

**Connect Transit Board of Trustees**  
**August 23, 2022, 4:30pm**  
**351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761 – Board Room**  
**Regular Session Minutes – Approved at 9/27/22 Meeting**

**Trustees Present:** Trustee Judy Buchanan  
Trustee Linda Foster  
Vice Chair Judy Hile (4:35)  
Trustee Tim McCue  
Trustee Mandava Rao  
Trustee Barbara Singer  
Chairman Ryan Whitehouse

**City Managers Present:** Town of Normal City Manager Pam Reece (4:33)  
Bloomington Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus (4:39)

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jackie Gaines, Connect Transit rider and resident of the Meadows on South 51, shared that she heard we are considering a bus stop there and came to support this stop. She has been looking for employment for many years with transportation being the major challenge in her pursuit of employment and feels this stop would be a help to her and others like her. She suggested that the stop times be 7am, noon, and 7pm to ensure all hours are covered for employment purposes or errands without having to depend on someone else for these needs. She additionally requested that the bus do one round on the outside perimeter to accommodate riders of all abilities and physical challenges. Chairman Whitehouse thanked Ms. Gaines for her comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. Approval of July 26, 2022, Regular Session Minutes
- b. Financial Information for June 2022 (*July 2022 delayed due to year end closing*)
- c. Monthly Statistical Reports for July 2022
- d. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report
- e. Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update

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

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee McCue.

**Discussion:**

David Braun, General Manager, pointed out that financial reports are for June 2022 because we are still undergoing our audit, July 2022 reports will be ready for our September meeting. In the June 2022 report under Cash Disbursements you will see a Traveler's Property Damage payment that looks like property damage, but it is actually for the Property Damage Insurance. You will also see a payment to Wilcox Electric for \$654,000.00 for the solar infrastructure, which is fully commissioned and now paid. Mr. Braun also noted that the Performance Reports are for July 2022, even though the Financial Reports are for June 2022. In the Performance Reports there was nothing that stood out. He notes that in the Cardinal Report the grant award Connect Transit received was mentioned, and the DOT has issued a new Greenhouse Gas Measure. Connect Transit purchasing the electric buses is helping the state meet these Greenhouse Gas Measure requirements. Mr. Braun closed with reminding everyone that in January he shared a concern about the Statement of Economic Interest form. Our consultant in Springfield has been working on the issue with the Illinois Association of Counties, as well as Township Officials, School Boards, and Illinois Municipal League also being very interested in changing the legislation because it keeps board members from fully engaging and possibly preventing people from joining boards in the future. It isn't expected to happen in the veto session, but they are working on new language.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None.

ABSTAIN: Vice Chair Hile

Consent Agenda was **approved**.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. The Board of Trustees approve the Connect Transit Livestream Policy dated August 23, 2022.

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to approve the Connect Transit Livestream Policy dated August 23, 2022, as attached.**

Trustee Singer motioned; seconded by Vice Chair Hile.

**Discussion:**

David Braun, General Manager, shared that during our last Board meeting we discussed returning to livestream meetings to remain transparent and he was tasked with creating a policy for submitting to the Board. This policy was created to share the purpose of the policy, how it applies, ability to edit content, and ability to stop streaming.

Chairman Whitehouse shared he likes the definition and explanation of why we did this.

Trustee Buchanan asked that if we change something in the minutes how that would be reflected in the video? Mr. Braun shared it would be shared in the next Board meeting when the minutes are corrected.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

The motion to approve the Connect Transit Livestream Policy dated August 23, 2022, as attached was **approved**.

- b. To authorize the General Manager to award Ken's Oil Service a fixed-unit-price three-year contract for the purchase and delivery of oils and lubricants.

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to award Ken's Oil Service a fixed-unit-price three-year contract for the purchase and delivery of oils and lubricants.**

Trustee Buchanan motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

**Discussion:**

Brady Lange, Procurement Director, explained that last year, Connect Transit awarded a single year contract to Evergreen FS. A single year contract was chosen last year because multiple bidders indicated market volatility made it too difficult to provide fixed pricing for multiple years. On July 15, 2022, Connect Transit released an Invitation for Bid (IFB) seeking bids for delivery and purchase of miscellaneous oils and lubricants, not including gasoline and diesel fuel. In response to the IFB, Connect Transit received two (2) bids, which are detailed in the meeting packet. Due to feedback received in response to the IFB issued last year, Connect Transit staff decided to seek a three-year contract for these goods, but allow for price increases or decreases not to exceed the Consumer Price Index for motor oils, coolant, and fluids. The contract is also limited to a total annual increase of 8% or less. Connect Transit will utilize standard operating funds for these goods and expects an estimated annual expense of approximately \$54,911.35 based on estimated annual usage.

Chairman Whitehouse asked for clarification on the 8% increase allowance, wanting to know what happens if prices go down. Mr. Lange stated it does follow market conditions and allows for the decrease as well.

Trustee Buchanan asked where Ken's Oil is located. Mr. Lange stated they are in Fairbury, IL.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to award Ken's Oil Service a fixed-unit-price three-year contract for the purchase and delivery of oils and lubricants was **approved**.

- c. To authorize the General Manager to award a contract to Wilcox Electric & Service Inc. for replacement of existing incandescent and fluorescent lighting fixtures with energy efficient LED fixtures.

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize the General Manager to award a contract to Wilcox Electric & Service Inc. for replacement of existing incandescent and fluorescent lighting fixtures with energy efficient LED fixtures.**

Trustee Rao motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

**Discussion:**

David Braun, General Manager, shared that our facility is about 12 years old, and fixtures have come a long way since then, and passed the recommendation to Brady Lange, Procurement Director. Mr. Lange shared that in September 2021, Connect Transit commissioned a solar array designed to supplement the electrical needs for existing facilities. The goal of the project was to decrease energy demands for facilities with renewable, clean energy and become as close to net-zero energy consumption as possible, while also decreasing operating costs. LED lighting will further reduce the electrical consumption of Connect Transit facilities and we estimated that this project will fund itself via operating and maintenance cost savings over a period of four (4) years. In addition, our Maintenance staff has expressed interest in brighter lighting in the bus repair garage. Addition of more fixtures in key locations as identified by our Maintenance staff, along with the replacement LED fixtures, will greatly increase the brightness in the Maintenance facility and some areas of the bus yard, which will increase safety for personnel. On July 6, 2022, Connect Transit released an Invitation for Bid (IFB) seeking bids for replacement of all existing incandescent and fluorescent lighting fixtures with energy efficient LED fixtures. This project includes both the Administration and Maintenance facilities, as well as yard lighting. In total, Connect Transit will replace 285 fixtures and add 28 new fixtures. Connect Transit received 4 bids in response to this IFB. One bid was considered incomplete and eliminated, therefore the award for this project is being offered to lowest responsive bidder. Wilcox Electric & Service has a history of good performance on previous contracts including installation of the solar array and ongoing EV charging infrastructure. Currently, the plan is to begin installation as soon as product orders begin arriving and we anticipate installation to take approximately three (3) months. Connect Transit will apply \$51,343.20 (80%) FTA 5307 funds and use \$12,835.80 (20%) local capital for a match on this project.

Trustee Foster asked if it was a sealed bid because there is a large difference in the bid prices. Mr. Lange stated it was a sealed bid, that we spec'd a particular product but approved equals were also acceptable.

Trustee Buchanan asked what makes the more expensive product better. Mr. Lange stated he couldn't say for sure but speculated it was probably name recognition.

Trustee McCue asked if this would cause any disruption to the Maintenance staff. Mr. Lange said they did require that the work be done with as little disruption to the staff as possible and to schedule accordingly.

Deputy City Manager Tyus asked if they were allowed to provide what we asked for or an equivalent product. Mr. Lange confirmed they did have that choice, and they provided prices for both options.

Vice Chair Hile shared her appreciation for the net-zero goal and the increased lighting finally coming to fruition.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to award a contract to Wilcox Electric & Service Inc. for replacement of existing incandescent and fluorescent lighting fixtures with energy efficient LED fixtures was **approved**.

- d. To authorize fare free rides for the month of September 2022 in exchange for riders showing their current Town of Normal or City of Bloomington Public Library card.

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to authorize fare free rides for the month of September 2022 in exchange for riders showing their current Town of Normal or City of Bloomington Public Library card.**

Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee Singer.

**Discussion:**

Aubrey Staton, Marketing Manager, shared that since 1987, the month of September has been library card sign-up month. In recent years, libraries and public transit systems have been teaming up to promote both library card sign-ups and usage of public transportation. This year, surrounding communities, including Peoria and Pekin, have committed to participating in this month-long promotion. The Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries have partnered together in asking Connect Transit to participate in this collaboration.

Library cards will not be swiped or scanned; they will just be shown to the Bus Operator. We will provide examples of current library cards, so our Bus Operators know what to look for. This will not cause a strain on our IT department or Bus Operators. This will not have a significant impact on our revenue budget with an average of 7 riders on/off at nearby stops daily.

Trustee Foster shared she feels this is a great idea and asked if all they need is a library card to ride the bus. Ms. Staton shared all they have to do is show their library card and they get to ride the bus for free for the entire month of September, there is no pass to swipe, just show their card like the college students do.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

Recommendation to authorize fare free rides for the month of September 2022 in exchange for riders showing their current Town of Normal or City of Bloomington Public Library card was **approved**.

- e. To approve staff's proposal to eliminate the Lime Express route and replace it with expanded service to West Bloomington-Normal and a 30-day fare-free trial period for the new route only.

**Chairman Whitehouse called for a motion to approve staff's proposal to eliminate the Lime Express route and replace it with expanded service to West Bloomington-Normal and a 30-day fare-free trial period for the new route only.**

Trustee Rao motioned; seconded by Trustee Foster.

**Discussion:**

David Braun, General Manager shared that at our April 26, 2022, Board meeting, the Connect Transit Board of Trustees authorized the staff to continue the planning and public involvement process for a service expansion to the West Bloomington/Normal area. Since that time, we conducted five public engagement sessions that demonstrated the proposed route and proposed schedule to the public. Through the public engagement process, we learned that the schedule would be more effective by having it run one hour later in the evening. We did not receive any comments concerning the elimination of the Lime Express route, primarily due to fact that it is being replaced by this new route and the community will receive more service, including weekend service. The schedule summary is listed in the meeting packet. We will continue to review ridership information to fine-tune the stop locations prior to posting permanent signs. We also considered a name for the route, in keeping with our naming convention of using colors for route names. We propose to use Cobalt (dark blue) as the color of this route, a nod to the fact that Rivian is one of the first electric vehicle manufacturers to not use cobalt in their batteries. We were asked to delay the implementation of the route until late September to allow Rivian to make some modifications to its driveway and circle where the bus will be operating. For ease of record keeping, we propose to start the new service on Sunday, October 2, 2022. In addition, we propose that we are allowed to waive the fare on this route for one-month to encourage people to try the new service. The total cost of providing this service is estimated to be \$774,251 for FY23, of which 65% will be covered by the Illinois Downstate Operating Program and the rest from Federal Grants or local sources. This amount can be accommodated in our approved FY23 budget. The net increase in budget as a result of this service is \$648,556 for FY23.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if we would review ridership over the year to see if it is an effective route. Mr. Braun shared he would suggest we give it one year without any significant changes and review it quarterly to determine ridership and trends, and then see what marketing strategies may need to be implemented.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if Rivian will be marketing the new route to their employees. Mr. Braun confirmed Rivian will be marketing it to their employees.

Trustee Buchanan asked if Rivian is expecting any type of ridership review on a regular basis with us. Mr. Braun said we have not spoken about that, but they have discussed the opportunity for a Universal Access Agreement in the future.

Deputy City Manager Tyus asked if this is a different route or a new route. Mr. Braun stated this is a new route that incorporates all of what the Lime Express was serving and beyond in both directions.

Trustee Foster asked if Rivian is doing anything to help with our ability to get in and out of their parking lot. Shelly Perry, Operations Manager, said they are making improvements to their circle for our use and will have a large shelter that is ADA.

**Rollcall vote:**

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

NAY: None

Recommendation to approve staff's proposal to eliminate the Lime Express route and replace it with expanded service to West Bloomington-Normal and a 30-day fare-free trial period for the new route only was **approved**.

f. Data Definitions - Informational

**Discussion:**

Mr. Braun shared these definitions expand on the reports we provide every month in a format that hopefully helps everyone understand the terms used. He also shared that we will be putting together a Board book with more definitions, by-laws, and other useful information in the coming months.

Chairman Whitehouse asked if they could please have the definitions document in sent to them via email as a separate document so they can refer to it as needed. Mr. Braun confirmed we would send this to them.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Chairman Whitehouse shared Connect Transit received a \$13 million in federal FTA funds to help us accomplish our goals in the community, for the riders, and our facility. He expressed his thanks to the staff, the Board, the community members, and the City and Town for their support. Chairman Whitehouse stated that receiving this funding is an affirmation that what we're accomplishing here is a good thing.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:**

**Development:**

Mr. Braun shared his congratulations to Shelly Perry, Operations Manager. Ms. Perry was accepted into the Eno Center for Transportation "Transportation Mid-Manager Program" and will be attending the course in September. He also congratulated Brady Lange, Procurement Director, for his acceptance into the Leadership McLean County class of 2023. Mr. Lange will be attending classes every other Friday, September through April. In addition, we promoted Chris Sharkey from a Class A Mechanic position to the Maintenance Foreman position, this position will help train the Mechanics and provide a broader development than we currently do; Dora Kohtz (former Dispatcher) and Chris Fuller, Operations Supervisors, both completed Transit Supervisor Certification; Justin Allen, Safety & Training Coordinator, completed Transit Bus Safety and starts

his progression to Transit Safety and Security Program Certification; Dave White, Safety & Training Director completed Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Transit Safety and Security: Design Review.

**Recognition:**

Mr. Braun shared we are currently working on a new program to recognize employee efforts that go above and beyond their regular duties. These employees are recognized by their managers or coworkers with copies of the form placed in their file, original given to employee, and their name is put in the newsletter. To date we have given eleven Gold Star awards.

**Grant Award:**

Mr. Braun shared Connect Transit received an FTA Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Award of \$13,079,000 in federal funding. We plan to replace our 2010 and 2011 diesel buses with five electric buses in FY24/25, we will purchase five to seven electric Microtransit vehicles in FY23/24, and we will build a Maintenance Storage and Training Facility in FY23/24. The storage facility will store up to 30 CM buses, 10 Microtransit vehicles and a training facility.

**Vehicle Wraps:**

Mr. Braun shared that the used buses we purchased to supplement our fleet will be wrapped in partnership with the City and the Town to save on the cost of painting. Mr. Braun shared the design of the wraps and explained the designs will be displayed on the buses with the window portions of the wraps having perforations so they are able to be seen through. One of the new electric buses will also have a City wrap on it once it arrives.

City Manager Reece thanked David for the opportunity to display the promotion like this.

**Community and Public Engagements:**

Mr. Braun shared that Connect has been busy in the community over the last month. We started with supporting Brats and Bags, continued on with Building BN Podcast, EDC's B/N By the Numbers, an Introductory meeting with Ferrero, the Back 2 School Alliance Shuttle, Saturdays on the Square, B/N Pridefest Celebration, ISU, HCC, IL Wesleyan outreach events, Friday on the Square, Sweet Corn Festival, and Day of the Dozer. He shared we are trying to get into the community, show who we are and participate in the things that reflect who we are as an agency.

**Advertising:**

Mr. Braun shared that when he and Marketing Manager, Aubrey Staton went to a conference in Austin, Texas they learned about collaboration, so we are starting an advertising campaign. Our goal is to tie in why it's important to support public transportation, bringing in community members to state why transit is important to them. Mr. Braun shared the current ads that are running.

**Recruiting:**

Mr. Braun stated recruitment continues at Connect Transit with nine Bus Operator positions open, one Maintenance Supervisor open, three Mechanics needed, and four Service Technicians needed. On a good note, we have filled one Custodian, one Dispatcher, and one Maintenance Foreman position. To help with our recruitment efforts we have increased our signing bonus to \$3,000.00, which is paid in three installments over one year, to be competitive in the current job market.



**Save the Date:**

Mr. Braun shared we will be hosting our Electric Bus and Charging Infrastructure Celebration on Tuesday, September 27, tentatively at 2:00pm. We are planning a fun, festive, event with supporter appreciation.

**Open Meetings Act Training:**

Mr. Braun reminded everyone to please complete the OMA training by September 1 and to send their certificate to Janice Crago.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

No Executive Session was held.

**TRUSTEE COMMENTS:**

Trustee Foster stated Mr. Braun gave an excellent report and shared her excitement for our engagements in the community.

Chairman Whitehouse noted the event is the same day as the Board meeting and asked everyone to plan accordingly.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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


Trustee Foster motioned; seconded by Trustee McCue.

**Rollcall vote:**

AYE: Trustee Buchanan, Trustee Foster, Vice Chair Hile, 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]

