

Connect Transit Board of Trustees
October 26, 2021
351 Wylie Drive, Connect Transit – Board Room, Normal, IL 61761
Meeting Minutes as Approved at 1/25/22 Meeting

The Connect Transit Board of Trustees meeting was held on October 26, 2021, at 4:30 p.m.

Trustees Present: Chairman Ryan Whitehouse
Vice-Chair Julie Hile
Trustee Judy Buchanan
Trustee Linda Foster
Trustee Tim McCue

City Managers Present: Bloomington Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus
Town of Normal Manager Pam Reece

Staff Present: David Braun, General Manager
Brady Lange, Maintenance/Procurement Manager
Jeff Holtke, Marketing Manager
Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director
Steve Stockton, IT Manager
Brendan O’Neill, Outreach Coordinator
Janice Crago, Board Clerk

The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Connect Transit Board of Trustees was called to order by Chairman Ryan Whitehouse at 4:38 p.m. Roll call was taken and Vice Chair Hile led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to allow Mandava Rao, Deb Presley, and Linda Foster to attend remotely due to commitments requiring them to be out of town.

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee McCue.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Vice Chair Hile, Trustee McCue, Chairman Whitehouse.

NAY: None.

Motion to allow Mandava Rao, Deb Presley, and Linda Foster to attend remotely was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approval of September 26, 2021 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

- b. Financial Information for the month of September 2021
- c. Monthly Statistical Report for September 2021
- d. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report
- e. Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update

Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda.

Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded by Trustee Buchanan.

Discussion: David Braun, General Manager, asked that everyone look at the Cornerstone Infrastructure Federal Report and Cardinal Illinois Weekly Update. They are very important in regard to what is happening in legislature with transit and renewal of the Transportation Act.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Vice Chair Hile, Trustee McCue, Chairman Whitehouse.
NAY: None.

Consent Agenda was unanimously **approved**.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to approve the Illinois State University Universal Access Contract for a six-month extension from January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to approve the Illinois State University Universal Access Contract for a six-month extension from January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022.

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Vice Chair Hile.

David stated that due to his August start date Connect Transit did not meet with ISU until October, which was too late for their Board of Trustees to make any approvals for this year. As a result, we have chosen to extend for another six-month period. We are currently in negotiations to reach an agreement that is mutually beneficial, in the meantime requesting this extension with an increase of \$0 from ISU to Connect Transit. Chairman Whitehouse commented that we will receive \$289,068.00 over the six months. Trustee McCue shared his hopes for a long-term plan, rather than these continued short-term extensions. While the short-term extensions have been valid, the long-term agreements would be of Connect Transit's best interest. Trustee Buchanan agreed that a long-term agreement would be helpful for both entities. Vice Chairman Hile added that the intention to continue the meetings with ISU in the interim in an ongoing effort to reach an agreement is appreciated and requested that David please keep the Board informed of the progress. Chairman Whitehouse stated that he supports this six-month extension, but this will be the last six-month extension he supports. Extensions have been the solution for three years and there needs to be a solution brought to the Board for the next contract, not another six-month extension.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Vice Chair Hile, Trustee McCue, Chairman Whitehouse
NAY: None

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to approve the Illinois State University Universal Access Contract for a six-month extension from January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022 was unanimously **approved**.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Whitehouse thanked the Council Members from the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal for taking the time to meet with David and himself over the last few weeks, and still to come. He also thanked Trustee Foster for attending the Boys and Girls Club event on Sunday and making remarks on behalf of the Board.

Pam Reece asked which Council Members from the Town of Normal David and Chairman Whitehouse had and had not met with yet?

Chairman Whitehouse shared that they had met with Council Members Lorenz and Cummings, and that he had reached out to the others.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:

Procurement Director Position

David shared that after completing the interview process with several good applicants, Brady Lange has been hired as the new Procurement Director. Brady has been the Maintenance Manager at Connect Transit for some time, as well as the Interim Procurement Manager. During his time as Interim Procurement Manager Brady has stepped up and done a great job with moving the electric bus, solar panels, and Transit Center projects forward. This role will be a step up as far as developing procurement policies and managing the new Manager of Planning and Grants position. He shared that with Brady assuming this position on November 1, the Maintenance Manager position will need to be advertised and filled.

Board Retreat Dates – Reminder

David reminded the Board that the Board Retreat is scheduled for Friday, December 10 and Saturday, December 11, 2021, with more information to be shared as the date nears.

Better Bus Stops Campaign

David stated that eight new stops were completed this week, providing better access to transportation.

Boys and Girls Club Bus Transfer

David shared that Connect Transit donated two Mobility buses to the Boys and Girls Club on Monday, October 25, 2021. Several staff members, Trustee Foster, and several Boys and Girls Club representatives were present. In appreciation the Boys and Girls Club shared a nice plaque with us. He thanked the Board of Trustees, his predecessors, and the general community for making this happen. He also thanked Trustee Foster for giving a nice speech and recognizing the impact the donation will have on the community. Chairman Whitehouse thanked Mayor Pro Tem Jamie Mathy for representing the City of Bloomington at the event. He also commented that it is nice to see the updated bus stops on the way to work.

Stuff-the-Bus Activities

David shared that Jeff Holtke, Marketing Manager, and Brendan O'Neill, Outreach Coordinator, have been out in the community with the bus attending several Halloween and Stuff the Bus events. Over 1,000 people have gone through the Halloween bus, with the bus being requested at several venues. He shared that Jeff and Brendan put in numerous hours outside of work to make these events happen, from decorating the bus to maintaining, planning, cleaning, and attending on behalf of Connect Transit.

Recruiting and Training Update

David shared that we currently have six Operators in training. We are accepting applications for the next class of Operators and will continue to give a \$1,000.00 signing bonus and a \$250.00 recruiting bonus. In addition, we are paying for the CDL permit to avoid out of pocket expenses to the applicant.

Vaccination Record Update

David reminded the Board that we are giving \$100 gift cards to employees who share their vaccination records. 72 employees have volunteered their records, which is approximately 52% of the staff. We are not requiring staff to share their records, but asking in advance so when the mandates are issued we know what our obligations will be.

Trustee Buchanan asked if there are any staff members who have been vaccinated but have chosen not to share their records?

David stated that we don't know if they have chosen not to share but that people are still sharing their records as of this week, and some are going to get vaccinated so they can share their records.

Trustee Buchanan shared that in some workplaces some employees were choosing not to share their records.

David said he would follow up on it and report back to her.

NEPA Study Update

David shared the NEPA process and that we are at the very beginning, and awaiting on CM Smith's recommendation to the FTA, who will then direct our next steps.

Electric Bus Update

David stated that the electric buses are on the assembly line now and we anticipate a late November or early December delivery. Testing, training, and commissioning will take place in December and January, with a roll out in February.

Key Performance Indicator Report

David stated that he would like to reconfigure the Monthly Statistical Report and separate them out by Fixed Route and Connect Mobility, to allow a clear picture of the indicators for each. If the report is not satisfactory, we can continue to change it until it is. He would like them to have a report that is actionable, allowing the Board to ask questions on effectiveness and performance.

Vice Chair Hile thanked David for his wide-ranging management and activities. She shared it is great to see the diverse types of projects he has taken up and his continued stabilization of staff. She asked for an update on the LED lights project in the bus garage?

Brady Lange shared that this project will be included in the Bus and Bus Facilities grant application currently being worked on. We are hoping to have the application approved so we can move forward with the project.

David Braun asked if we had received any quotes on the project?

Brady Lange stated we had not received any quotes yet.

TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS:

Trustee Foster thanked Chairman Whitehouse for allowing her to stand in at The Boys and Girls Club event and shared her appreciation of the Terrance Rose event at Connect Transit.

Chairman Whitehouse shared that several staff members and Board of Trustee members attended the event for Terrance Rose, and that it was nice to see so many people care and come out on a Sunday evening to support each other.

Trustee Buchanan shared her excitement at being witness to the forward movement Connect Transit is making and her appreciation to the staff for making it happen.

Town Manager Reece shared that they have a survey for residents to share their opinions on the American Rescue Plan Act Funds and their prioritization that will be out for another 3-4 weeks. The town's allotment is \$10.8 million with one of the options is to direct some of the funds to urban transit. The survey results will be used to determine how to use the funds and make recommendations to the City Council. The survey can be accessed through the Town's website.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session was held.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Adjourn.

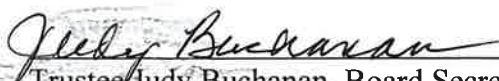
Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded by Trustee McCue.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Vice Chair Hile, Trustee McCue, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

Motion **carried**; meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.


Trustee Judy Buchanan, Board Secretary

[SEAL]


Janice Crago, Board Clerk

