun stated we have negotiated a microtransit wage and now we are working on a shift.

Trustee Buchanan asked if our current drivers will be handling microtransit or are we looking for additional drivers? Mr. Braun stated we are looking at additional drivers.

Trustee Rao asked if we expect any misutilization of the service during the fare free launch? Mr. Braun stated he didn't expect that would happen because it is a pick up and drop off service, not a fixed route service that continues all day.

Secretary McCue asked if the fare free launch will skew the ridership number expectations? Mr. Braun stated there will be ups and downs for the service in the first few months as people try it and decide if they like it, but that it is incumbent upon us to market and educate well.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if launching fare free is the norm for microtransit services or just for our services? Mr. Braun stated we are launching fare free because it's something we do for our new services. David Perlmutter of Via stated that many of the providers launching microtransit do launch fare free as a way to promote the service. Cathal O'Gorman with Via stated launching fare free is a great way to gain rider confidence without inputting a credit card, but to expect a decrease in ridership when fares are instituted. Mr. O'Gorman further

explained that while there is that initial decrease when fares are instituted, ridership is expected to steadily increase over the next two years.

The next steps (approx. 6-week time frame) for implementing the zone include:

- Establishing software and zone parameters
- Purchasing and commissioning vehicles
- Establishing understanding with ATU Local 752
- Creating Bus Operator schedules
- Hiring and training Bus Operators
- Training Dispatchers and CSRs
- Developing microtransit service standards
- Developing marketing and public communication plan
 - Branding
 - App training
 - Understanding expectations
 - Area partnerships
- Propose fare (June 2023 Board Meeting)
- “Soft Launch” with approximately ten people to test the software and service in a live environment.
- Launch service (July 2023).

The FY24 Budget approved on April 24 includes the hours, miles, and associated costs for this service. As discussed during our March Strategic Planning Informational Session meeting, the costs are driven by the wages of the Operators assigned to the service. We expect the cost to vary as follows:

Low Estimate	\$456,428.65 – Microtransit Operator Wages
Medium Estimate	\$647,234.08 – Average Operator Wages (mix of new and senior)
High Estimate	\$695,396.02 – Top Operator Wages

It will be incumbent on us to manage the service appropriately. 65% of the cost will be covered by IDOT’s Downstate Operating Assistance Program and the remaining 35% will consist of federal and local operating funds.

Mr. Braun stated that as we launch he fully expects to experience issues that need addressing, possibly expanding the zone slightly to include Cardinal Ridge, or other issues that may pop up, and this fare free launch is the time to work the kinks out while allowing riders to use the service.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse
NAY: None

The motion to authorize the staff to implement the first microtransit zone in the area identified by Via Mobility as the Southwest Zone was **approved**.

- c. Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Creative Bus Sales, Inc. for the purchase of five 2022 BraunAbility ProMaster 3500 Low Floor Full-Size ADA vans for use in microtransit service.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Creative Bus Sales, Inc. for the purchase of five 2022 BraunAbility ProMaster 3500 Low Floor Full-Size ADA vans for use in microtransit service.

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

Discussion:

Brady Lange, Procurement Director, explained Connect Transit recently awarded a contract for operating software for microtransit services so we can effectively provide access to our system in areas of the community that do not currently have access. In addition, we were awarded federal and state grant funding to assist with the purchase of battery electric microtransit vehicles. We are currently awaiting approval from IDOT for our Request for Proposals for electric microtransit vehicles and anticipate awarding a contract by fall of 2023. Due to continued supply chain difficulties, we expect that vehicle delivery will be 12 – 18 months after the contract is awarded. In order to launch microtransit service this summer, we determined it would be necessary to purchase our service launch vehicles with gasoline engines that are immediately available at various dealerships in our region. In addition, we have determined that it will be beneficial to have some gasoline vehicles available for fleet resiliency.

We released an Invitation for Bid (IFB) for microtransit vehicles on May 1, 2023, and detailed ideal vehicle specifications to fulfill the needs of the microtransit service. The IFB was sent directly to four vendors and was advertised publicly. We received two bids in response to the IFB. A bid summary is provided below.

Bidder	Total Price (5 Vehicles)
Creative Bus Sales, Inc.	\$649,505.00
Transportation Equipment Sales Corp	\$776,315.00

Creative Bus Sales, Inc., based in Indianapolis, was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for these vehicles, and they currently supply over 5,000 similar vehicles per year to transit agencies across the country. These vehicles are immediately available and upon contract award Creative Bus Sales will deliver the vehicles within 14 days. After delivery, staff will begin to outfit the vehicles with appropriate equipment and graphics to make them ready for the launch of our microtransit service.

The Ram ProMaster 3500 Low Floor Full-Size ADA vans feature nine passenger seats and two wheelchair locations. As a low floor vehicle, they are equipped with a fold-away wheelchair ramp for easy boarding of passengers requiring a mobility device. The vehicles include the original equipment manufacturer warranty of 5-years / 60,000-miles and includes a 3-year / 36,000-mile body conversion warranty.

The purchase of the five 2022 BraunAbility ProMaster 3500 Low Floor Full-Size ADA vans will total \$649,505.00, which will be funded by local capital funding that was obligated to this purchase in our most recent capital budget plan.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if there is a shortage on these vans? Mr. Lange stated there is no shortage on these vans, they are readily available.

Chairman Whitehouse asked where the vans will be serviced since they are being purchased from Indianapolis? Mr. Lange stated they will be serviced at the local Dodge dealership.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if the cost of wrapping the vehicles was included in the FY24 budget? Mr. Braun stated the cost was budgeted for in capital expenses.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse
NAY: None

The motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Creative Bus Sales, Inc. for the purchase of five 2022 BraunAbility ProMaster 3500 Low Floor Full-Size ADA vans for use in microtransit service was **approved**.

- d. Authorize the General Manager and staff to brand Connect Transit’s microtransit service as “Connect FLEX”.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager and staff to brand Connect Transit’s microtransit service as “Connect FLEX”.

Trustee Rao motioned; seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

Discussion:

Aubrey Staton, Marketing Manager, explained an internal brainstorm amongst staff generated 35 potential names for our new microtransit service. After a first wave of eliminations, 26 names were included in an internal poll to all employees and Board members. The top five names were then presented to the public for voting via social media. In addition to being a staff favorite, “Connect FLEX” received the most community votes.

In 2012, Connect Transit underwent a rebranding that provided a visual guide to assist with the creation of new logos for additional services. The “Connect FLEX” name and logo fall within the provided brand guidelines.

The “Connect FLEX” name and logo usage will mirror that of “Connect Mobility”. This logo will be used on vehicle wraps, rider guides, and any other educational materials used specifically for microtransit.

Ms. Staton referred to the logo on screen, included in the General Manager’s Presentation available online.

This recommendation does not have a financial impact.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse
NAY: None

The motion to authorize the General Manager and staff to brand Connect Transit’s microtransit service as “Connect FLEX” was **approved**.

- e. Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Aramark Uniform Services for the rental of Maintenance uniforms, facility rugs, and various cleaning rags.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Aramark Uniform Services for the rental of Maintenance uniforms, facility rugs, and various cleaning rags.

Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded by Secretary McCue.

Discussion:

Mr. Lange explained Connect Transit has historically rented Maintenance uniforms, facility rugs, and cleaning rags. Due to the nature of the work performed by Maintenance Department staff, rental of uniforms is ideal because the uniforms are laundered and repaired by the supplier. Similarly, rugs are exchanged weekly, ensuring we are consistently able to provide clean and safe rugs for visitors and staff.

We released an Invitation for Bid (IFB) on April 20, 2023, detailing the goods and services required for our uniform rental program. The IFB was sent directly to four potential bidders and was advertised publicly.

Bidder	Estimated Annual Price
Aramark Uniform Services	\$88,072
Cintas	\$178,655
UniFirst Corporation	\$186,049

Aramark Uniform Services was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Aramark has consistently provided uniforms to similar customers throughout the region and is our current uniform supplier. They will provide uniforms weekly, so Maintenance staff has a clean uniform each day. During weekly laundering and inspections, if uniforms are found to be defective, they will be replaced at no charge. Due to the work performed by Maintenance staff uniforms can frequently be damaged so including this no-charge replacement program in the contract will result in long-term savings. We are recommending awarding Aramark a five-year contract with two single-year options.

All products in this contract are provided as a firm-fixed price per unit so actual total costs are dependent upon the quantity of materials required. The estimated total seven-year contract cost based on planned staffing levels will be \$88,072, which is budgeted as an operating expense.

	Base Term					Options		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 1	Year 2	
Estimated Annual Uniform Cost	\$5,039	\$5,298	\$5,548	\$5,831	\$6,129	\$5,039	\$5,393	
Estimate Annual Rugs & Rags Cost	\$6,599	\$6,947	\$7,270	\$7,626	\$8,021	\$6,599	\$6,736	
Total Contract Value (estimate)							\$88,072	

Chairman Whitehouse asked why Aramark is half the price of the other bidders? Mr. Lange stated he suspects it is because they are our current provider and do not have any set up fees or roll out costs involved.

Trustee Buchanan asked if their quality of service is worth the low cost? Mr. Lange stated we have had wonderful delivery service, and they are very responsive to issues.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None

The motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Aramark Uniform Services for the rental of Maintenance uniforms, facility rugs, and various cleaning rags was **approved**.

- f. Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Stark Excavating for the construction of two bus stops and new sidewalk from the Sleep Number Mattress Store to McDonalds along IAA Drive, near the intersection of Empire Street and Veterans Parkway.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Aramark Uniform Services for the rental of Maintenance uniforms, facility rugs, and various cleaning rags.

Chairman Whitehouse motioned; seconded by Vice Chair Hile.

Discussion:

Mr. Lange stated Connect Transit is in the fourth year of our Better Bus Stops Campaign. As part of this campaign, we are seeking to improve bus stop accessibility throughout Bloomington-Normal. We have not improved the bus stops along IAA Drive near Empire Crossing in any previous projects because the area does not have public sidewalks. To provide public transportation northbound and southbound, we must pick-up and drop-off on both sides of the street.

Empire Crossing is home to retailers, restaurants, and other service-oriented establishments. These businesses, employees, and patrons benefit from the economic, equitable, and accessible access that public transportation provides. This location lies within the Empire Street Corridor TIF District established in 2016. This project will improve the two stops in the area by making them ADA accessible and adding passenger amenities like bus stop shelters and trash receptacles. We will construct landing pads on both sides of the street and provide a ramp leading to the opposite side of the street with safety signage and crosswalk markings as depicted in the picture below. In addition, we will construct a new sidewalk from Sleep Number Mattress Store to McDonalds along IAA Drive.

While we will utilize federal and state grant funds to construct bus stops which can include limited sidewalk improvements, we are not able to use these funds for the sidewalk required for this project. We worked with the City of Bloomington Economic Development Division to request the availability of TIF funding to improve the sidewalks in the area. On June 27, 2022, the Bloomington City Council approved usage of up to \$135,000 to construct the sidewalk. Since that time, staff has been working to obtain the easements and permits required for the project.

As with all the bus stop improvement projects, we released an Invitation for Bid (IFB) on April 20, 2023. The IFB was sent directly to three contractors that have historically participated in bus stop

improvement projects, as well as advertised publicly. We received two bids in response to the IFB. A bid summary is provided below.

Bidder	Bid Total
JG Stewart Contractors	\$111,530
Stark Excavating	\$110,140

Stark Excavating was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for this work and is being recommended for a contract. They have been a valuable partner in various past projects. During this project they will work in close communication with area businesses to schedule closures of their driveways for sidewalk and ramp improvements at optimal times to minimize impact on their operations. In addition, they will work closely with the City of Bloomington Public Works Department for permitting and inspection of completed work.

Bus stop and sidewalk improvements in this area will vastly improve the accessibility of our bus stops, as well as the entire shopping center in this area.

Financial Impact:

Construction of two bus stops and related sidewalks will cost a total of \$110,140 with \$3,290 being provided by competitive FTA 5339 grant funds and the remaining \$106,850 being provided by local TIF funding directly from the City of Bloomington.

Funding Source	Amount
FTA 5339 Grant Funds	\$3,290
City of Bloomington TIF Funding	\$106,850
Project Total	\$110,140

Chairman Whitehouse shared his pleasure at seeing this project coming to fruition and seeing improved stops coming to the users of the stops on IAA Drive. Mr. Whitehouse thanked the City for their collaboration in making this project happen.

Vice Chair Hile stated she is thankful we will be working with Stark on interface with businesses and traffic control for safety purposes.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse
 NAY: None

The motion to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Stark Excavating for the construction of two bus stops and new sidewalk from the Sleep Number Mattress Store to McDonalds along IAA Drive, near the intersection of Empire Street and Veterans Parkway was **approved**.

- g. That the contract with Connect Transit’s current healthcare insurance provider, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBS), be approved for a contract term of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion that the contract with Connect Transit’s current healthcare insurance provider, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBS), be approved for a contract term of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Secretary McCue motioned; seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

Discussion:

The current health insurance policy with BCBS is set to be renewed July 1, 2023. Employees will maintain the choice of three (3) plans: low, medium, and high deductible plans.

1. MPP83436: This plan has a \$1,000 individual deductible and a \$3,000 family deductible.
 - a. CHANGES: No changes have been made to this plan.
2. MPP9383C: This plan has a \$1,500 individual deductible and a \$4,500 family deductible.
 - a. CHANGES: No changes have been made to this plan.
3. MPEQ1Z0720: This plan is a high deductible HSA. This plan offers a \$3,000 individual deductible and a \$5,600 family deductible.
 - a. CHANGES: Last year's \$2,800 deductible HSA plan is required by the IRS to increase to \$3,000 at renewal.

The total cost increase in our health insurance cost is 4.78% for the FY24 renewal. This increase was anticipated in our approved FY24 Budget.

There will be no increase to our Life/AD&D or FMLA benefits for the FY024 renewal.

There will be no increase in our Dental, Vision & Long-Term Disability premium cost nor Short-Term Disability premium.

Our vision insurance has a 4-year rate lock until 7/1/26.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None

The motion to authorize that the contract with Connect Transit's current healthcare insurance provider, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBS), be approved for a contract term of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, was **approved**.

- h. To adopt the Resolution authorizing the application for a \$110,000.00 Transit Statewide/Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning – Federal Sec 5305(e) grant under the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) general authority.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to adopt the Resolution authorizing the application for a \$110,000.00 Transit Statewide/Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning – Federal Sec 5305(e) grant under the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) general authority.

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

Discussion:

Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director, stated that through the Federal Transit Administration and IDOT's Transit Statewide /Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning – Federal Sec 5305(e) grant, Connect

Transit is eligible to apply for grant funding to study the unmet public transportation need in the Bloomington-Normal UZA.

As the Bloomington-Normal urbanized area continues to grow, there are populated areas that are not served by either Connect Transit or Show Bus. Our service area covers the corporate limits of Bloomington and Normal, which does not include the entirety of the federally recognized urbanized area. Show Bus is unable to provide services to the federal urbanized area, which we believe has transportation needs, because of age, income, or lack of available vehicles.

We intend to contract with a consultant to study the need for transportation services in the area immediately adjacent to the municipal boundaries of Bloomington and Normal that are in the Bloomington-Normal urbanized area. The consultant will investigate potential demand, funding mechanisms, and governmental agreements needed to provide transportation services to these unserved areas.

This project will be fully funded through the grant without a contribution from Connect Transit.

Vice Chair Hile stated her pleasure that we are pursuing this opportunity.

Mr. Braun stated we have a feeling there is a demand for this service and to have a consultant on board who can identify the demand and how best to serve it will be better for both the City and the Town. They will also identify funding opportunities available.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if we have held conversations with the City and the Town because our Intergovernmental Agreement only allows us to serve corporate limits? Mr. Braun stated we have had those conversations and they are amenable.

Chairman Whitehouse asked what the process going forward will be if one side does not want to fund? Mr. Braun stated there are multiple ways the study can come back, such as there is no demand then we continue on as we are now. If it comes back that there is a demand, the study will evaluate what types of agreements are needed and what type of funding is available and evaluate if we can gather more federal funds.

Chairman Whitehouse asked for clarification that this study will present us with what any opportunities may look like and possible funding for those opportunities; however, just because we agree to the study does not mean we have to provide the service? Mr. Braun confirmed Chairman Whitehouse understood correctly.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if the McLean County Regional Planning Commission is supportive of this endeavor? Mr. Braun stated they have provided a letter of support, as did Show Bus.

Rollcall Vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Secretary McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse
NAY: None

The motion to adopt the Resolution authorizing the application for a \$110,000.00 Transit Statewide/Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning – Federal Sec 5305(e) grant under the Illinois Department of Transportation’s (IDOT) general authority was **approved**.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Whitehouse thanked Councilman Andy Byar for visiting Connect Transit, and Vice Chair Hile and Trustee Buchanan for helping host his visit.

Chairman Whitehouse stated he was pleased to see so many wrapped buses around the community, they are eye catching.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Braun shared his monthly General Manager report.

Community:

Update:

- Fair Housing Fair: 52 used the bus, five unhoused.

Outreach

- Twin City Showcase
- BHS Career Fair
- Best Buddies Friendship Walk
- BeContent Senior Expo
- Councilman Andy Byars Visit
- Heartland Child Development "BBQ & Bus" Day
- MCAA Job Fair
- Low Vision Fair

Employee Development:

- Class 2304 is at the midway point of training and will be completed on or around June 9.
- CDL testing for Service Technicians and new Bus Operators will be completed by May 26.
- Virtual annual HR related training for all employees has begun and will be completed by August 31.
- Dave White conducted Intervention and De-escalation training for Management personnel.
 - This training prepares Managers and Supervisors for situations in which they may need to intervene in a disturbance on or related to our operations.
 - Various de-escalation techniques were discussed.
- Chestnut Health Systems trained our Management personnel and several Supervisors on the use of Naloxone (Narcan) in situations where there is a suspected opioid overdose.
 - Chestnut HCS will train additional staff whenever we need it.
 - Training was provided free of charge by Chestnut Health Systems. They are also providing the Narcan at no charge.
 - This enables supervisors and other staff to respond to possible overdose situations when they are on the road or out and about in public. For example, a supervisor conducting spot checks on routes sees a pedestrian in duress, exhibiting signs of a possible overdose, can stop and check on the person, administer Narcan (if needed), and request medical assistance from trained first responders.

Recruiting:

Positions Filled:

- Bus Operator (5)
- Scheduler (1)

Positions Open:

- Bus Operator (8)
- Customer Service Rep. (1)
- Dispatcher (2)
- Executive Assistant for Procurement (1)
- Marketing Assistant (1)
- Service Technician (3)

TRUSTEE COMMENTS:

Vice Chair Hile encouraged Trustees to attend the annual APTA Transit Board Member Conference where she will be moderating a safety panel.

Secretary McCue reminded staff ISU will be hosting the Special Olympics on June 9 – 11.

Chairman Whitehouse wished everyone a happy Memorial Day and encouraged everyone to remember why they have the day off.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

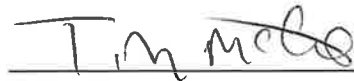
No Executive Session was held.

ADJOURNMENT:

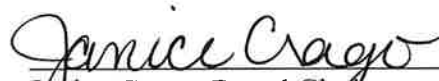
Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Adjourn.

Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

Meeting adjourned by consensus at 5:54 p.m.



Trustee Tim McCue, Board Secretary



Janice Crago, Board Clerk

[SEAL]

