

Connect Transit Board of Trustees
July 26, 2022, 4:30pm
351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761 – Board Room
Regular Session Minutes – Approved at 8/23/22 Meeting

Trustees Present: Trustee Judy Buchanan (4:33)
Trustee Linda Foster
Trustee Tim McCue
Trustee Mandava Rao
Trustee Barbara Singer (after motion/vote)
Chairman Ryan Whitehouse

City Managers Present: Bloomington Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus

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

Chairman Ryan Whitehouse called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
Board Clerk, Janice Crago, recorded attendance via roll call.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to approve Vice Chair Julie Hile and Trustee Barbara Singer to attend virtually due to reason one – personal illness or disability, as stated in the by-laws.

Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee McCue.

Discussion:

There was no discussion.

Rollcall vote:

A YE: Trustee Foster, Trustee McCue, Trustee Rao, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

Motion to approve Vice Chair Julie Hile and Trustee Barbara Singer to attend virtually due to reason one – personal illness or disability, as stated in the by-laws was **approved**.

Chairman Whitehouse led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Connect Transit Mission Statement

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approval of June 28, 2022, Regular Session Minutes
- b. ~~Financial Information for June 2022 – Delayed due to year end closing~~
- c. Monthly Statistical Reports for June 2022
- d. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report
- e. Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update

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

Trustee Rao motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

Discussion:

David Braun, General Manager, shared that the Performance Reports reflect year end data and show Fixed Route ridership increased 15% and Connect Mobility ridership increased 40%, this puts Connect Mobility very close to pre-pandemic levels. Mr. Braun expects Fixed Route ridership will continue to grow because we are offering Peak Service again. Mr. Braun shared that we do not have financial reports to share this month due to year end numbers still coming in, which is normal for this time of year.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Trustee McCue, Trustee Rao, Trustee Singer, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None.

Consent Agenda was **approved**.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. To approve the Illinois Department of Transportation Public Transportation Capital Assistance Grant Board Resolution as attached.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to approve the Illinois Department of Transportation Public Transportation Capital Assistance Grant Board Resolution as attached.

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

Discussion:

Brady Lange, Procurement Director, shared this is very similar to the Consolidated Vehicle Procurement application process we recently underwent, with IDOT requiring a Board Resolution anytime we going to seek funding through a Capital Assistance Grant. This grant will potentially fund up to ten Microtransit vehicles, a storage and charging facility for Paratransit and Microtransit vehicles on our property, and radio system replacements. Mr. Braun shared that a public hearing was held on July 25, with no one attending to share public comments.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Trustee McCue, Trustee Rao, Trustee Singer, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None

The recommendation motion to approve the Illinois Department of Transportation Public Transportation Capital Assistance Grant Board Resolution as attached was **approved**.

- b. To authorize the General Manager to award a contract for completing a midlife overhaul of five 2015 and seven 2016 New Flyer buses to Cummins Sales and Service.

Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to award a contract for completing a midlife overhaul of five 2015 and seven 2016 New Flyer buses to Cummins Sales and Service.

Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

Discussion:

Brady Lange, Procurement Director, shared that this recommendation is to authorize the General Manager to award a contract for completing a midlife overhaul of five 2015 and seven 2016 New Flyer buses to Cummins Sales and Service. Connect Transit's fleet management plan calls for vehicle and engine overhauls on an as-needed basis. Midlife overhauls have become common practice in the industry. Performing overhauls extends the life of buses by many years and saves maintenance expenses by replacing components that can cause on-street failures. Performing midlife overhauls also includes new warranties on vital components such as engines, transmissions, and aftertreatment systems. The Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) provides Useful Life Benchmarking guidance for all types of transit equipment. For Fixed Route transit vehicles, the FTA requires fourteen years of life. Therefore, Connect Transit has chosen to perform midlife overhaul services seven years into the vehicle's life. On May 24, 2022, Connect Transit released a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking proposals for midlife overhaul services for five 2015 and seven 2016 New Flyer transit buses. The Scope of Work for this RFP specifically defines all the components that Connect Transit Maintenance staff has identified as an item that will need to be replaced or refurbished during the midlife overhaul. Vital components such as engines, transmissions, cooling systems, exhaust aftertreatment systems, alternators, and fire suppressions systems will be replaced with new or remanufactured units or serviced as OEM's dictate. Additionally, Bus Operator seats will be replaced to reduce driver fatigue which can increase as seat components wear. The Scope of Work also defines the responsibilities the contractor shall assume by being awarded a contract. Connect Transit has defined quality assurance inspections and final acceptance procedures that will be utilized during the project and prior to allowing an invoice to be submitted for each vehicle. Three proposals were received in response to the RFP. Staff evaluated the proposals based on the proposed approach for accomplishing the scope of work, cost proposal, references and related experience, and the qualifications and capabilities of key staff. Based on the evaluation data, staff is recommending that Cummins Sales and Service be awarded the contract. Cummins has been a long-time partner for Connect Transit and has completed past similar work. Additionally, Cummins repair technicians have been valued partners in repairing and assisting with the training of Connect Transit Mechanic staff. The total price of this contract will be \$1,467,641 of which 65% (\$953,967) will be funding by IDOT DOAP Debt Service and 35% (\$513,674) will be funded by FTA5307.

Chairman Whitehouse stated it is good to see the money staying in the community, supporting local jobs.

Trustee Buchanan asked if there is any warranty or guarantee with the work. Mr. Lange said there will be a five-year warranty on the engines, transmissions will have a two-year warranty, and all the other parts of the overhauls will have varying warranties.

Trustee Buchanan asked if Connect Transit had previously worked with Cummins. Mr. Lange shared we had a long-standing working relationship with Cummins, and they meet all the requirements needed. In addition, they are local, and we can go check on the overhaul progress as stipulated in the RFP.

Trustee Rao asked if we are replacing the engine and transmission. Mr. Lange said we are replacing both the engine and the transmission, extending the life of the bus.

Mr. Braun asked how many miles are on the buses after 7 years. Mr. Lange said approximately 150,000-200,000.

Trustee Foster asked if these replacements will be done in house or somewhere else. Mr. Lange shared they will go to Cummins, on the north side of Normal.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Trustee McCue, Trustee Rao, Trustee Singer, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to award a contract for completing a midlife overhaul of five 2015 and seven 2016 New Flyer buses to Cummins Sales and Service was **approved**.

c. Data Definitions and Graphs – Informational

Jacob Smith, Transportation Planner, discussed the FY22 Ridership Snapshot and Three-year Comparison report and graphs shared in the meeting packet, highlighting the At-A-Glance data for FY22 in comparison to FY19, which was our last full year of service without any effects of COVID.

Mr. Braun shared that the on-time performance and cleanliness data we are seeing is a testament to our staff and the wonderful job they do.

Trustee Buchanan thanked Jacob for his report and shared her excitement over the passenger trip data, considering what we've been through in previous years, it is great to see such a robust number.

Trustee Foster asked if we are following up on the complaints when they come in. Shelly Perry, Operations Manager, shared complaints are verified through videos when applicable, the person who made the complaint is always contacted if we have their contact information, if the complaint was employee related the employee is notified, and notes are always made on the complaint.

Trustee McCue asked if we do any benchmarking of numbers regionally or nationally. Mr. Braun shared that we do a small amount of national benchmarking through National Transit Database but that doesn't include On-time Performance, but we are considering ways to do this in the future.

Trustee Buchanan asked if we get calls or complaints about things that are not in our control, such as curb cuts. Shelly Perry, Operations Manager, shared we do get some, but we try to explain our role in the issue being addressed and then either redirect them to the right entity or take the information and make the call ourselves in order to get them the help they need in order to have their issue or need addressed.

Chairman Whitehouse shared he likes this report and appreciates the format being easy to read. The 96% on-time tells him we are running effectively and not overdrawn, successfully meeting the needs of the community. Chairman Whitehouse extended his appreciation to the Operators for the lower collision data, and to the staff for the training extended to help lower that number. Chairman Whitehouse also shared his pleasure in seeing the Connect Mobility passengers per hour data rising and reminded Trustees and staff to keep that number in mind when planning future budgets so we can keep up with the demand.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Whitehouse asked the Board to consent to creating a policy to broadcast our future Board of Trustees meetings, and to start broadcasting our meetings with the next meeting. The consensus of the Board was to move forward with the creation of a policy and cost estimate and to bring those to the August meeting.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:

APTA Transit Initiatives and Communities Workshop:

Mr. Braun shared that he and Marketing Manager, Aubrey Staton, attended the workshop in Austin, TX. While the program was focused on funding campaigns, he and Aubrey attended to learn how to build better coalitions and partnerships. He reminded the Trustees that when they first hired him, they asked him to reach out to the public to gain support for Connect Transit as more than just transit riders, but as part of the community, and that's what they hoped to learn in this workshop. Mr. Braun felt they came away with some great ideas to help them with their search for a Messaging Consultant. Over the next 6 months he will be working with staff on a coalition building exercise, to understand who our supporters and detractors are in order to build a coalition for Connect Transit.

Public Engagement/Participation:

Mr. Braun shared that Connect Transit had been quite active in the community with the Cooling Bus, West Bloomington West Fest, Marcfirst Disability Pride Parade, Saturdays on the Square, Future Historians of McLean County Shuttle, publishing the first edition of our Get Connected bi-monthly newsletter, hosted EDC Real Estate Committee meeting at Connect Transit, Building BN Podcast, and will be supporting the Brats and Bags Participation next month.

West Bloomington-Normal Route Update:

Mr. Braun stated the buses have been delivered for the new route, with the new route expecting to take 44 minutes one way with a 16-minute layover/recovery at Uptown/Downtown. The buses will be wrapped to coordinate with the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal, and we have an anticipated start date of mid-September 2022.

Training:

Mr. Braun stated our staff has been attending numerous trainings with development of our employees continuing to be a priority. LIFE CIL was recently on site to train our staff on sensitivity in serving people with disabilities, all of our Mechanics received training on Lift-U wheelchair ramps, the new Maintenance Supervisor and Service Technician received forklift training, our Safety and Training Coordinator completed Underground Storage Tank training, and CPR/AED, Diversity, and Substance Abuse trainings continue.

Recruiting:

Mr. Braun shared that recruitment continues with 1 Custodian and 1 Dispatcher position filled. In addition, we are still hiring for ten Bus Operators, 1 Maintenance Supervisor, 1 Maintenance Foreman, 2 Mechanics, and 3 Service Technicians. Mr. Braun encouraged the Trustees to have interested individuals apply online at our website.

Trustee Buchanan asked if we offer mental or behavioral health training for our employees to teach them how to respond to a rider who may be in crisis. Shelly Perry, Operations Manager, said we do have training that started during COVID. Ms. Perry shared that we utilize FTA videos, we've incorporated this as part of our new hire training, and we continue to develop and expand our training.

Trustee Buchanan asked if we refer individuals who may need additional help. Shelly Perry said that it is case by case, sometimes we do refer to our partners in the community when needed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session was held.

TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS:

Trustee McCue alerted everyone that ISU move in begins August 15 and encouraged everyone to avoid the area. First day of classes is August 22 so activity in the area and on the buses will pick up.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Whitehouse called for a Motion to Adjourn.

Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Rao.

Rollcall vote:

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Trustee McCue, Trustee Rao, Trustee Singer, Chairman Whitehouse

NAY: None

Motion to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting was **approved**; meeting adjourned at 5:17p.m.


Trustee Tim McCue, Board Secretary


Janice Crago, Board Clerk

[SEAL]

