

**Connect Transit Board of Trustees**  
**March 26, 2024, 4:30 p. m.**  
**351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761 – Board Room**  
**Regular Session Minutes – Approved at 4/23/24 Meeting**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Ryan Whitehouse called the meeting to order at 4:30 p. m.

**B. ROLL CALL:**

Board Clerk, Janice Crago, recorded attendance via roll call.

**Trustees Present:**

Trustee Judy Buchanan  
Trustee Linda Foster  
Vice Chair Julie Hile (4:32)  
Secretary Tim McCue  
Trustee Mandava Rao  
Chairman Ryan Whitehouse

**Trustees Absent:**

Trustee Barbara Singer

**City Managers Present:**

City Manager Pam Reece  
City Manager Tim Gleason (5:03 p.m., Virtual)

**City Managers Absent:**

None

**Staff Present:**

David Braun, General Manager  
Aubrey Staton, Marketing Manager  
Brady Lange, Procurement Director (Virtual)  
Charlie Busse, Maintenance Manager  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk  
Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director  
Shelly Moss, Operations Director  
Steve Stockton, IT Manager

**Guest(s) Present:**

Ted Carlock, Connect Transit

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MISSION STATEMENT:**

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

**D. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**E. CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. Approval of Regular Session Minutes for February 27, 2024
- b. Approval of Financial Information for February 2024
- c. Monthly Statistical Reports for February 2024
- d. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report

e. Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update

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

Secretary McCue motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

**Discussion:**

David Braun, General Manager, stated all expenses in the Financial Reports have been budgeted for so there was nothing out of the ordinary in the expenses. He stated the Budget to Actual reflects we are at about 61%, and at this point in the year we should be at 71% so we are running under budget and performing well financially.

Mr. Braun stated ridership continues to go up system wide, citing a 10.25% increase is shown in the Performance Report for February; fixed route went up 7.17%; Mobility continues to increase with a 22.3% increase last month. He pointed out the Operator Pay Hours to Service Hours, which are additional hours over an operator's scheduled hours, is now 1.28% versus 1.37% last year at this time. In our FY25 budget we planned for this at 1.29%. Mr. Braun commended Shelly Moss, Operations Director, for monitoring this number and keeping it low. He pointed out that this month's Performance Report includes a glossary of terms that not only includes the definition, but how the data measurement is collected, and why each one is important. He asked the Trustees to let him know if there were any improvements they would like made to the glossary.

Mr. Braun stated a Connect Transit at-a-glance card was left at each Trustee's seat and a digital copy will follow soon. He asked them to use and share the cards as needed to educate others on our services.

Mr. Braun stated the Cardinal Infrastructure report emphasized the need for us to share the importance of the Capital Investment Grant, which is a grant for new or small starts in the transit systems. He stated that Connect will continue working through APTA to let our voices be heard. The report also states the Appropriations Bill has been passed for transit. We have not officially heard and hope to hear soon but Connect did have earmark funding for safety systems as part of that bill.

Mr. Braun shared they will be meeting with Cornerstone on April 18 when they visit legislature for Transit Day with APTA. Cornerstone will facilitate a meeting with an appropriator to discuss the state funds we have available in one of their discretionary programs, and how to move those funds forward for the transit center now that we are approaching the start of that project. Mr. Braun stated Cornerstone has done a tremendous job for us and has relationships with many of the legislators.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Consent Agenda was **approved**.

**F. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Marketing and Communications Committee:**

Trustee Buchanan referred to slides available on screen and as part of the General Manager's Presentation available online.

Trustee Buchanan explained that the Trustees have already heard a lot of what the committee has been working on but the more she looks at the reports they've received from Dovetail the richer she thinks the information is. She stated Dovetail developed a brand after all their outreach which is "For Bloomington-Normal residents, Connect Transit delivers the best possible public transit experience, and their services make our city a better place to live, work, and play."

Trustee Buchanan reminded everyone of their committee charge and the three concepts originally shared by Dovetail. All three concepts will celebrate the community, bringing people closer together, helping people keep their appointments, get to school, get to work, friendly drivers, safe vehicles, and lots of amenities. Trustee Buchanan stated they will be focusing on concept three, "Up, Down, All Around Town, Take Your City Bus" first because it is all about the journey and where we are choosing to start, to fulfill the journey of our riders.

Secretary McCue stated Dovetail laid out a menu of deliverables for us, all within budget, and we highlighted vehicle wraps, shelter ads, social media templates, and pre-roll video as our top priorities. He also stated that collecting rider stories is something we have begun doing and will continue to pursue through push notifications on the app and email.

Secretary McCue stated Ms. Staton has done a great job holding Dovetail accountable for getting what we've asked for and making sure we have data to measure the impact we are making.

Trustee Buchanan stated we are on budget and on the timeline previously laid out.

Mr. Braun asked if we can get photos with the stories in order to associate a more personal touch? Ms. Staton shared they ask for email and phone numbers with the stories so they can follow up later, and possibly do photos or interviews later.

Mr. Braun stated he has seen websites with a constant scrolling of people and their stories and maybe we could integrate something like that into our own website.

Mr. Braun stated for clarification purposes that we are moving forward with the A to Beyond concept, and the other concepts would be used later. The committee agreed.

Mr. Braun asked what they are using for their data tool. Ms. Staton shared they are using Hoot Suite, a tool they already have that can pull the data they need for reports and graphs. They are also using JotForm as a story collector, which is embedded in our website and used onboard our vehicles.

Trustee Foster asked if we are having conversations with community members who are not pleased with us so we can find ways to bring them on board? Ms. Staton said we have included a "How can we do better?" in our call for stories because there is always a way we can improve and that is important. She shared that she also manages our electronic intake forms that come in when we receive a complaint, which she shares with other managers to problem solve and follow up with those riders to try and come to a solution.

Trustee Foster asked if we get back in touch with the person who sends in a complaint? Ms. Staton said we do an initial “Thank you for your feedback” email and then a follow up with the actions we took.

Trustee Buchanan stated we want the stories to be all encompassing, not just the ones who are pleased.

Vice Chair Hile asked Ms. Staton to share the strategy for making sure we are setting ourselves up for success in terms of getting representative demographics across all types or riders that we might hope to attract. Ms. Staton explained that our distribution list is comprised of 8,000 FLEX and Mobility users, plus external newsletter recipients from all across our communities who receive the notifications. She shared that we do ask for some demographic information in the call for stories with the hope that we will get a good representation.

**Finance Committee:**

Mr. Braun stated this will be discussed under the budget presentation.

**Operations and Planning Committee:**

No report

**Nominations Committee:**

Chairman Whitehouse stated it is time for officer appointments, so he has asked Trustee Foster from Bloomington and Trustee McCue from Normal to serve as the Nominating Committee. He stated that all recommendations for next year’s positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary should be directed to the Nominating Committee, who will bring them forward as a slate of candidates at next month’s meeting. Next month we will vote on those candidates.

**G. NEW BUSINESS:**

a. FY23 Audit Results – Informational

Mr. Braun stated that every year we are required to have an audit completed and this year we have a new firm. They’re learning our system and have put together a comprehensive audit and Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director, will be introducing them.

Mr. Kuebrich introduced Courtney Mohr, a principal at Lauterbach and Amen.

Ms. Mohr referred to the Bloomington-Norman Public Transit System Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023, which each Trustee had at their seat and can be viewed on the Connect Transit website.

Ms. Mohr stated she will present the June 30, 2023, audit report for Connect Transit but that she first wanted to thank Pat Kuebrich and LeeAnn Biddle, Accountant, for all their help in getting everything pulled together for the audit. She explained it takes a lot of extra work outside of their regular job duties, especially since it was their first-year audit. Ms. Mohr also stated that Connect Transit has once again received the Certificate of Achievement Award for Excellence in Financial

Reporting through the Government Finance Officers Association, and stated this is a very prestigious award.

Chairman Whitehouse paused Ms. Mohr and congratulated Pat on receiving this award again.

Ms. Mohr explained the purpose of the audit is to perform various tests and procedures on Connect Transit's financial statements to ultimately form an opinion, and they did ultimately give the System an unmodified opinion, also known as a clean opinion, which is the highest opinion they can give. She explained that a clean opinion states the financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects and that they can rely on the internal control environment of the organization. She further stated that in their letter they mentioned they did not have any difficulties or disagreements with management throughout the process.

Ms. Mohr stated a few key financial highlights for the year, all found within the financial statement available on the website.

Ms. Mohr then referred to the management letter, and pointed out there are two new Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements coming out in the next couple of years to be aware of but there is nothing to do at this point. The third comment in the management letter is related to an outstanding check write off policy, and a recommendation for the System to develop and implement an outstanding check policy.

Chairman Whitehouse thanked Ms. Mohr for her time and expressed his pleasure at a receiving a clean opinion. He also thanked Ms. Mohr for the spiral bound financial statement each Trustee received, which is something new for them this year.

Trustee Foster asked what the GASB changes will be, so we are ready when the time comes. Ms. Mohr stated that GASB #100 is required to be implemented by June 30, 2024, which will be our next audit and there is nothing we need to do because it is an update to the note disclosure of any potential accounting change or error correction that may come up. Assuming there are no errors that need to be corrected, there is nothing we really need to do with this report as far as financial statements go. GASB #101 is related to the way compensated absences are shown on financial statements. She explained compensated absences are the estimated liability that the organization would have to pay out if an individual were to leave at June 30, whatever year it may be and based on our personnel policy of vacation and sick pay out, that is not required until June 30, 2025 and we have plenty of time to take a look at this and work together to do what needs to be done ahead of time.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if it is a requirement by law that we do an audit every year. Mr. Kuebrich confirmed it is required every year.

Chairman Whitehouse asked the cost associated with the audit. Mr. Braun stated the cost is contractual and we approved a five-year contract last year so we will not have to do it again for another four years.

Mr. Braun stated that a copy of the audit results will be distributed to ISU as a funding partner so they can see what our cost per hour is and true up in the future. We will also send it to the City and the Town.

b. FLEX/Fixed Route Comparison – Informational

Mr. Braun referred to a presentation on screen available as part of the General Manager's Presentation available online.

Mr. Braun explained that last month the Trustees had asked for the impact of Connect FLEX on the routes in the area it is serving and provided a FY23 to FY24 comparison.

The Lime Route is up by 159 riders.  
The Aqua Route is down by 234 riders.  
The Silver is up by 151 riders.

Mr. Braun stated it is not believed the Aqua ridership is down only because of FLEX because many things impact ridership, everything from new businesses to closed businesses and more. He explained the Aqua is one of our more popular routes and we will continue to look into it if it becomes a problem.

Mr. Braun pointed out that the Aqua runs with one bus, the Silver runs with one bus, and FLEX runs with three vans. While ridership looks great, the efficiency is still around 4.5 versus upwards of 15 on the other routes. He asked the Trustees not to assume that FLEX is as efficient a service as fixed route when they look at the raw data because it takes three times as many vehicles to carry the same number of passengers.

Chairman Whitehouse noted that the Lime Route started to decline in ridership when FLEX reached its peak ridership. Mr. Braun stated it also happened in September of the previous year prior to FLEX even existing and they aren't sure exactly why it happens. Mr. Braun stated the Sapphire did run in that area for a while and that may have affected the Lime's ridership, but they are keeping an eye on the Lime's ridership.

Vice Chair Hile asked if Connect FLEX can serve as a gateway to riding and once people have tried it and been out in the community, figure out how to transfer to them using the fixed routes? Mr. Braun stated he believes that it is possible. FLEX is smaller and comfortable and provides a service similar to Uber and Lyft, which they are accustomed to. He stated he does believe it is a gateway into fixed route and is designed so that if there are certain pick up spots on a route then we can create a fixed route to serve it rather than using FLEX in the long run. He explained we have data on who is using the service, when they are using it, and how frequently they use it, which is something we don't have on the fixed route system.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if we know where they were going. He elaborated that at one point we knew they were going to Walmart but didn't know if it was to shop at Walmart or transfer to a fixed route. Mr. Braun stated we know they are coming from all over the zone and going to Walmart and Downtown, but it is not known if they are going elsewhere.

Mr. Braun stated we are also trying to improve the service, recognizing that some people are picked up within a few blocks of each other so we are trying to establish some gathering spaces so people will go to that single stop rather than being picked up every half block or so.

Vice Chair Hile asked if the service was functioning the way it was supposed to. Mr. Braun said it is, and that initially our impression was that it would just take them to the nearest bus stop, but the problem is that if they missed that bus or if they're a little late or too early, they're standing in the middle of nowhere. He explained we changed this so they are near activity and safer.

Vice Chair Hile asked about the timeline for getting strategic now that we have a baseline because we want to be proactive in establishing an expectation in the community that FLEX is intended to be a feeder and not a replacement for ride shares. Mr. Braun stated that he would like to give it six months to a year since we started charging a fare, which was in January. He explained ridership dipped a little when we started charging fares - we are going to roll out a marketing campaign soon, and every day we're looking at where we can be more efficient. As we collect that data, we will become more proficient in the service, and help us in the next zone, which is going to be different. The next zone will operate differently, the riders will be different, and the destinations will be different. We are planning how we can best serve the community without taking away from our routes or overwhelming our service.

Vice Chair Hile stated that she feels there is gap in available transportation at the airport that leaves people stranded and asked if Connect is looking at that as a possibility. Mr. Braun stated that we've previously had that conversation with elected officials to people in the community who recognize that same problem. He explained that the challenge for us is paying drivers for hours driven even though they are not driving, versus an independent contractor who is paid per passenger. He stated it is something we keep on our radar but that we are always challenged with how to operate service yet remain efficient.

c. Recommendation for Cash Farm Lease – Roll Call Vote

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Authorize the General Manager to sign and enter into a seven month Cash Farm Lease with Mark Thompson beginning on April 1, 2024, and ending on or about October 31, 2024, on a cash rent basis of \$200.00 per acre per year, for a total of \$1,000 per lease term.**

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Kuebrich stated that for the past several years Connect Transit has leased the five acres of land to the west of our operations and maintenance facility to Mark Thompson to use as farmland. Under the lease agreement, the property is maintained by the Lessee and provides additional revenue to Connect Transit. The land produces average to fair yields due to sitting rather low and does not properly drain because of tile damage. Per the Farmland Values and Lease Trends, the typical cash rental rates per acre of land with average productivity ranges from \$150 to \$250. The purpose of the seven month term is to allow flexibility for future development of that property for Connect Transit use. The revenue received will be directed to fiscal year 2025 operational revenues.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if we normally do a seven month lease. Mr. Braun stated we are doing this term because of Connect's potential need to use the land as early as November of this year.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if the lessee is putting nutrients back into the soil. Mr. Kuebrich said we do not have any records of that but ask that he does.

Chairman Whitehouse would like to ask for records that shows the nutrients are being put back into the soil.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to authorize the General Manager to sign and enter into a seven month Cash Farm Lease with Mark Thompson beginning on April 1, 2024, and ending on or about October 31, 2024, on a cash rent basis of \$200.00 per acre per year, for a total of \$1,000 per lease term was **approved**.

d. Recommendation for Zero-Fare on Earth Day – Roll Call Vote

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Authorize the transit system to allow riders to utilize fixed route, Connect Mobility, and Connect FLEX services at no charge to passengers on Monday, April 22, 2024, in honor of Earth Day.**

Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

**Discussion:**

Ms. Staton stated that our system has historically operated at no charge to passengers to encourage the community to use public transportation instead of personal vehicles on Earth Day. Personal vehicles are the largest contributors to a household's carbon footprint. On a day dedicated to reducing carbon footprints and environmental impact, the easiest way to lower your carbon footprint is to take public transit. We would like to give our community the opportunity to do so by operating without charging a fare. This will result in the loss of one day's worth of fares.

Trustee Foster asked if the Ecology Action Center would be part of our advertising to let people know? Ms. Staton stated we are looking into how we can partner with other organizations that are hosting Earth Day celebrations to see if we have routes that go by their events, but she is having trouble finding those events ahead of time.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to Authorize the transit system to allow riders to utilize fixed route, Connect Mobility, and Connect FLEX services at no charge to passengers on Monday, April 22, 2024, in honor of Earth Day was **approved**.

e. Recommendation for Clarification of By-Laws Pertaining to Executive Session Attendance by Other Means – Roll Call Vote



**Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to clarify by-laws to prohibit attending an Executive Session by other means (video, telephone, etc.). Further recommend that Executive Sessions be held in the Administrative Conference Room or another pre-designated on-site room, physically removed from the regular meeting location. Those in attendance at the regular meeting may remain in the regular meeting room during the Executive Session.**

Secretary McCue motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Braun explained during the October 24, 2023, Board of Trustees meeting, Connect Transit Administration has two sets of signed and notarized by-laws dated May 2015 and September 2015. The May 2015 by-laws indicate that Trustees cannot attend a closed meeting by other means. In our meeting RSVP request to Trustees, we also included a phrase stating that ‘Other means’ is by video or audio conference. A Trustee(s) may not attend a closed meeting by other means....

Another set of by-laws dated September 2015 did not have this language included.

Each of the by-laws indicate that it was “approved unanimously by the Trustees at a meeting held on the 26th Day of May 2015 and are still in full force and effect.”

Given the difference between the by-laws, a concern that was raised, and the inconsistent information provided to the Board, the Administration makes the recommendations shown above.

For reference, the Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA) offers the following:

“Except as otherwise provided in this Act, a quorum of members of a public body... must be physically present at the location of a closed meeting. Other members who are not physically present at a closed meeting of such a public body may participate in the meeting by means of a video or audio conference...”

The OMA defines a “meeting” as “any gathering, whether in person or by video or audio conference, telephone call, electronic means (such as, without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, and instant messaging), or other means of contemporaneous interactive communication, of a majority of a quorum of the members of a public body held for the purpose of discussing public business...”

A closed meeting is allowed for specific purposes, including:

- Employment Matters
- Real Estate Matters
- Sale or Purchase of Securities
- Security Matters
- Litigation or Claims
- Informants
- Professional Ethics
- Peer Review
- Auditing Matters
- Closed Meeting Minutes
- A few others that don’t pertain to the business of this Board.

Closed meetings are allowed because these are sensitive topics that impact the privacy and security of people or the agency. The question of whether to allow attendance by other means directly concerns whether the location of the “other means” is private and secure, and not open to others listening in and hearing the sensitive business of the Board.

Trustee Foster stated that the discussions that happen during the closed session meetings should stay in the closed session and that we should take steps to make sure there are no accidents. She believes that while this may even affect her not being able to attend an Executive Session, she would not be eligible if she were attending a meeting virtually.

Mr. Braun stated he reached out to the City and the Town to see if either had a written policy on this and they do not. He stated the City indicated that if they had someone attending by virtual means they would allow it. The Town physically leaves the room and they’ve never had an issue.

Ms. Reece stated their practice is a council member must be physically present to participate in a closed session meeting. Legal counsel may call into speak to the council.

Chairman Whitehouse noted that having legal counsel able to call in is a good exception and perhaps we should make an amendment to this motion.

Trustee Rao stated that confidentiality is important and endorsed the recommendation.

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to amend the original motion to the clarify by-laws to prohibit Trustees and Connect Transit staff from attending an Executive Session by other means (video, telephone, etc.). Legal counsel will be allowed to call in for closed session meetings when necessary. Further recommend that Executive Sessions be held in the Administrative Conference Room or another pre-designated on-site room, physically removed from the regular meeting location. Those in attendance at the regular meeting may remain in the regular meeting room during the Executive Session.**

Secretary McCue motioned; seconded by Vice Chair Hile.

Trustee Buchanan stated that she previously had concerns about whether or not we were consistent with OMA but after having legal counsel look at it, it seems to be acceptable, and she is on board.

Trustee Foster asked if Trustees not in attendance would be privy to the legal counsel’s conversation. Ms. Reece explained that if they were not in physical attendance, then it would be the responsibility of Mr. Whitehouse or Mr. Braun to update them because they are not attending.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to amend the original motion to the clarify by-laws to prohibit Trustees and Connect Transit staff from attending an Executive Session by other means (video, telephone, etc.). Legal counsel

will be allowed to call in for closed session meetings when necessary. Further recommend that Executive Sessions be held in the Administrative Conference Room or another pre-designated on-site room, physically removed from the regular meeting location. Those in attendance at the regular meeting may remain in the regular meeting room during the Executive Session **was approved.**

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to clarify by-laws to prohibit Trustees and Connect Transit staff from attending an Executive Session by other means (video, telephone, etc.). Legal counsel will be allowed to call in for closed session meetings when necessary. Further recommend that Executive Sessions be held in the Administrative Conference Room or another pre-designated on-site room, physically removed from the regular meeting location. Those in attendance at the regular meeting may remain in the regular meeting room during the Executive Session **was approved.**

f. Draft Strategic Plan – Informational

Mr. Braun referred to a presentation on screen available as part of the General Manager's Presentation available online.

Mr. Braun stated the draft Connect Transit Strategic Plan document was sent to Board of Trustees on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, for review.

The draft Connect Transit Strategic Plan was sent to the Trustees with guidance provided on what to consider when reviewing the plan. The strategic plan spans over three years and is quite lengthy. Rather than recommending it for approval, I will offer additional time for feedback from Trustees before it is brought to the Board for a final presentation and approval.

The draft strategic plan concepts and direction were presented at the March 26, 2024, meeting. I will schedule 1:1 meetings with Board members throughout April to receive feedback, review, clarify language or modify the plan. The final presentation will be brought to the Board for approval at its April 23, 2024, meeting.

Chairman Whitehouse urged Trustees to set up their meetings with Mr. Braun.

g. Recommendation to Approve FY25 Budget – Roll Call Vote

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025 Operating and Capital Budget.**

Secretary McCue motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Braun referred to a presentation on screen available as part of the General Manager's Presentation available online.

Mr. Braun stated the draft FY25 Budget was presented for your review and consideration at the Connect Transit Board of Trustees February meeting.

The FY25 budget includes 105,864 revenue hours for fixed route service (down 9.5% from FY24) and includes 1,980 hours for additional microtransit zones in late 2025. The FY25 budget also includes 53,969 revenue hours for Connect Mobility (up 33% from FY24) and assumes an increase of 27% increase in the number of Connect Mobility trips based on ridership trends.

The total FY25 budget of \$20,054,326 is 6.3% higher than the FY24 budget.

Vice Chair Hile stated the budget process has been an excellent one, consistent with the approach we took last year and that she appreciates the time and attention everyone gave. She shared it is a strong budget and that she looks forward to seeing it passed.

Chairman Whitehouse thanked everyone for sitting down with Mr. Braun to go over the budget.

Vice Chair Hile stated she appreciated where he ended his presentation and that it is a story we need to tell, that we are a revenue source in addition to being a great community partner. Mr. Braun agreed that it is a great story we should tell.

Chairman Whitehouse stated that he believes the financials management is the most important role the Board of Trustees does and that he knows we will eventually max out but that we are putting money in reserves, even with this growth, which is a positive.

Ms. Reece stated that what Chairman Whitehouse stated doesn't just happen, it takes a lot of work from the staff and congratulated them on their hard work.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025 Operating and Capital Budget was **approved**.

**H. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Chairman Whitehouse stated he, Mr. Braun, and Brady Lange, Procurement Director, will be traveling to Washington, DC before the next Board meeting to attend the APTA Legislative Conference. He also shared that Trustee Buchanan had been celebrated on WGLT for her years as a public servant.

**I. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:**

Mr. Braun shared his monthly General Manager report.

**Community:**

**Outreach**

- Brickyard Apartments: Warming bus support & transportation during the 2/14/24 fire
- Best Buddies Ambassador Training

- Congressman Sorensen Visit
- ISU WBB Game Sponsor
- Westminster Village Resource Fair
- STAR Adult Literacy Presentation & Ride Along
- Chamber of Commerce “The Amazing Gala”
- Heartland Community College Advanced Manufacturing Center & State Farm Electric Vehicle Lab Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

**Employee Morale**

- Soup or Chili Bowl Cook-Off

**Professional Development:**

- New Bus Operators
  - One new Bus Operator has completed training; performed extremely well during Route Familiarization Training.
- Justin Allen, Safety & Training Coordinator, completed the Transportation Safety Institute course for Transit System Security at Houston Metro.
  - By completing this course, Justin successfully completed the FTA Transit Safety and Security Program (TSSP) process and has received a TSSP Certification.

**Recruiting:**

**Positions Filled**

- Dispatcher (2)
  - Bo Roberts
  - Cashala Coleman
- Service Technician (1)
  - Robert Wilson

**Positions Open**

- Bus Operators (7)
- Customer Service Representative (1)
- Mechanic (1)
- Microtransit Operators FT (1)
- Microtransit Operators PT (1)
- Operations Supervisor (1)
- Planning & Grants Coordinator (1)
- Service Technician (2)

**J. TRUSTEE COMMENTS:**

Secretary McCue shared the appreciation he and Trustee Buchanan have for the work Ms. Staton is doing with our community and the committee in keeping the two of them on task. He also shared that the April meeting will be his last meeting because he has taken a new job out of state. He stated he will have definitive thoughts at the last meeting and will work through the last meeting.

Trustee Foster stated she was at the electric vehicle summit at the McLean County Museum and Mr. Braun did an excellent job.

Chairman Whitehouse reminded Trustees that the April meeting will start at 4:15 for the Annual Meeting.

Mr. Braun stated we will also be holding an Executive Session in April.

**K. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

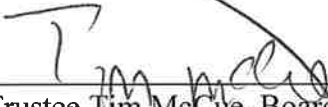
N/A

**L. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Adjourn.**

Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

Meeting adjourned by consensus at 6:15 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Trustee Tim McCue, Board Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk

[SEAL]

