

**Connect Transit Board of Trustees**  
**February 22, 2022, 4:30pm**  
**351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761 – Board Room**  
**Regular Session Minutes – Approved at 3/22/22 Board Meeting**

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

**City Managers Present:** Bloomington Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus (remote)

**Staff Present:** David Braun, General Manager  
Brady Lange, Maintenance/Procurement Manager  
Charlie Busse, Maintenance Manager  
Germaine Walls, Interim HR Manager  
Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director  
Shelly Perry, Operations Manager  
Steve Stockton, IT Manager  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk

Chairman Ryan Whitehouse called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and read the Connect Transit Mission Statement.  
Board Clerk, Janice Crago, recorded attendance via roll call.  
Trustee Foster led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**  
There were no public comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. Approval of January 25, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of February 8, 2022, Strategic Planning Meeting Minutes
- c. Financial Information for January 2022
- d. Monthly Statistical Reports for January 2022
- e. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report
- f. Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda.**  
Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

**Discussion:** David Braun, General Manager, pointed out that we have a new Key Performance Indicator (KPI) report this month that includes some new information in a new format. He went through the report and explained what each page represents and what to look forward to each month. He shared that at our next Board meeting the report will include definitions, including what we consider efficiency vs. effectiveness. Mr. Braun welcomed feedback on report during or after the meeting.

Chairman Whitehouse asked what a good number for farebox recovery would be and where we compare to transit standards?

Mr. Braun shared that there isn't really a transit standard number, it really depends on each community. Most mid-west systems are 10%-15% and Connect Transit is 10%, which takes into account that we've been fare free for quite a while.

Chairman Whitehouse asked what "% farebox recovery" means exactly?

Mr. Braun explained % farebox recovery is revenue taken in by the fareboxes against the operating costs, including the ISU, Wesleyan, and HCC contracts.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None.

Consent Agenda was **approved**.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. 2021 Connect Transit Onboard Customer Satisfaction Survey (Informational):  
Mr. Braun stated that in October of 2021 we received the results of the passenger satisfaction survey the Operations Department completed in September of 2021. Shelly Perry, Operations Manager, then shared the results of the survey. The top five items riders were most satisfied with were driver safety, bus cleanliness, onboard safety/security, driver courtesy, and fare/cost to ride. The top five services most important to riders were reliability of service/buses on time, frequency of service, Connect Mobility App, service after 9pm, and bus stop safety. [The complete report and presentation was sent to the Board of Trustees the following day]
- b. Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to award a contract for interior and exterior bus advertising services to Houck Transit Advertising for a base term of three (3) years with two (2) options for two (2) years each.

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to award a contract for interior and exterior bus advertising services to Houck Transit Advertising for a base term of three (3) years with two (2) options for two (2) years each.**

Trustee McCue motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao

**Discussion:** Mr. Braun explained that as mentioned at our Board Retreat, we have completed our RFP for selling interior and exterior bus advertising through a contractor, rather than doing it in house. When our Marketing Department left us in December, we no longer had anyone to sell the bus advertising, so we needed a way to move forward with the advertising revenue without putting the burden on someone completely new to the position, so we put the RFP out and it has closed. Brady Lange, Procurement Director, explained that in the past, Connect Transit marketing staff has sold advertising on buses. This required a significant investment of time and resources. When taking staff labor costs into consideration, the advertising program did not produce revenue for Connect Transit. Management has recognized that utilizing an outside advertising agency will provide more revenue and allow the Connect Transit Marketing Department to concentrate on other areas. Two proposals were received in response to the RFP. Staff evaluated the proposals based on

the qualifications and advertising experience of the firm, the proposed approach and method for accomplishing the scope of work, and the compensation proposal submitted. Based on the evaluation data, staff is recommending that Houck Transit Advertising be awarded the contract. Houck Transit Advertising is headquartered in St Paul, MN and has contracts with various Illinois transit agencies including Danville, Decatur, Macomb, Peoria, and Springfield. They also service agencies throughout the Midwest. They have considerable experience specifically relating to transit advertising and are well positioned to take on Connect Transit as a client. Connect Transit will not incur any expenses related to this contract.

Trustee McCue asked if the Connect Transit brand and logo would remain present on the buses? Mr. Braun stated the RFP was very specific that we do not lose our own brand when we wrap a bus or place an ad on the bus.

Chairman Whitehouse reminded the Board of the policy to not advertise alcohol or tobacco products.

Trustee Buchanan asked if the things we will not advertise have been shared with Houck Transit Advertising?

Brady Lange stated that our requirements and 'code of conduct' for advertising has been shared.

Trustee Buchanan asked if we have the final approval on all ads placed on buses?

Brady Lange confirmed we do have final approval.

Trustee Foster asked if the buses would have local ads and ads outside of the Bloomington-Normal area on the buses?

Brady Lange stated the agency will take over our current local advertising contracts after introductions, and then they will bring in more local and mid-western and national ads, which is how they can guarantee such high revenue.

Trustee Buchanan asked if we had spoken with any of the transit systems the agency had referred to.

Brady Lange said that while we had not verbally spoken to them, the companies had all provided good references.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to award a contract for interior and exterior bus advertising services to Houck Transit Advertising for a base term of three (3) years with two (2) options for two (2) years each was **approved**.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Chairman Whitehouse explained that Mr. Braun will be presenting various committee opportunities and their purpose and asked that after Mr. explains the committees each Trustee please consider which committee they would like to be a part of and let him know via email or cell phone so he can make appointments as best possible. He also reminded everyone that the Annual Meeting is next

month, and it will be time to name officers, including Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. If you are interested in serving on the Nominating Committee, please let him know. The group appointments will be made public at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Braun, General Manager, shared that at our Retreat in December we discussed committee roles and we thought our Board is too small to have a standing committee and monthly meetings of said committee to deal with issues. However, he shared we do have some issues coming up and he does occasionally need some insight from the Board and is proposing these committees or ad-hoc working groups of the Board. The committees are the Personnel Committee, Finance Committee, Outreach Committee, and Planning and Operations Committee. Mr. suggested one or two people on each committee, reporting to either himself or Chairman Whitehouse.

Chairman Whitehouse shared they do not want to appoint Trustees to committees but would rather have them serve on a committee where they want to serve.

Vice Chair Hile pointed out that this follows the Stackrow-Eadie's book we utilized at the Retreat and is pleased to do so.

### **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:**

#### **Recruiting and Training:**

Mr. Braun shared that we have filled two positions since our last meeting. Charlie Busse, a Maintenance Supervisor, has been promoted to Maintenance Manager. Charlie has already implemented some great ideas and did a wonderful job with the recent snow events. Aubrey Stanton has accepted the Marketing Manager position and will start full time in June, until then she will work as an intern due to still attending Millikin College. She will graduate with a degree in Entrepreneurship with a minor in Digital Marketing. We are still recruiting for two or three Maintenance Supervisors, Bus Operators, one Mechanic, three Service Technicians, and a Transportation Planner. He shared that we are working with Youth Build to establish an apprentice program for Bus Cleaners. Two of our new Operators have been released to routes on their own and two will complete Route Familiarization Training next week, four Mechanics have completed Q'Straint/ADA training, and 13 Maintenance employees have completed Forklift training and certifications.

#### **COVID and Vaccination Update:**

Mr. Braun shared that we reinstated our late-night scheduled service, effective Monday, February 14, 2022, and will reinstate front door boarding procedures and fares Monday, February 28, 2022. To date we 89 employees have shared their vaccination records, which is 65% of staff.

#### **Strategic Plan-Next Steps:**

Mr. Braun stated we are still reviewing all the recommendations made in the Strategic Plan meeting. The staff and I will go through them and prioritize them, and then present them to the Board.

#### **Intro to Connect Transit Presentation:**

Mr. Braun shared with the Board the PowerPoint presentation he shares with local elected officials. This presentation shares who we are, our Trustees, where we started, how we got where we are, and a brief history of transit. \*Attached

Trustee Buchanan asked if this had been shared with an individual Council member in the Town of Normal?

Mr. Braun stated it had been shared with all Council members in Normal.

Trustee Buchanan asked if it had been shared with any Council members in the City of Bloomington?

Mr. Braun stated it had not been shared with all of them, the presentation was developed after he and Chairman Whitehouse had already met with a few Council members. He will be speaking in front of the City Council in May and sharing pieces of this presentation at that time, as well as sharing future plans

Trustee Foster shared this presentation is wonderful and a great tool to use in the community for gathering support.

Mr. Braun shared he will be presenting this to the Downtown Rotary in April and is still trying to schedule a time with the Sunrise Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions. He will continue to work on getting more time with local community leaders in an effort to garner support for our transit system.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

ILCS 12/2(c)(5) – Property Acquisition

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to adjourn Regular Session and move into an Executive Session.**

Vice Chair Hile motioned; seconded Trustee McCue

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

**Motion carried, and the Board of Trustees adjourned Regular Session and moved into Executive Session at 5:30 p.m.**

**REGULAR SESSION RE-OPENED:**

Chairman Whitehouse called Regular Session back to order at 6:22pm and noted all Board members previously noted at roll call were still present.

**Trustees Present:**

Chairman Ryan Whitehouse  
Vice-Chair Julie Hile  
Trustee Judy Buchanan  
Trustee Linda Foster  
Trustee Tim McCue  
Trustee Mandava Rao

**City Managers Present:**

Bloomington Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus (remote)

**Staff Present:**

David Braun, General Manager  
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**TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS:**

Trustee Hile stated her appreciation of the morale and momentum she sees on the Connect Transit staff. She also acknowledged the updated reports Mr. Braun gave at the beginning of the meeting and the community presentation he shared at the end of the meeting. Trustee Hile also requested we move forward with completing the Strategic Plan and an update on Better Bus Stops at our next meeting and expressed that it is an accomplishment we should be sharing in public meetings.

Trustee Foster expressed that she was pleased to see Connect Transit Represented at the Heartland Community College event with Secretary of Transportation Buttigieg.

Trustee Rao stated he was thankful for the Ridership Survey presentation in the meeting.

Trustee Buchanan expressed that she echoed Trustee Hile's sentiments.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Adjourn.**


Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

Motion to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting was **approved**; meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

  
Trustee Judy Buchanan, Board Secretary

  
Janice Crago, Board Clerk

[SEAL]

