

**CONNECT TRANSIT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF WORK SESSION MEETING- JULY 17, 2018**

The Work Session Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was held at the Connect Transit Board Room #135, 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, Illinois 61761 on July 17, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Chairman Mike McCurdy
 Vice Chairman Ryan Whitehouse
 Trustee John Bowman
 Trustee Judy Buchanan
 Trustee Monica Bullington
 Trustee Julie Hile
 Trustee John Thomas
 Town of Normal Manager Pamela Reece – arrived at 4:45 p.m.

ABSENT: City of Bloomington Interim City Manager Steve Rasmussen

STAFF PRESENT: General Manager Isaac Thorne
 Operations Manager Martin Glaze
 Marketing Manager Jeff Holtke
 Finance Director Patrick Keubrich
 Human Resources Director Julie Dockham

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike McCurdy at 4:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Chairman Mike McCurdy extended a welcome to the newest member to the Board, Julie Hile, who was appointed as a Trustee by the Town of Normal. Ms. Hile will replace Trustee Jennifer McDade, whose term expired at the end of June, 2018.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

NEW BUSINESS

Rider and Customer Satisfaction Survey Results (Discussion)

Martin Glaze, Connect's Operations Manager, took the floor to explain the results of the surveys. He began by stating that Connect has contracted with the ETC Institute to determine Connect's rider's "origin to destination" as well as the performance of a Ridership Survey. This is a three (3) year plan where the first year consists of both origin to destination as well as satisfaction. Years two (2) and three (3) will only consist of a Satisfaction Survey which follows Connect's Strategic Plan by conducting customer surveys, interviews, focus groups and obtaining feedback from the community to gauge satisfaction and receive suggestions. Our collection goal was to obtain ten

percent (10%) of the average ridership during each of the different times of day. ETC took our average ridership from our data and then broke it down into daily totals and used 10% of each total for each of the survey sections. It is also spread out by weekdays and weekends. ETC used a very broad range of sampling. These 1,070 valid surveys collected were conducted by GPS tablets to obtain a quality controlled survey from each rider who participated in the survey.

Board Handbook – Draft (Discussion)

General Manager Isaac Thorne stated that it is his intention to use the Board Handbook to train new Board Members and to educate them when they attend the *Transit 101* class. The drafting of a Handbook has been discussed previously going back to 2014-2015 through a Committee appointed by the Board. Some of the information that was gathered was through that Committee. He is now seeking from the Board any additional information or feedback that should be added to the Handbook to improve the document.

Discussion

The Trustees discussed that (i) funding the system; (ii) the funding sources; and (iii) the different mechanisms that frame funding to bring revenue to the system should be included. Other items to add to the Handbook would be; (iv) any action the Board must take on the budget including assisting, developing and monitoring the budget; and (v) the responsibility of the Board for hiring a General Manager. Also discussed was the inclusion of the Board Members' responsibility regarding media protocol.

Chairman Mike McCurdy reminded the Trustees that this is not a finished document and at some point the Board will vote on it. In the meantime, the Board has the opportunity to edit and amend the current draft.

Board members also discussed adding a copy of the *Freedom of Information Act*; the *Open Meetings Act*; and the *McLean County Economic Interest Statement*.

Strategic Plan Objectives for FY2019 - Draft (Discussion)

General Manager Isaac Thorne reports that after meeting with the McLean County Regional Planning Committee, we are trying to have something available for the Board and Connect Staff to look at in November of this year. The exploration of fare restructuring is another item that will be continued, bringing a Recommendation to the Board in the November meeting.

He added that building a Downtown Transfer Center will continue to be one of our strategic goals and in starting that process a Feasibility Study and an Alternative Site Analysis will need to be performed. Before Connect can issue a RFP, the Department of Transportation has to approve it and sign over the Contract. We are still waiting for that to happen.

Regarding revenue sourced for stability and growth potential, Staff is working with the *Ad-Hoc Budget Committee* and will continue to meet until a recommendation is determined by the *Committee* which hopefully will be brought to the Board in November.

Staff is working with MCRP by looking at ordinances and codes for a building renovation or new construction for the assurance that new sidewalks are installed for our customers. Bus stops with no sidewalks hurt transit ridership with our customers waiting in muddy grass areas. This will continue to be a strategic item for the foreseeable future because it is so important for transit. Connect will continue installing shelters and benches which fall under a three (3) year *Bus Stops Campaign* which was approved by the Board. Over 17 bus stops will have infrastructure improvements such as a shelter, bench, or an ADA compliant concrete pad to be installed in FY2019.

We are focusing our marketing and advertising campaign on creating videos to educate our customers to train potential customers on how to navigate and ride the system. Some of our potential riders do not use the system simply because they do not know how to ride the system. We want to break down that barrier.

Something that is not in our FY2019 budget but would like to bring to the Board at some time within the next two (2) years is the performance of an Economic Impact Study. The General Manager also stated that he believes we could partner with Illinois State University grad students to get this type of study done. An Economic Impact Study is vital to show how important transit is in our community. The Trustees discussed the Study and were in agreement that a Study like this is important and that partnering with ISU or the Chamber would be very beneficial.

There are still steps to be taken with the consideration of building the Downtown Transfer Center and the Center will continue to be a part of Connect's FY2020 Strategic Plan.

Chairman Mike McCurdy stated that the objectives of the system often overlap heavily with the objectives of the General Manager. He reminded the Board that it will be discussing in August the General Manager's evaluation and set goals at that time in Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn Work Session by Trustee Judy Buchanan and seconded by Trustee Monica Bullington.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.


Jill Bower, Board Clerk


John Bowman, Secretary

