

Connect Transit Board of Trustees
April 28, 2026, 4:30 p.m.
351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761
Regular Session Minutes – Approved at 5/26/26 Meeting

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Board Chair Hile called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.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:

Jeff Jurgens, City of Bloomington
Brian Day, Town of Normal (Proxy)

City Managers Absent:

Pam Reece, Town of Normal

Staff Present:

Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director
Alex Giantamidis, Transit Planner (Remote)
Ashley Strupek, Procurement Manager
Brandon Miles, Rural Transit Coordinator
Charlie Busse, Maintenance Manager
Janice Crago, Board Clerk
Jared Simons, Interim Transportation Manager
Jeff Mancil, Service Delivery Manager
Mark Huffman, Marketing Manager
Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director
Stephanie Butler, Human Resources Manager
Steve Stockton, IT Manager

Guest(s) Present:

Mark Peterson
Scott Gaddy, ATU Local 752, Connect Transit
Cal Boddie, ATU Local 752, Connect Transit

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MISSION STATEMENT:

Trustee Sanders led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.
Secretary Foster read the Connect Transit Mission Statement.

D. SAFETY MOMENT:

Jared Simons, Interim Transportation Manager, shared the severe weather protocol drivers follow when necessary.

Board Chair Hile thanked Mr. Simons for the information and asked him to share with the Operators the Trustee's appreciation of their recent handling of weather and passenger safety.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

F. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes for March 31, 2026
- b. Approval of Regular Session Minutes for March 31, 2026
- c. Approval of Financial Information for March 2026
- d. Monthly Statistical Report for March 2026

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

Secretary Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

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. Fall 2026 Proposed Service Adjustments – Informational

Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director, explained that the FY27 budget included funding for proposed service adjustments to enhance our services. Mr. Lange introduced Alex Giantamidis, Transit Planner, for his informational presentation.

Mr. Giantamidis joined remotely to present the proposed service adjustments planned for the fall of 2026, and referred to an on-screen PowerPoint presentation available upon request through the Board Clerk

Mr. Lange thanked Mr. Giantamidis for his presentation. He reminded Trustees that public engagement sessions will be held prior to bringing a recommendation to the Board in May or June of 2026.

Brian Day, Town of Normal Assistant City Manager, asked if the proposed changes fall under the threshold that would need to be presented to the Town or City Council for approval.

Mr. Lange stated they do fall under the threshold.

Secretary Foster thanked Mr. Giantamidis for his detailed presentation so that the Board may be better informed.

Board Chair Hile thanked Mr. Giantamidis for a clear explanation of what feels like very complicated changes, making them easy to understand. She shared her appreciation of a thorough system review and enthusiasm for returning peak service.

b. Recommendation for Approval of Downtown Transit Center Property Agreements – Roll Call Vote

Board Chair Hile called for a motion to authorize the Deputy Managing Director to execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement and a Lease Agreement between Connect Transit and the City of Bloomington for property located at 202 W. Market Street in Downtown Bloomington.

Vice Chair Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Bianchi.

Discussion:

Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director, explained that the Downtown Bloomington Transit Center has been the focus of a multi-year planning and design effort between Connect Transit and the City of Bloomington. Early work, including National Environmental Policy Act review and subsequent design phases, confirmed the need for a modern, centralized transit facility to replace the current on-street transfer environment and improve safety, accessibility, and system efficiency. As planning progressed, both agencies identified the Market Street Garage site—an aging structure at the end of its useful life—as the most viable and cost-effective location for the project.

The proposed facility is designed to serve as a multimodal hub that enhances passenger experience through improved connectivity and weather-protected amenities, while also supporting broader downtown revitalization efforts. The architectural approach blends historic downtown character with contemporary design elements, and the project is currently at approximately 60 percent design completion.

The proposed agreements formalize a partnership framework under which the City of Bloomington will convey the Market Street Garage property to Connect Transit for a nominal purchase price of \$10. Connect Transit will accept the property in its current “as-is” condition and assume full responsibility for demolition of the existing structure and construction of the new facility at their sole expense.

The City will contribute just over \$358,000 toward design costs, while Connect Transit will fund the balance of the project. In addition, the City will provide short-term support for site security and maintenance following the approval of these agreements for the existing garage, covering these costs for the first six months and sharing costs for an additional six months if demolition has not yet commenced.

Upon completion, Connect Transit will retain ownership of the property and operate the transit facility. The City will lease the public parking facility and police security office for a 99-year term at a nominal rate of \$10 per year. Under this structure, the City will have full responsibility for operating, maintaining, and collecting revenue from the parking facility, as well as providing snow removal and maintaining surrounding site elements. Connect Transit will retain access to 12 dedicated parking spaces for operational needs.

Overall, the agreements establish a balanced approach that enables development of a modern transit hub while clearly defining long-term responsibilities between the parties.

If approved, Connect Transit will purchase the Market Street Garage for a total cost of \$10.

Board Chair Hile stated this recommendation was the culmination of many years of work and noted the consequential vote about to happen, then gave each Trustee a moment to comment or ask questions.

Trustee Bianchi stated she was very excited at the progress being made.

Trustee Sanders stated she was pleased to see the stealth with which the project was moving.

Trustee Foster stated this has been a long time coming and thanked Mr. Lange for his leadership through it.

Trustee Cravens thanked Mr. Lange for his work and the City of Bloomington for approving the agreements.

Vice Chair Buchanan shared her excitement at seeing the partnerships develop over years, and thanked Mr. Lange for clearing the way for this continued work with the City of Bloomington as a great partner.

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 Purchase and Sale Agreement and a Lease Agreement between Connect Transit and the City of Bloomington for property located at 202 W. Market Street in Downtown Bloomington was **approved**.

c. Recommendation for Roof Replacement Contract – Roll Call Vote.

Board Chair Hile called for a motion to authorize the Deputy Managing Director to execute a contract with Western Specialty Contractors for a roof replacement on the Wylie Drive Administration Building. This contract will be contingent on IDOT's approval.

Secretary Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Sanders.

Discussion:

Ashley Strupek, Procurement Manager, stated that the Wylie Drive Administration Building, which was constructed over fifteen years ago, has experienced ongoing issues with shingle loss over the past several years. These losses have led to leaks that have resulted in additional interior damage, including moisture-related concerns. Our Maintenance Department has engaged third-party contractors to replace shingles on an as-needed basis; however, the frequency of issues poses significant challenges during periods of adverse weather.

To address these concerns, the Maintenance Department developed specifications for a replacement metal roof. This solution is anticipated to provide the Administration Building with a durable low-maintenance roofing system that will support long-term structural integrity.

On July 9, 2025, Connect Transit issued an Invitation for Bid (IFB) seeking bids for a roof replacement on our Administration Building at our Wylie Drive campus. Connect Transit received three bids in response to the IFB.

A contract from an IFB is awarded to the lowest responsive bidder. In this case, lowest bidder Top Roofing, was deemed unresponsive due to an incomplete bid price sheet, as well as missing Scope of Work requirements including a lack of project references and manufacturer specifications. The second lowest bidder, Western Specialty Contractors, was deemed responsive and are being recommended for contract award.

Western Specialty Contractors has been in business for over 100 years. Their corporate office is in St. Louis, Missouri and their local office is in Peoria, Illinois. The vendor has expertise in metal roofing, which is the type of roof proposed for installation. The roof work will include tear off and disposal of existing asphalt shingles, underlayment which includes an ice and water shield, and replacement of any damaged/rotted substrates. The roof applied will be a standing seam metal roof that includes all hardware and manufacturer's recommendations and specifications for a watertight installation. All flashing, drip edge, soffits, ridge cap, fascia trim, commercial seamless heavy gauge gutters, and downspouts will be replaced. The warranty for the roof is a 20-year weathertightness, and a 35-year paint and finish which includes cracking, checking, and peeling.

Funding for this project is provided by FTA 5307 in the amount of \$123,726 and IDOT DOAP Debt Service in the amount of \$291,122 for a total cost of \$414,848.

Trustee Foster asked when we expect to begin the project.

Ms. Strupek stated we are on the schedule for August of this year.

Board Chair Hile acknowledged the funding for this project is being put back into our community and that was something to be proud of.

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 Western Specialty Contractors for a roof replacement on the Wylie Drive Administration Building. This contract will be contingent on IDOT's approval was **approved**.

d. Recommendation for Facility Security Equipment Upgrade Contract – Roll Call Vote

Board Chair Hile called for a motion to authorize the Deputy Managing Director to execute a contract with Senergy Electric, Inc. for facility security equipment for a term of five years.

Trustee Rao motioned; seconded by Secretary Foster.

Discussion:

Ashley Strupek, Procurement Manager, stated that Connect Transit continues to expand its facilities, the need for a modern, comprehensive security and access control system has become increasingly urgent due to the rapid advancement of technology and software, as well as the aging and failing condition of current equipment. Many of the existing security and access control systems are original to the building and now exceed 15 years in age, with most security cameras at least eight years old and door security mechanisms showing signs of significant wear and obsolescence. An internal audit by the Technology Department revealed that these outdated systems not only pose security risks but also contribute to rising operational costs, particularly with cloud storage expenses for camera footage straining the technology budget. In addition, ensuring a safe and secure workplace for employees is very important. Recognizing these challenges and the advantages that new integrated solutions offer in terms of reliability, functionality, and cost efficiency, the IT team collaborated with the Procurement Department to develop a detailed Scope of Work for upgrading to modern security and access control systems.

On November 10, 2025, Connect Transit released a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking proposals to upgrade door locks and security cameras throughout the facilities. Two proposals were received in response to the RFP. The evaluation committee reviewed proposals, conducted interviews, participated in demonstrations, and scored the proposals.

The evaluation committee is recommending Senergy Electric, Inc. be awarded the contract to replace current camera systems and access control systems throughout existing facilities. Senergy Electric, Inc. has been in business since 2014 and operates primarily in Illinois, Missouri, and Wisconsin offering services including access control systems as well as cloud-based security and surveillance systems. The company is headquartered in Williamsville, Illinois, and has a strong focus on designing integrated security solutions for commercial businesses, schools, hospitals, municipalities, and law enforcement agencies.

Senergy Electric, Inc. will deliver a comprehensive suite of software based on the Genetec software platform combined with Axis security cameras and Mercury/HID access control systems. All systems are managed under a single platform and offer linked functionality between various hardware systems. The system will include perimeter control of all gates and can be expanded to incorporate new facilities including the Downtown Transit Center. Connect Transit is continuing to work to fulfill our mission of employee safety, and this will bring us closer to that goal.

The total cost of this project will be \$378,045.74 for equipment and installation and an additional \$7,000 annually for the service level agreement. For capital costs, \$327,200 will be funded through a FY24 Congressionally Directed Spending award from Senator Durbin and the remainder of \$81,800 will be funded with local capital. The \$7,000 annual operating costs are included in the annual operating budget previously approved by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Day asked if this was cloud-based software.

Steve Stockton, IT Manager, stated it has an on-site DVR with cloud access.

Vice Chair Buchanan confirmed this project will include the gates and entrance to the property.

Ms. Strupek confirmed it includes the gate to the property.

Vice Chair Buchanan asked if we will be getting additional cameras.

Ms. Strupek stated they will be replacing all cameras in the facility and adding some based on their analysis of our property.

Mr. Stockton stated we currently have 30+ cameras on site and will have 50+ after this due to their coverage map.

Mr. Lange stated this new system will integrate easily with the new transit center but will require the purchase of additional cameras once the transit center is built.

Trustee Bianchi asked if the yearly cost will increase once we bring the transit center online.

Ms. Strupek that is something we will have to discuss when the transit center cameras are being looked into.

Mr. Day asked how long we are storing the video footage from the cameras.

Mr. Lange stated the system will store up to 92TB, which we don't know how many days that will store but it does meet our retention requirements.

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 Senergy Electric, Inc. for facility security equipment for a term of five years was **approved**.

e. Recommendation for Release/Hold of Closed Session Minutes – Roll Call Vote

Board Chair Hile called for a motion to continue to hold from release all confidential closed session minutes and hold from release the closed session minutes as indicated.

Trustee Sanders motioned; seconded by Secretary Foster.

Discussion:

Mr. Lange stated that Illinois State Law requires that all public bodies which are subject to the requirements of the Illinois Open Meetings Act review closed session minutes at least twice each calendar year to determine which of those minutes need to remain confidential and which can be released to the public. It is entirely up to the governing body to make the determination as to whether to release to the public any closed session minutes.

Staff has reviewed the closed session minutes in accordance with state statute and is recommending that all minutes previously held by the Board continue to be withheld from public release at this time due to the confidential nature of the items that were discussed during those closed session meetings. Staff further recommends the closed session minutes listed below be held from release due to their confidential nature.

Date	Topic	Reviewed	Decision	Release Date
	5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) Personnel Matters; (5 ILCS 120/2.06) (d) – Rev. of Closed Session Minutes;			
10/25/25	5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5) Property Acquisition	4/28/26	Hold	None
11/25/25	5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) Personnel Matters	4/28/26	Hold	None

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 continue to hold from release all confidential closed session minutes and hold from release the closed session minutes as indicated was **approved**.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Messaging and Marketing Committee:

Vice Chair Buchanan shared they will begin meeting with Council Members in May or June. In those meetings they plan to share the number of boardings, impact on community employees and fiscal impact we have in the community.

Board Chair Hile stated they are looking forward to the Council Member meetings, starting with the City of Bloomington due to pressing business there.

Finance Committee:

Trustee Rao stated they reviewed monthly financials at the last Finance Committee meeting and everything looks good.

Operations and Planning Committee:

Trustee Bianchi stated they discussed the proposed changes that Mr. Giantamidis presented tonight at the last Operations and Planning Committee meeting.

I: BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT:

Board Chair Hile thanked the committees for their time and efforts; she also thanked Trustees for their support in the process of searching for a new Chief Executive Officer.

J: DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Lange shared the following report:

- Design Progress Report
 - Progressing toward 90% design – anticipated for May or June.
 - Plans are becoming much more detailed.
 - Reviewing updated cost estimates based on 60% design.
- Bus Routing
 - Held initial meeting with consultant input and suggestions.
 - Further internal discussion is guiding a desired approach with alternatives.
 - Will coordinate with the City to attempt avoiding frequent road closures/detours.
- City of Bloomington Coordination
 - Property agreements approved by FTA.
 - Meeting with BPD to review facility design and discuss security camera layout.
- Fare Collection Implementation
 - Continued work on development of internal and external marketing materials.
 - Implementing fare structure in the back end of the software.
 - Ongoing discussions with all Universal Access partners.
 - Coordinating installation of readers on all buses; cash boxes will be installed later.
- ERP/EAM Project
 - Project planning meetings have concluded.
 - Next significant task is Chart of Accounts design.
 - Work is also being done to develop the entire implementation schedule.
- Federal Updates

- Watching progress on federal reauthorization; earliest possible package would be late 2026, but more likely to be a Continuing Resolution.
- Most debate is centered around discretionary programs and advanced appropriations.

K: TRUSTEE COMMENTS:

Trustee Sanders thanked the Operators who serve the ARC for their service and stated they are doing a great job for the riders.

Trustee Foster shared her appreciation to Connect Transit staff for their handling of the tornado warnings and keeping customer safety a priority.

Trustee Cravens commended Mr. Lange for doing a wonderful job at keeping the Trustees informed and educated.

Vice Chair Buchanan shared her appreciation of staff's proactive thinking and planning for all of the upcoming projects.

City Manager Jurgens shared his appreciation for finalizing the agreements tonight and for Mr. Lange's work to make this possible. He stated this has been several years in the making with several obstacles, and now we have something we can all be proud of.

Board Chair Hile noted she saw three operators picking up bits of trash at stops and shared her appreciation for their efforts in taking care of the community and stops.

L: EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session was held.

M. ADJOURNMENT:

Board Chair Hile called for a motion to adjourn.

Trustee Bianchi motioned; seconded by Secretary Foster.

Rollcall Vote:

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

NAY: None

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Linda Foster-Caruth 5/20/24
 Linda Foster-Caruth, Secretary / Date

Janice Crago 5/26/26
 Janice Crago, Board Clerk / Date

[CONNECT TRANSIT SEAL]

