

**CONNECT TRANSIT BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 5, 2019**

**351 Wylie Drive – Board Room #135  
Normal, Illinois 61761**

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was held at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room of Connect Transit located at 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, Illinois 61761. This meeting represents the Board's regular monthly meeting of November 2019, which was rescheduled to December 5, 2019.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Chairman Mike McCurdy  
Vice Chairman Ryan Whitehouse  
Secretary Monica Bullington  
Trustee John Bowman  
Trustee Julie Hile  
Trustee Judy Buchanan (via telephone conference)

CITY MANAGERS: Town of Normal Manager Pam Reece - Absent  
Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason - Absent

STAFF PRESENT: General Manager, Isaac Thorne  
Martin Glaze, Chief Operating Officer

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was called to order by Chairman Mike McCurdy at 4:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Chairman McCurdy asked for a *Motion* to allow Trustee Buchanan to participate in Meeting via telephone conference; *Motion* made by Trustee \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Trustee \_\_\_\_\_.

AYE: All  
NAY: None

The Board approved the *Motion* to allow Trustee Buchanan to participate in Meeting via telephone.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of Minutes of October 22, 2019 Board Meeting

2. Disbursements for the month of October 2019
3. Monthly Statistical Report for October 2019

Chairman McCurdy called for a *Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda*. Trustee Bullington so moved, seconded by Trustee Hile.

**DISCUSSION**

The Board briefly commented on items in the *Consent Agenda*.

AYE: All  
NAY: None

The Board approved the *Consent Agenda*.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Recommendation for ReMix Software Contract Renewal*

General Manager Thorne introduced the *Recommendation* to the Board by stating that Remix software is used by staff to plan routes and establish daily work schedules for bus operators. The 3-year contract cost is \$55,500 for three (3) years which would begin January 1, 2020 and expire December 31, 2022; paid from the operating budget. Cost is slightly higher from previous years.

Chairman McCurdy asked the Board for a *Motion to Approve Recommendation for ReMix Software Contract Renewal* moved by Trustee Buchanan, seconded by Trustee Bullington.

AYE: All.  
NAY: None.

The *Recommendation for ReMix Software Contract Renewal* was approved by the Board.

*Recommendation to Delay Fixed Route and Connect Mobility Fare Increases to July 1, 2020*

General Manager Thorne introduced the *Recommendation* to the Board by stating that in a prior meeting the Board of Trustees approved a fare increase for Fixed Route and Connect Mobility to take effect on October 1 of 2019.

This *Recommendation* to delay the fare increase to July 1, 2020 will decrease fare revenue an estimated \$45,950 for the period January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020; and will decrease fare revenue an estimated \$91,900 for the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Connect will use additional Federal grant funding in FY2020 in an estimated amount of \$91,900 to balance the budget. The General Manager asked the Board to delay this increase by waiting on the final recommendations from *Connect to the Future Working Group* before moving forward with any increases in fixed route and Connect Mobility fares.

Chairman McCurdy asked the Board for a Motion on the *Recommendation to Delay Fixed Route and Connect Mobility Fare Increases to July 1, 2020*.

Motion to Approve *the Recommendation to Delay Fixed Route and Connect Mobility Fare Increases to July 1, 2020*, moved by Trustee Hile, seconded by Trustee Bowman.

AYE: All.

NAY: None.

The *Recommendation to Delay Fixed Route and Connect Mobility Fare Increases to July 1, 2020* was approved by the Board.

#### *Universal Access Agreement with Illinois State University – 6-Month Extension*

General Manager Thorne asked the Board to extend Connect Transit's agreement with Illinois State University under the *Universal Access Agreement* for a period of six (6) months (January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020). For the period of January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020, the contract amount will be set at \$277,950 and Connect and ISU will continue meeting to discuss the cost structure of the FY2021 contract.

The *Universal Access Agreement* allows Illinois State University students, faculty and staff, to ride Connect Transit fixed route buses free of charge when swiping a valid ISU identification card. Connect has been providing universal access to ISU since 2006.

Chairman McCurdy moved that the *Motion* on the floor be amended by modifying the extension granted would be a period of three (3) months; adding that a period of six (6) months is an unreasonable amount of time for Connect Transit at this juncture. Chairman McCurdy also asked that the *Motion* also be modified by recommending that Illinois State University Board of Trustees approve a retroactive payment to Connect for the period January 1, 2020 through March 31, 2020, for an amount as agreed upon. Chairman McCurdy added he did not want Connect Transit receiving payments that are inadequate for the service ISU receives, keeping in mind that Connect's negotiations with ISU have been on-going for twelve (12) months.

*AMENDED MOTION: Recommendation to Approve a Three (3) Month Extension to ISU with ISU retroactively paying to Connect effective January 1, 2020 in an amount determined and agreed upon by both parties.*

Trustee Bullington seconded the *Motion, as amended*.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Trustee Whitehouse commented that it was his understanding that negotiations have come to a stalemate with no compromise. With Connect's upcoming budget shortfalls and current issues in the



community, ISU does not want to pay its fair share. Connect cannot afford to continue with extensions and as a Board Member he feels it is time to stand fast.

General Manager Thorne stated that if the original *Recommendation* and/or the *Amended Motion* fail, ISU will not have service as of January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Chairman McCurdy stated that amounts to 617,000 rides for ISU students annually.

Trustee Whitehouse stated that ridership numbers are important but at what cost? Connect Transit will then be subsidizing to run the service for ISU and why should Connect Transit suffer?

Trustee Bowman asked what about the cost to run the Redbird service?

General Manager Thorne stated that in order to receive any reimbursement from IDOT, Connect must have expenses. If a decision is made that Connect does not want to run ISU service, it is technically "a wash" to some degree but Connect then loses the IDOT money for expenses it is paying to fund its service.

Trustee Whitehouse stated that if the Redbird Express costs \$650,000 to run the service, if Connect chooses not to run that service it will not have that expense. To him it is a wash of revenue and expenses. The ridership bothers him but at the same time he does not think that Connect should subsidize another system – we are providing services and ISU is taking advantage of Connect Transit.

Trustee Buchanan did not disagree with the comments at this point. She believed Connect has found itself between a rock and a hard place. Continuing, she stated that as Board Members, we know Connect provides a good service and believes it is appreciated but eventually the Board is going to have to make a hard decision; reminding all of us that the Board did put in place the Working Group earlier this year to include a look at this very issue. She felt that it is very appropriate and timely to say to the Working Group: we will in fact wait for your recommendations. Discussions have been good and some have not been productive; however, if we undercut one of our base vendors Connect looks to for funding of the overall system, ISU should be very much aware of this conversation tonight. If there is a way or opportunity to cover the cost, then we must negotiate with a very strong partner in our community and she would not be in favor of the *Motion* as amended by the Chairman.

Trustee Whitehouse stated that he does not believe the Working Group was charged with negotiating what ISU is going to pay Connect. They are looking at fares but ISU is not even paying what the costs are so the Working Group, to him, he does not look to them to give advice on how Connect is going to negotiate with ISU.

Trustee Buchanan responded to Trustee Whitehouse by affirming that the Working Group is not in charge of negotiating nor did she think the Working Group wants to be involved in that; however, she did think that the Working Group was to look at very seriously how Connect is funding the system and how does it ensure that we can retain where we are now and where we can improve funding, they are

to weigh in on those ideas. The Working Group is very much aware of the situation and a member of the ISU Leadership Department has been a part of these conversations.

Trustee Bowman asked what are the costs - statements have been made that ISU is not covering the costs with what they are paying. The Financial Statement states ISU is paying an annual contribution of \$559,000, which is the largest single vendor who is participating in the system.

General Manager Thorne stated Connect Transit provides 6,500 hours of service for Redbird Express: roughly \$650,000. All the other rides that are taking place outside of the Redbird, technically are rolled into the Redbird Express route.

Trustee Bowman stated that taking ISU's payment of \$559,000 and multiply that by the DOAP amount, calculates to over \$1M of revenue brought in by ISU when factoring in the IDOT money. He believes ISU wants recognition of that and has always been a negotiating point from the ISU side.

AMENDED MOTION: Recommendation to Approve a Three (3) Month Extension to ISU with ISU retroactively paying to Connect effective January 1, 2020 in an amount determined and agreed upon by both parties.

A rollcall vote was taken on the *Amended Motion*:

Chairman Mike McCurdy	AYE
Secretary Monica Bullington	NAY
Trustee John Bowman	NAY
Trustee Judy Buchanan (via telephone conference)	NAY
Trustee Julie Hile	NAY
Vice-Chairman Ryan Whitehouse	NAY

Chairman McCurdy then again brought to the floor the original *Recommendation of Universal Access Agreement with Illinois State University – 6-Month Extension* and asked the Board for a Motion, moved by Trustee \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Trustee \_\_\_\_\_.

A rollcall vote was taken on the original *Motion*:

Chairman Mike McCurdy	NAY
Secretary Monica Bullington	NAY
Trustee John Bowman	YAY
Trustee Judy Buchanan (via telephone conference)	YAY
Trustee Julie Hile	YAY
Vice-Chairman Ryan Whitehouse	NAY

The *Motion of Recommendation of Universal Access Agreement with Illinois State University – 6-Month Extension* did not pass. Motion declined.

Recommendation for Approval of Vice-Chairman Whitehouse Travel Expenses for APTA Annual Trip

Motion to Approve Vice-Chairman Whitehouse Travel Expenses for APTA Annual Trip, moved by Trustee Bowman, seconded by Trustee Bullington.

A rollcall vote was taken:

Chairman Mike McCurdy	AYE
Secretary Monica Bullington	AYE
Trustee John Bowman	AYE
Trustee Judy Buchanan(via telephone conference)	AYE
Trustee Julie Hile	AYE
Vice-Chairman Ryan Whitehouse	Abstained

Motion carried and the *Recommendation of Vice-Chairman Ryan Whitehouse Travel Expenses* was approved by the Board in the amount of \$1,758.94.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION (CITES) – 5 ILCS 120/2(21) REVIEW OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES AND ILCS 120/2 (c)(1) PERSONNEL MATTERS**

Chairman McCurdy asked for a Motion to move into Executive Session for the required review of Closed Session Minutes and Personnel Matters. Trustee Bowman made the Motion to move into Executive Session, seconded by Trustee Bullington.

AYE: All  
NAY: None

Motion carried, and the Board of Trustees moved into Executive Session at 5:11 p.m.

Chairman Mike McCurdy asked for Rollcall as the Board moved back into Regular Session at 5:20 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Chairman Mike McCurdy  
Vice Chairman Ryan Whitehouse  
Secretary Monica Bullington  
Trustee John Bowman  
Trustee Judy Hile

CITY MANAGERS: City of Bloomington Manager Tim Gleason - Absent  
Town of Normal Manager Pam Reece – Absent

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Mike McCurdy entertained a *Motion for Adjournment*.

Trustee Whitehouse moved to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Hile.

AYE: All  
NAY: None

Motion carried, and the Board of Trustees adjourned the regular monthly meeting for November 2019 at 5:21 p.m.

  
Secretary Monica Bullington

