

**Connect Transit Board of Trustees**  
**January 27, 2026, 4:30 p.m.**  
**351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761**  
**Regular Session Minutes – Approved at 3/31/26 Meeting**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

Board Chair Hile called the meeting to order at 4:31p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL:**

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

**Trustees Present:**

Trustee Gina Bianchi  
Vice Chair Judy Buchanan  
Trustee Tyler Cravens  
Secretary Linda Foster  
Board Chair Julie Hile  
Trustee Mandava Rao  
Trustee Elicssha Sanders

**Trustees Absent:**

None

**City Managers Present:**

City Manager Jeff Jurgens  
City Manager Pam Reece (4:33)

**City Managers Absent:**

None

**Staff Present:**

Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director  
Alex Giantamidis, Transit Planner  
Ashley Strupek, Procurement Manager  
Charlie Busse, Maintenance Manager  
Dave White, Safety and Training Director  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk  
Jared Simons, Interim Transportation Manager  
Mark Huffman, Marketing Manager  
Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director  
Stephanie Butler, Human Resources Manager  
Steve Stockton, IT Manager

**Guest(s) Present:**

Ted Carlock, Connect Transit Employee  
Kristine Spina, Tyler Technologies (Virtual)  
Jeff Payne, Tyler Technologies (Virtual)  
Cal Boddie, Connect Transit Employee

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

Trustee Sanders led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.  
Board Chair Hile read the Connect Transit Mission Statement.

**D. SAFETY MOMENT:**

Dave White, Safety and Training Director, shared the importance of continued hydration during winter months.

**E. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Shirley Craig, Mobility Rider, shared her difficulties with scheduling a paratransit return ride instead of using the previously used “will-call” procedure, and the stress it puts on riders who are in medical appointments. Ms. Craig asked that Connect Transit consider making allowances for users who are in medical appointments.

**F. CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. Approval of Regular Session Minutes for November 25, 2025
- b. Approval of Executive Session Minutes for November 25, 2025
- c. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes for December 3, 2025
- d. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes for December 16, 2025
- e. Approval of Financial Information for November 2025
- f. Approval of Financial Information for December 2025
- g. Monthly Statistical Report for November 2025
- h. Monthly Statistical Report for December 2025

**Board Chair Hile called for a Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda.**

Vice Chair Buchanan motioned; seconded by Secretary Foster

**Discussion:**

Board Chair Hile asked if Trustees had any questions regarding the motion on the floor.

Trustees had no comments or questions.

Board Chair Hile called for a vote on the motion on the floor since there were no questions or comments and asked the Clerk to call the roll.

**Rollcall Vote:**

AYE: Trustee Bianchi, Vice Chair Buchanan, Trustee Cravens, Secretary Foster, Trustee Rao, Trustee Sanders, Board Chair Hile

NAY: None

Consent Agenda was **approved**.

**G. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **Authorize the Deputy Managing Director to execute a contract with Tyler Technologies for Enterprise Resource Planning software for a term of five years.**

**Board Chair Hile called for a motion to authorize the Deputy Managing Director to execute a contract with Tyler Technologies for Enterprise Resource Planning software for a term of five years.**

Secretary Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

**Discussion:**

Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director, introduced Ashley Strupek, Procurement Manager, for this recommendation.

Ms. Strupek stated Connect Transit has been using Avail Technologies for our ERP software for at least 14 years. As Connect Transit grows and technology advances, we have discovered that Avail no longer meets our needs. We need a platform that can support all our departments more than Avail is able to. The departments that we use our ERP system for are Human Resources, Maintenance, Finance, Transit Assets, Timekeeping, Payroll, and Scheduling.

On February 27, 2024, the Board awarded a contract to Government Finance Officers Association in partnership with three peer agencies to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) for replacement ERP software. The RFP was open till May 6, 2025.

After the RFP process closed, the evaluation committee reviewed 10 proposals. Evaluators from each agency scored the proposals to decide which vendors would proceed to the interview phase. Five vendors moved on to interviews and product demonstrations over three weeks, focusing on financials, human resources, and implementation. We then scored these vendors and selected the top two, Crowe LLP and Tyler Technologies, for in-person discovery phase interviews.

The scores were recorded, with Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District selecting Crowe and Connect Transit, Metrolink, and Rockford Mass Transit District choosing Tyler Technologies. It was decided to divide the agencies according to their preferences; the three agencies would go with Tyler Technologies while Champaign would proceed with Crowe. Contract negotiations began with Tyler Technologies, and it was agreed that Connect Transit would be the first to implement the software. During these discussions, we also addressed a demonstration of their Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) software, which is a complementary tool that integrates seamlessly with the ERP system.

The additional expense of the annual fees, compared to our current provider, is accounted for in our budget, and we have secured funding from state and federal sources to cover this increase. Consequently, we will not redirect funds from other budget areas to support this expenditure. Connect Transit intends to leverage the efficiencies gained from the new system to achieve other previously unattainable objectives; there is no planned reduction in staff resulting from the implementation of this platform.

Tyler Technologies has decades of exclusive public sector experience and is the market leader providing integrated software and services. Tyler is the largest company in the United States focused solely on providing software solutions to the public sector. While many of their competitors compete in multiple vertical markets, Tyler is singularly focused on the public sector, which is 100 percent of their business. Tyler has completed 425 new implementations in the last five years and presently has 150+ active implementations at various stages throughout their respective implementation. Tyler has more than 44,000 successful installations across more than 13,000 sites, with clients in all 50 states, Canada, the Caribbean, Australia, and other international locations.

Total expenses associated with this contract for a five-year term are \$1,344,717; this includes a one-time implementation fee of \$629,032 and the recurring annual fee of \$143,137.

Connect Transit will utilize operating funds for this contract.

Jeff Payne and Kristine Spina from Tyler Technologies gave an on-screen presentation available upon request through the Board Clerk.

Board Chair Hile asked if there were any questions or comments.

Board Chair Hile thanked Mr. Payne and Ms. Spina for their presentation and asked for some examples of where Connect will see improvements.

Ms. Strupek explained that HR will see the biggest improvement at first because they are very paper-oriented now and the new system will be more digital based. She explained that Procurement, Finance, and Maintenance will also see the benefit of digital based processes that come with the new system.

Trustee Cravens asked if we will be utilizing their public facing app.

Ms. Strupek stated that we would be looking into it down the road, but we are not sure if we will use it at this time.

Trustee Buchanan asked if the ongoing training mentioned in the presentation is initiated by Tyler Technologies and if there is an additional cost.

Mr. Payne explained that implementation training is included, and that additional various training opportunities that include conferences are available for additional annual costs.

Trustee Buchanan asked if support is available.

Ms. Spina stated there is a fully dedicated support department available via telephone or online support, both included in the contract.

Mr. Lange stated that when you reach out to the support team you will be talking to a Tyler employee who is familiar with the software, which was very appealing to our team.

Trustee Rao shared his concerns on the timeline, end user training, and upgrades.

Mr. Lange explained that the implementation timeline is lengthy because we will be transferring all our existing data over to the new system, and that data will need to be converted before it can be moved. He stated all of that will be done while still working day-to-day within our current system and limited staff.

Ms. Spina explained that end user training will begin on day one and is tailored to the needs of each user and role within the system.

Ms. Spina stated that upgrades are done once a year at a minimum, usually at a year-end release. Our contract also includes as needed upgrades for table fixes, etc., which we can schedule to be done automatically at no additional cost to us. If Tyler handles them for us, there is an additional cost.

Trustee Rao asked if Connect Transit is doing any customizations.

Ms. Spina stated that their product is an out-of-box software system and in most cases satisfies clients' needs without customization so Connect as not customized anything.

Trustee Foster asked if training will be included through the entire contract period.

Ms. Strupek explained that during the implementation process they will train the trainer – meaning they will train us on the different aspects of each department and give us everything need to run that department's system. We will have those documents and trainings to use whenever we need them at no additional cost.

Board Chair Hile asked if there were any more questions or comments.

Board Chair Hile called for a vote on the motion on the floor since there were no more questions or comments and asked the Clerk to call the roll.

**Rollcall Vote:**

AYE: Trustee Bianchi, Vice Chair Buchanan, Trustee Cravens, Secretary Foster, Trustee Rao, Trustee Sanders, Board Chair Hile

NAY: None

The motion to authorize the Deputy Managing Director to execute a contract with Tyler Technologies for Enterprise Resource Planning software for a term of five years was **approved**.

**b. Reschedule the Tuesday, March 24, 2026, Annual Meeting and Regular Session Meeting to Tuesday, March 31, 2026.**

**Board Chair Hile called for a motion to reschedule the Tuesday, March 24, 2026, Annual Meeting and Regular Session Meeting to Tuesday, March 31, 2026.**

Trustee Cravens motioned; seconded by Secretary Foster.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Lange shared that at the November 25, 2025, meeting, the Connect Transit Board of Trustees approved the meeting schedule for 2026. At that time, it was understood that the March 2026 Annual and Regular Session meetings would be rescheduled to avoid conflicts with local school districts' spring break schedules.

Staff recommends rescheduling the Tuesday, March 24, 2026, Annual and Regular Session meetings to Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at their regular time. The new date is a one-week delay and four weeks until the April 28, 2026, meeting, which still keeps a pace conducive for productive business.

Board Chair Hile asked if there were any questions or comments.

Board Chair Hile called for a vote on the motion on the floor since there were no questions or comments and asked the Clerk to call the roll.

**Rollcall Vote:**

AYE: Trustee Bianchi, Vice Chair Buchanan, Trustee Cravens, Secretary Foster, Trustee Rao, Trustee Sanders, Board Chair Hile

NAY: None

The motion to reschedule the Tuesday, March 24, 2026, Annual Meeting and Regular Session Meeting to Tuesday, March 31, 2026, was **approved**.

**c. Ridership Report – Informational**

Mr. Lange introduced Alex Giantamidis, Transit Planner, who gave a ridership report. The report is available upon request through the Board Clerk.

Trustees thanked Mr. Giantamidis for his in-depth presentation.

Board Chair Hile asked if the next update could include a paratransit peer system comparison.

**H. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Operations and Planning Committee:**

Trustee Bianchi stated she and Trustee Sanders viewed a very similar ridership presentation on January 9 at their committee meeting. She shared it was very interesting to consider the impact the student population has on our ridership and she looks forward to seeing how the other routes fair in the next update.

Trustee Sanders said she appreciates seeing we are running more efficiently than systems larger than ours.

**Finance Committee:**

Trustee Cravens stated they reviewed the November and December financials and then spent some time on the upcoming budget process. He stated staff are deep into preparing the FY27 draft budget. The Finance Committee will have two meetings in February, one to review the budget ahead of our February Trustee meeting and the other for the normal Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Lange will give an initial budget presentation at the February meeting and then bring it back to the Board for final approval in March.

**Messaging and Marketing Committee:**

Vice Chair Buchanan shared the following update from the Messaging and Marketing Committee:

- The committee is continuing its work to identify, engage, and educate community partners, while clarifying its role and purpose within the community.
- A key focus will be understanding both community partners and rider experiences, with riders identified as the primary priority.
- To better assess service quality, committee members plan to participate in a firsthand bus ride experience to evaluate factors such as routes, stops, comfort, cleanliness, messaging, and overall rider experience.
  - This effort will also help inform future route planning decisions with a more practical, user-centered perspective.

- A separate, non-board meeting session (approximately 1–2 hours) will be scheduled for this activity.
- Trustees are encouraged to engage with available resources, including the APTA email communications, to stay informed and support committee goals.
- An upcoming APTA seminar for Board and Administrative members will take place July 18–21 in Detroit; members are encouraged to check availability and consider attending.

**I: BOARD CHAIR’S REPORT:**

Board Chair Hile encouraged Trustees to attend the APTA Transit Board Member Seminar in July if possible. She shared that being better equipped to share information throughout the community is something she is thankful for and that she will continue to ask more from the Trustees in the way of public transit champions.

Board Chair Hile shared that the search firm RFP has been released and evaluations will begin in early February. She stated that she has asked Trustees Buchanan and Bianchi to serve as evaluators and that she will pull others in for help in later phases.

Board Chair Hile thanked Mr. Lange for stepping up, and to staff for how they are handling things during this transition period.

**J: DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

**Transit Center Update:**

- Design Progress Report
  - 30% Design Review Meeting
  - Consultant is continuing progress to 60% design over the next two months
- Upcoming
  - FTA is currently reviewing property agreements
  - Meeting with a group of DT stakeholders to share updates
- Funding
  - \$1.6 M for accessibility features is included in the THUD Appropriation Bill

**Other Updates:**

- Staffing Changes
  - Interim Transportation Manager –Congratulations to Jared Simons!
- ATU Leadership Transition
  - Thalia Klunick has retired.
  - Cal Boddie has been elected as new president.
- Federal Updates
  - THUD appropriators released final bill language which is supported by leadership from both parties.
    - Funding levels for FTA remaining consistent with IJJA.
- Return to Front Street
- Upcoming
  - FY27 Budget

**K: TRUSTEE COMMENTS:**

Trustee Foster thanked Connect Transit for the warming buses.

Trustee Bianchi shared her appreciation for the staff leaning into the challenges recently, and the new direction the Trustees are going.

**L: EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

No Executive Session was held.

**M. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Board Chair Hile called for a Motion to Adjourn.**

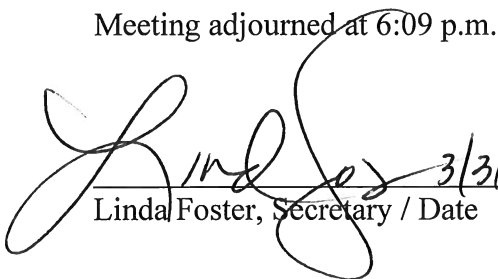
Trustee Bianchi motioned; seconded by Trustee Sanders.

**Rollcall Vote:**

AYE: Trustee Bianchi, Vice Chair Buchanan, Trustee Cravens, Secretary Foster, Trustee Rao, Trustee Sanders, Board Chair Hile

NAY: None

Meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

  
Linda Foster, Secretary / Date 3/31/2026

  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk / Date 3:31:26

[CONNECT TRANSIT SEAL]

