

**CONNECT TRANSIT BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 27, 2020**

**351 Wylie Drive – Training Room  
Normal, Illinois 61761**

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was held on October 27, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. at Connect Transit in the Training Room with Board Members participating in the meeting virtually.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustee Judy Buchanan  
Trustee Linda Foster  
Vice-Chairman Julie Hile  
Trustee Deb Presley  
Chairman Ryan Whitehouse

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Trustee Tim McCue

CITY MANAGERS: Town of Normal Manager Pam Reece – Present  
Bloomington Deputy City Manager, Billy Tyus – Present

STAFF PRESENT: Martin Glaze, Chief Operating Officer  
Jill Baxter, Board Clerk  
Patrick Kuebrich, Finance Director  
Steve Stockton, IT Manager  
Julie Dockham, HR Director

The October monthly meeting of the Connect Transit Board of Trustees was called to order by Chairman Ryan Whitehouse at 4:40 p.m. Roll call was taken.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of Minutes of September 22, 2020 Board Meeting
2. Disbursements for the month of September 2020
3. Monthly Statistical Report for September 2020
4. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report (*Addendum*)

Chairman Whitehouse called for a *Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda*. Secretary Buchanan so moved, seconded by Trustee Presley.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

The Board approved the *Consent Agenda*.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Financial Audit Presentation – CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP*

Mr. Adam Pulley of CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP presented the Financial Audit Presentation of Connect Transit's June 30, 2020 audit results. Mr. Pulley stated that their job as the external auditor is to express an opinion on the system's financial statement as of June 30, 2020. "Expressing an opinion" is not looking at every transaction but looking at the financials as presented for the year-end. His firm also looks at internal controls under Government Auditing Standards as well as testing over Federal Grant major programs. His firm also summarizes any of the audit findings, observations or recommendations that would be noteworthy to share with either management or the Board of Trustees.

As in the past, we have identified a few of the areas that we consider to be of higher risk that we spend a little more time looking at. When assessing risk, it comes to no surprise that we did take COVID into consideration. If there were any potential drops in controls, most everybody is having to rotate or change their staffing a little bit. Potentially, there could be drops in internal controls from going into a remote working environment and we did take that into consideration as we were performing our audit.

We did issue an "unmodified or a clean audit" opinion which is the best opinion we can give and that is the opinion that you would want on both the financial piece as well as in accordance with government auditing standards and the Uniform Grant Guidance which is the Federal Grant Compliance piece. We identified no findings or any recommendations.

The total revenue for FY2020 was about \$14.3M compared to \$13.8 in FY2019. It is no surprise passenger fares were a little bit down which led to more coverage by some of the Federal Operating Grants. There were some capital purchases in FY2019 that obviously did not take place during FY2020.

The expense totals for FY2020 was almost \$14.9M in total expenses and FY2019 there were around \$14.1M. The salaries and payroll went up a little bit as did repairs and maintenance, but for the most part there were no gigantic swings in the expense categories.

We are also required to issue a letter to governance which is our opportunity to express to the Board if there are any significant delays that came up during the audit; any disagreements with Management or any noteworthy items. There were no findings; no recommendations; no audit adjustments; and no issues.

*Recommendation for Continued Suspension of Fares*

Mr. Glaze stated that Staff had recommended that we take the fares month-by-month but because we are going into the winter months, we do not see any major change that would lead Staff to recommend

that we go back to the collection of fares. We want the public to know now that we will extend the free fares into the beginning of spring and will again reassess at that time.

There was no discussion.

Chairman Whitehouse asked for a *Motion* on the *Recommendation for Continued Suspension of Fares* moved by Vice-Chairman Hile, seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

The Board unanimously approved the *Recommendation for Continued Suspension of Fares* (until March 8, 2021).

#### *Recommendation for Authorized Signatory*

Mr. Glaze stated that every check that is written by Connect Transit requires two (2) Connect Transit authorized signatures. There are times when these individuals are not always in the office and Staff is asking to add another signatory as we have had three (3) authorized signatories for several years now. Mr. Glaze stated that he is one of the authorized signatories. We are asking the Board to approve Shelly Perry, Connect's Operations Manager, to be an approved signatory, together with Dave White and Steve Stockton.

Chairman Whitehouse asked for a *Motion* on the *Recommendation for Authorized Signatory* moved by Trustee Presley, seconded by Vice-Chairman Hile.

There was no further discussion.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

The Board unanimously approved the *Recommendation for Authorized Signatory* (Shelly Perry, Connect's Operations Manager).

#### *Recommendation for Adoption of Agency Safety Plan*

Mr. Glaze stated that the *Agency Safety Plan* is now a requirement that was put in place by the *Federal Transit Administration*. The original due date was scheduled for July but because of COVID, the deadline was pushed back to December 31<sup>st</sup> to ensure that any revisions or additions were included. Overall, the *Plan* identifies who is accountable and has the responsibility of developing, maintaining, and implementing the *Plan*. The *Plan* itself takes any safety-related action for evaluation and determines the appropriate cause of action and enter appropriate guidelines for safety implementation.

The *Plan* does take a comprehensive program and development for all employees with a proactive approach rather than a reactive approach.

Chairman Whitehouse asked for a Motion for *Recommendation for Adoption of Agency Safety Plan*, moved by Vice-Chairman Hile, seconded by Trustee Foster.

### **DISCUSSION**

Vice-Chairman Hile thanked Connect Staff for the timely completion of the *Plan*. In reference to the performance targets, Vice-Chairman Hile asked Mr. Glaze to describe some of the targets set for the performance targets for the future.

Mr. Glaze stated that most of the performance targets deal with injuries whether internal or external, ascertaining which ones can be mitigated and which ones would be difficult to mitigate. Our area is very safe from a small agency perspective. We do not have as many injuries and slip and falls as a large city would have. Those are some of the metrics put into place: preventable accidents that were most difficult to prevent, non-preventable accidents; and major accidents are some of the main ones. Others are going to be more specific. When we bring in the electric buses, ascertaining the safety risk of those that are maintaining the unit and what is the safety risk of those that are plugging in the units and those that are working on the batteries behind it. As stated earlier, number of events and types of events and miles between major maintenance issues are some of the yearly ones that are always going to be standardized and others will be very "event specific" that would be put in place anytime something needs to be evaluated prior to implementation.

Vice-Chairman Hile stated that some of the types of events that APTA has a very close eye on now is "operator assault". Certainly, in the time of COVID there has been attention on various modes of transportation nationally and we have one event last year that was a difficult experience for one of our operators. Have you heard anything more on this front?

Mr. Glaze recalled an incident where a passenger made contact with one of the driver shields. Because there is a barrier shielding the driver, passengers may be more prone to make contact with the shield than the driver.

Trustee Buchanan commented regarding the safety of our drivers and passengers, are there particular measures we have taken or will be moving forward with regarding the safety of our passengers?

Mr. Glaze responded that we take a different approach depending on each incident. Slip and falls we address with evaluating different materials as to flooring and look for different materials that have a better rating; we look for better railing systems; and as far as driver interactions, we work on "de-escalation training" and we bring in a professional to teach our drivers and to talk to our Supervisors and Dispatchers on how to handle those situations. Regarding COVID, which is evolving, we are looking at best practices throughout the industry. We are relying on case studies/feedback from the industry to find out what are the best options. Regarding de-escalation, we have had an individual come into Connect for three (3) years now with training for Staff.

Trustee Presley inquired what, if any, statistics that we gather that would separate out Connect-Mobility from the fixed routes and communication as many individuals on Connect-Mobility routes are not able to fully communicate what has occurred or indicated the time that they are injured or something has happened. How do you communicate with a responsible guardian and/or adult to make sure all bases are covered?

Mr. Glaze stated that service is more one-on-one. If there are individuals that need additional guidance or oversight, usually that is set up throughout the process so that we will know if a guardian needs to be informed: pickups and drop-offs or anything out of the ordinary that needs to be looked at to watch for any signs that are red flags that we need to know about. All of this is protected under HIPAA. We are better able to individualize the oversight of any incidents happening on Connect-Mobility than on the fixed routes. Any additional precautions or steps are constantly communicated and remain fluid.

There was no further discussion.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

The Board unanimously approved the *Recommendation for Adoption of Agency Safety Plan*.

#### **REGULAR SESSION ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Whitehouse called for a *Motion* to adjourn regular session to move the Board into *Executive Session*. Trustee Buchanan so moved, seconded by Trustee Presley.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

Motion carried, and the Board of Trustees adjourned regular session at 5:10 p.m. and moved into *Executive Session* to discuss Personnel Matters (5ILCS 120/2(c)(1)).

#### **REGULAR SESSION CONTINUED**

Chairman Whitehouse called for rollcall as the Board moved back into *Regular Session*.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; City of Bloomington Deputy Manager Billy Tyus; Town of Normal Manager Pam Reece; Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

*Board Recommendation for Interim General Manager Contract*

Chairman Whitehouse asked for a *Motion* on the *Board Recommendation for Interim General Manager Contract*, moved by Vice-Chairman Hile, seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

There was no discussion.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

The Board unanimously approved the *Board Recommendation for Interim General Manager Contract* appointing Mark Peterson as *Interim General Manager* effective October 29, 2020. Chairman Whitehouse stated that Staff would make this announcement public by a Press Release.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

*Website Design*

Interim General Manager Glaze state that we are diligently processing and evaluating services. We want to be very thorough, item by item, to ensure that we receive the full accessibility and all other desired options. We're not rushing this but hopefully by next month's meeting we will have the winning bid and will report to the Board.

*Better Bus Stops Campaign Update*

Mr. Glaze stated that at the last Board meeting, we updated the Trustees that 31 stops were contracted for construction. Five (5) have already been constructed and two (2) are framed out and ready to be poured. Others are ready to start. The stops which are planned for the spring require NEPA evaluations and all of the data is being collected and planned to be sent to the FTA within the next two weeks. FTA will then evaluate the NEPA data and provide approval. Once approval is given, we can use the Federal Grants to pay for the upcoming spring construction of those stops. Hopefully, will be on target to issue an RFP in December for the design work in FY 2022 stops.

**TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Whitehouse recognized Martin Glaze's invaluable service and dedication over the years to Connect Transit as this Board meeting will be his last.

**REGULAR SESSION ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Whitehouse entertained a *Motion to Adjourn*, moved by Trustee Foster, seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

AYE: Trustee Buchanan; Trustee Foster; Vice-Chairman Hile; Trustee Presley; Chairman Whitehouse  
NAY: None.

Motion carried and the regular monthly Board meeting for October adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

  
Trustee Judy Buchanan, Secretary

  
Jill Baxter, Board Clerk

[SEAL]