

**Connect Transit Board of Trustees**  
**August 8, 2024, 5:00 p.m.**  
**351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761 – Board Room**  
**Special Meeting Minutes – Approved at 8/27/24 Meeting**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Ryan Whitehouse called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL:**

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

**Trustees Present:**

Trustee Judy Buchanan  
Vice Chair Julie Hile  
Trustee Mandava Rao  
Chairman Ryan Whitehouse

**Trustees Absent:**

Secretary Linda Foster  
Trustee Barbara Singer

**City Managers Present:**

City Manager Jeff Jurgens

**City Managers Absent:**

City Manager Pam Reece

**Staff Present:**

David Braun, Managing Director  
Ashley Strupek, Procurement Manager  
Aubrey Staton, Marketing Manager  
Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director  
Charlie Busse, Maintenance Manager  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk  
Jon Spratt, Data Management Specialist  
Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director  
Shelly Moss, Operations Director

**Guest(s) Present:**

Chris Martel, CDM Smith  
Chad Frankeberger, Farnsworth Group

**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 June 25, 2024
- b. ~~Approval of Financial Information for June 2024~~ – delayed due to year end closing
- c. Monthly Statistical Reports for June 2024

- d. Cardinal Infrastructure; Federal Report
- e. Cornerstone; Illinois Weekly Update

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to table the Consent Agenda until the August Regular Session Meeting.**

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

**Discussion:**

None

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to table the Consent Agenda until the August Regular Session meeting was **approved**.

**F. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Operations and Planning Committee:**

No report.

**Marketing and Communications Committee:**

No report.

**Finance Committee:**

No report.

**G. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Recommendation to Support Library Card Sign up Month/September 2024 – Roll Call Vote

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion authorize the Managing Director to allow zero fare rides in exchange for riders showing their current Normal or Bloomington Public Library Card on all fixed route, Connect Mobility, and Connect FLEX vehicles**

Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

**Discussion:**

Aubrey Staton, Marketing Manager, explained that for the past two years, Connect Transit partnered with both the Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries to offer rides without requiring a fare if riders were able to produce a valid library card. This was in support of library card sign-up month, which takes place in September each year. Several other Illinois communities also participate in similar fashion.

Both Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries saw a significant increase in new library card sign-ups in 2022, in part due to our promotion and support. Normal's library card sign ups increased by over 300% from 343 in 2021 to 1,076 in 2023. Bloomington also saw a large increase from 285 sign ups in 2021 to 421 in 2022. Connect Transit provided 19,970 zero fare rides because of this partnership, out of a total ridership for the month of 225,983.

Library cards will not be swiped or scanned; they will just be shown to the driver. We will provide examples of current library cards, so drivers know what to look for. This will not cause a strain on our IT department or Operators.

The financial impact is estimated to be \$16,500. This was determined by looking at the number of full fare and discounted fare rider percentages and using an estimation of 20,000 rides.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to authorize the Managing Director to allow zero fare rides in exchange for riders showing their current Normal or Bloomington Public Library Card on all fixed route, Connect Mobility, and Connect FLEX vehicles was **approved**.

b. Recommendation for Managed Printer and Copier Services Contract Award – Roll Call Vote

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the Managing Director to execute a contract with Gibbs Technology Company (GFI Digital) for managed printer and copier services for a term of five years.**

Trustee Rao motioned; seconded by Vice Chair Hile.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Braun explained that our printer and copier services are contracted out because it saves us money and asked Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director to explain the recommendation.

Mr. Lange explained that for the past six years Connect Transit has contracted for managed printer and copier services. The current agreement is ending on October 31, 2024. By leasing printers and copiers Connect Transit has no up-front costs or depreciation of equipment, prompt repair services from experienced professionals in the event of a device failure, managed supply levels - including automatic supply of toners, new and updated devices, and improved pricing on consumable supplies.

On May 27, 2024, Connect Transit issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking proposals for managed printer and copier services. Connect Transit received two proposals in response to the RFP.

Based on the evaluation scoring, staff is recommending that GFI Digital be awarded a five-year contract for these services. The contract includes leasing four printers/copiers, materials and supplies for the devices, and maintenance services on the devices.

GFI Digital is represented by a local office that guarantees a response time of four-hours or less. The devices include enhanced capabilities that will assist with managing printing capabilities, help reduce costs, provide a better user experience, and improved reporting capabilities.

Anticipated expenses associated with this five-year contract are approximately \$1,167 per month (\$14,000 annually) based on anticipated printer usage. As in past years, Connect Transit will utilize operating funds for this contract and the expense was included in our FY25 budget.

Trustee Rao asked what consumables Mr. Lange was referring to.

Mr. Lange stated the consumables were toner, drums, everything else other than paper which we purchase.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to authorize the Managing Director to execute a contract with Gibbs Technology Company (GFI Digital) for managed printer and copier services for a term of five years was **approved**.

c. Recommendation for Architect and Engineering Contract Award – Roll Call Vote

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the Managing Director to execute a contract with CDM Smith for Architecture and Engineering Services for the Downtown Bloomington Transit Center.**

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Braun expressed his excitement that we are able to bring this recommendation to the Board because of what it means to our riders and the City. He explained Connect Transit was awarded federal grant funding in 2019 and state grant funding in 2020 to support the construction of a transit center in Downtown Bloomington to improve the safety and comfort of our passengers while they are transferring or waiting for a bus downtown. In 2019, a feasibility study was commissioned to identify the ideal locations for a transit center in the Downtown area. Initially, the former Pantagraph building was identified as the preferred location. Connect Transit contracted NEPA consultation services for this property in September 2021. By early 2022, the target property was determined to be no longer feasible because of historic preservation requirements, hazardous material mitigation costs, and demolition/renovation costs.

Mr. Braun stated Connect Transit began discussions with the City of Bloomington to develop a partnership project at the site of the City owned Market Street Parking Garage, which is in need of repair or replacement. This partnership proved to be advantageous for Connect Transit and the City of Bloomington allowing both parties to accomplish their goals on a single parcel in the Downtown area. As NEPA consultation progressed on this parcel, a concept was developed that included a transit center on the ground level with two or more levels of parking included above the center. This arrangement satisfies the need for parking while simultaneously providing a roof over the transit center. The concept also includes improved passenger amenities, covered and climate-controlled waiting areas, as well as potential for additional meeting and leasable space for other community partners.

Mr. Lange explained Connect Transit issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on February 16, 2024. The RFQ requested Statements of Qualifications from firms qualified to provide architecture, engineering and consulting services for the Downtown Transit Center project. Six qualifications statements were received in response to the RFQ.

An evaluation team was assembled consisting of three representatives from Connect Transit and two from the City of Bloomington. After initial evaluation of the qualifications demonstrated by each firm, the top two ranked firms progressed to the interview phase of assessments. After interviews were conducted, CDM Smith was identified as the most qualified firm.

CDM Smith successfully guided Connect Transit through the NEPA process for this project. The team proposed for our project has completed similar work for other transit agencies in Illinois and the Midwest, such as Chicago Transit Authority, PACE Suburban Bus, and IndyGo, as well as rail projects for Metra. They have also participated in various contracts for the Illinois Department of Transportation. Many of these projects have required direct coordination with the Federal Transit Administration Region V offices. For this contract CDM Smith has partnered with Farnsworth Group as the primary subconsultant providing site and civil engineering services for this project. Farnsworth Group's local presence will be critical to the success of this project.

CDM Smith and the various subconsultants participating in this project are uniquely positioned to guide Connect Transit through the planning, project administration, stakeholder engagement, design, and construction bidding phases of this project.

Upon identifying CDM Smith and their subconsultants as the most qualified team, staff began negotiating the Scope of Services for this project. This started by identifying the goals of the design, the design concepts, and various project support services. This allowed the CDM Smith team to develop the full scope of services for this project which includes engineering and architectural design services, project management and oversight services, development of project schedule, construction phasing, logistics plans, specifications, and construction cost estimates. The Scope also includes assistance in preparing bid documents, evaluation of bids, and recommendations for the selection of an approved Contractor.

The negotiated Scope of Services includes:

- Project administration and planning
- Quality control through the project
- Various meetings, workshops, and presentations including:
  - Transit Center design workshop
  - Parking Structure design workshop
  - Safety and security workshop
  - Accessibility workshop
  - Aesthetics workshop
  - Constructability workshop
  - Project delivery methods workshop
  - Market analysis workshop and study
  - Bus routing workshop
- Stakeholder engagement and coordination to understand their needs
- Supporting public meetings for community outreach
- Zoning and permitting
- Property acquisition support
- Managing project quality control
- Coordinating subcontractors
- Support for seeking additional grant funding if necessary
- Existing condition evaluation and field investigations
- Geotechnical evaluation
- Construction cost estimating

- Subconsultant coordination:
  - Parking structure schematic functional design
  - Parking structure complete design and construction document preparation
  - Site survey work, civil design, landscape design, site electrical design, permitting
- Initial design phase (0% - 30%) includes:
  - Advancing three concepts through 30% design
  - Schematic design package
- Final concept design phase (30% - 100%) including:
  - Site/civil
  - Architectural design
  - Structural design
  - Mechanical, plumbing, and fire protection design
  - Electrical and fire alarm design
  - Communications and security design
- Building information modeling allowing for visualization of the spaces, clash detection and creation of construction drawings
- Technical design workshops
- Design packages (30%, 60%, 90%, 100%)
- Construction contract bid support with FTA/IDOT coordination
- Various support tasks including:
  - Sustainability initiative support
  - Additional funding support

After finalizing the Scope of Work, Connect Transit requested a price proposal for the services outlined in the Scope. After reviewing the proposed price, Connect Transit negotiated a Best and Final Offer from CDM Smith resulting in the final proposed contract price.

The total cost of this contract will be \$3,152,642 which will be funded by FTA, IDOT grant funds awarded to this specific project. The City of Bloomington is proposing to contribute \$452,178 toward this project for design of the parking structure.

This contract is being recommended contingent upon IDOT and Bloomington City Council approval.

Chris Martel of CDM Smith referred to an on-screen presentation available as part of the Managing Director's Presentation online.

Chairman Whitehouse shared his excitement to see this happening and the panel coming to a consensus to work with CDM Smith on the project. He explained it is important to him to bring on a local vendor, especially one with a great reputation. He stated that he is pleased to see transit on the forefront of the presentation, that while he is pleased to be partnering with the City to provide parking, he is happy that a transit center that fits into the culture of Downtown while fitting the needs of the riders and Connect Transit is the primary focus of the project. He shared his belief that this project can be a catalyst to make Downtown Bloomington even better than it already is and looks forward to seeing this happen. Mr. Whitehouse stated that he believes the parking is very important and is pleased to see the partnership with the City work to make this happen with possibly more parking than less parking. He urged CDM Smith to work quick but don't hurry because he looks forward to the groundbreaking and ribbon cutting.

Trustee Buchanan stated she and Chairman Whitehouse have been waiting a long time for this and echoed his pleasure at seeing this come to fruition. She shared her appreciation at the architecture shown in the CDM Smith presentation and that they will be working with the Streetscape Project. Ms. Buchanan asked if the parking demand study will be included as part of this contract.

Mr. Lange stated that study has been removed from the contract and will not be completed.

Trustee Buchanan asked if the building layout will include the liner building as shown in the presentation.

Mr. Braun stated there will be options that must be part of the design consideration and the funding we have available. If we decide not to build the liner building now, the site may be developed in a way that we could build one in the future when or if funds become available.

Trustee Buchanan stated she would appreciate regular updates to the Board when there are changes or things that might add to the cost.

Mr. Martel clarified what the scope includes by referring to a slide on-screen and if we did not pursue those options, there would be credits back to Connect Transit. He explained there would be updates and suggested an update at the 30% design phase.

Mr. Jurgens asked if there would be additional costs if an additional layer of parking was added.

Mr. Martel stated there would be costs and they would need to visit that because it changes building calculations and foundation planning so they can build accordingly. He explained that if there is the possibility of adding that additional layer, now is the time because the price will go up in time.

Mr. Jurgens asked how many layers of parking Connect Transit and the City have planned in the current layout.

Mr. Lange stated P1 is Connect's roof and parking and P2 is the City's parking.

Trustee Buchanan stated this project will have a great impact on Downtown and asked how many other entities are willing to invest \$18m there.

Trustee Rao stated he would like to see tenant space available because liveliness in Downtown is a good idea.

Vice Chair Hile thanked Mr. Martel for his presentation and staff for their work. She stated that she Normal has enjoyed their transit center, and she is excited about the energy this project will create. She asked Mr. Martel about the timing of his engagement sessions and generating public interest.

Mr. Martel stated they will work with staff to establish a representative committee from the Downtown area to be good neighbors, learn about the businesses, minimize disruption, and so on. They will meet around 30% to gather design input, and then again around 90% to present the plan. He stated that Connect Transit is going to use a website to inform the public on updates as well.

Mr. Braun stated the market study included in the project is very exciting to him because the location of the transit center is currently not very attractive and has about 1,500 people go through it every day, and that is a potential market for a business that can be supportive of our passengers. Once we've developed a center that's more attractive and out of the elements, we can attract a different type of person to come Downtown and enjoy the restaurants, bars, shops, etc. without worrying about driving home. That takes it to a whole new level of transit center.

Mr. Braun stated CDM Smith has a great public outreach plan and that we will be available to speak with groups because we're developing a speaker's bureau. He explained that we will be available to anyone who wants to learn about the Downtown transit center, with or without CDM Smith.

**Rollcall Vote:**

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

Motion to authorize the Managing Director to execute a contract with CDM Smith for Architecture and Engineering Services for the Downtown Bloomington Transit Center was **approved**.

**H. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Chairman Whitehouse stated that Congressman Sorenson will be visiting Connect Transit at 11:00 on Tuesday, August 12 and invited Trustees to attend if they were available.

**I. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

No report.

**J. TRUSTEE COMMENTS:**

**K. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

None.

**L. ADJOURNMENT:**

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

Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

Meeting adjourned by consensus at 5:55 p.m.

*Linda Foster* - 8-27-24  
Linda Foster, Secretary / Date

*Janice Crago* 8-27-24  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk / Date

[SEAL]

