

**CONNECT TRANSIT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WORK SESSION PROCEEDINGS OF APRIL 8, 2017**

The Work Session of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was held at the City of Bloomington Police Department, Osborne Room, 305 S. East Street, Bloomington, IL on April 8, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Mike McCurdy, Vice-Chairman
 Ryan Whitehouse, Secretary
 John Bowman
 Judy Buchanan
 Lauren Lacey
 Jennifer McDade
 John Thomas

TRUSTEES ABSENT:

CITY MANAGERS: Mark Peterson, Town of Normal Manager
 Steve Rasmussen, City of Bloomington, Assistant City Manager

STAFF PRESENT: Isaac Thorne, Interim General Manager
 Julie Beer, Executive Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Lynn Montei, Montei Consulting

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 9:05p.m. Roll call was taken.

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, seconded by Trustee Jennifer McDade to allow City of Bloomington Assistant City Manager, Steve Rasmussen to participate in the Board meeting.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy stated the Board would adjourn into Executive Session to review the final consulting agreement with former General Manager, Andrew Johnson. He requested a motion to move the Executive Session to the beginning of the meeting.

Motion by Trustee Jennifer McDade, seconded by Trustee Judy Buchanan to move the item to the beginning of the meeting and adjourn into Executive Session.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Time: 9:17 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:22 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Glen Ludwig addressed the Board. He thanked them for the opportunity to speak. He was in attendance in the hopes to learn with the objective of being better informed about the future of Connect Transit. He stated he has attended Connect Transit meetings in the past and expressed his concerns. He was concerned about Connect Transit's current business model. He noted that Connect Transit, being a service business, is in a tenuous position, in that that heavily depends on state of Illinois government dollars for survival. He hoped that the Board was prepared to address the major issues that are a threat to Connect Transit.

John S. Brandt addressed the Board. He stated he had studied Connect Transit's financial statement. He has witnessed Connect Transit's growth over the years. He noted that Connect Transit's financial statement lacked good detail. He was very concerned about the future of Connect Transit.

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy opened the session and thanked everyone for their attendance. Connect Transit is facing some issues. Some issues include a new general manager search, a search for operating and capital dollars, and a solution to declining ridership. Lynn Montei, of Montei consulting was present and it was his hope that through this process a plan would be made to address some of those issues. He noted that many of the objectives from the previous strategic plan had been met. He looked forward to a productive session.

(Record of Planning Session #1 is attached)

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, Seconded by Trustee Lauren Lacey to adjourn.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Time: 12:01 p.m.

Julie Beer, Executive Assistant

Connect Transit

Strategic Plan Development Process

Record of Planning Session #1 – April 8, 2017

Introduction

Connect Transit's Acting Chair Mike McCurdy welcomed participants to the session, thanked them for their service and presence, and set the stage for a day of interaction and dialogue. Present were all Connect Transit board members and Interim General Manager Isaac Thorne. Participants sat in 2 table groupings, each having its own flipchart for recording information generated during the exercises.

The facilitator, Lynn Montei, was introduced. She thanked members for the quality of one-on-one interviews conducted the last week of March, when she had also briefed Board members on the planning process and its desired outcomes.

Lynn explained that she would guide the process and the day's session which would identify the current context, and prepare the group for visioning and action planning at the next session on April 18. She invited the group to take ownership of the session's relevance and effectiveness. Participants each selected and interviewed a partner whom they then introduced to the assembly.

After introductions, participants utilized a number of exercises to generate information, observations, reflections and values that will begin to align Connect Transit with its mission, and design the future state of Connect Transit in the year 2021.

This document is a transcription of the data generated by workshop participants and recorded on table group flipcharts. It does not contain whole-group conversation not recorded on flipcharts. No effort has been made to eliminate redundancy or synthesize the data at this point. All data collected in the planning session will be utilized in the synthesis and plan development phase of the process.

A Profile of Current Conditions

Table groups engaged in an exercise to identify matters of pride, disappointment and frustration in connection with Connect Transit over the last two years, and recorded summary themes. What follows is simply a list of all that was reported out from the table conversations.

Pride/Honor

- Improvements in system
- Image
- Convenience
- Board composition and diversity of opinion
- Staff
- APTA award
- Remarkable drivers – professional and caring
- Relationship with union
- Infrastructure (from nothing → now)
- Doing COA/restructure
- Focus/partnership on land-use
- Robust system and routes bring cosmopolitan look/feel
- Image/rebranding
- Ease of riding – connectivity

Disappointments/ Frustrations

- Communication to community
 - Buy in from non-users
 - Understanding of funding
- Diversity of opinions
- Clarity of mission/vision
- Declining ridership
- Funding
- Lack of infrastructure (shelter, downtown transfer)
- Declining ridership
- Disconnect – "payoff" of COA - restructure
- Need utilization of data (#) metrics–driven decisions
- General uncertainty – especially related to funding
- Community awareness
- Board awareness/education

Stakeholder Inventory

Staff created an inventory of Connect Transit stakeholders at their workshop on March 29. The list, below, identifies who we serve, who is impacted by our work and whose support we need. To the list, planning session participants added additional stakeholders which are noted in **bold** typeface.

External Customers

- Riders Elderly
- Advertising Partners
- Working people with and without cars
- Disabled
- Taxpayers
- Low-income
- Colleges/University
- Choice riders
- Millennials
- CTAC
- Municipalities
- Grocery stores
- Doctors' offices
- Walmart
- Non-riders
- Municipalities
- State Legislators
- Federal Legislators
- Taxpayers
- Commercial
- Retail
- Employers
- Not-for-Profits
- Hospitals
- Airport
- Churches
- Library
- Downtown/Uptown
- Zoo
- Parks
- Court system
- Coliseum
- Visitors/tourists
- BN Advantage
- EDC
- Future development
- Future residents
- Vendor/suppliers
- **Universal access partners**
- **Town/City Councils**
- **Other elected officials**
- **SHOW Bus**
- **McLean County Regional Planning Commission**

Internal Customers/Employees of Connect Transit

- Board of Trustees
- CTAC
- GM
- Managers and Supervisors
- Dispatchers
- Customer Service
- Operators
- Cleaners
- Mechanics
- Servicemen
- Safety/training
- Information Technology (IT)
- Finance
- Procurement
- Payroll
- Human Resources
- Janitor
- **Municipalities**

Purpose (Mission) Conversation

Participants engaged in small group conversation about purpose, or mission, naming in more detail what Connect Transit does and why it does it – its fundamental reason for being. The mission is that for which all commitments and resources are in service.

- Determine focus of system
- Devise a strategy to achieve objectives
- Provide mobility for community
- To support economic development
- Impact community planning
- Link residents to jobs, healthcare, education, etc.
- To add value to all residents and stakeholders
- To reduce traffic congestion
- Positive impact on the physical environment
- Enriching the lives of individuals
- Source of leadership
- Be an innovative system
- Facilitator for local institutions and organizations to prepare for future
- Improving the sense of community
- A source of community pride
- System is a good local employer – invest in community
- Safe Place program
- National recognition to Bloomington-Normal
- Unites the two communities
- Responsiveness to societal preference changes – demographic/ lifestyle
- Provide transportation to people for those without other means and choice riders
- How many riders do we want to serve? - above/below national statistics?
- Balance transit-dependent with optional riders. How do we do this?
- Ability to provide:
 - Connectedness
 - Fewer cars/parking lots
 - Options for moving that aren't driving/vehicle
 - Mobility options for people
- Community with public transit (versus without)
- Want to create financially sound system
- Empowerment through mobility
- People understanding and are aware of what we do
- Hearing stories of how system works for people makes us want to see this happen for more people
- Articulate value to stakeholders. Riders primary stakeholders?

Guiding Principles

Participants generated these initial expressions of the Connect Transit's shared values. Guiding Principles apply to everyone at all times, and guide personal conduct and behavior under all circumstances.

- Focus on big picture
- Value professional expertise of staff
- Mutual respect
 - Board and staff
- Inclusiveness
 - Everyone can and should contribute
- Civility/courtesy and respectful board protocol
- Share information with all board members
- Listen to everyone's point of view
 - Don't interrupt
- Make a conscious effort to be "present" at meetings
 - Cell phone/distractions
 - Pay attention
- Accept facts but open to context
- Learn from experiences of others
- Safety – operating safely, safety top of mind
- Reliability
- Customer focus (including potential customers)
- Customer service (rider comfort, responsiveness, helpful, courteous)
- Affordability for community
- Simplicity/ease-of-use
- Funding – more self-reliant and accountability/stewardship
- Courtesy/respect
- Active listening
- Open mindedness
- Humility
- Fairness
- Honesty/truthfulness
- Kindness
- Proactive action – future focused
- Big picture thinking - macro level focus
- Stakeholder engagement
- Universal access – demonstrating value (e.g. ISU)
- Attitude of public service – public servants/stewardship, transparency
Community-based thinking (not personal principles)
- Focus on governance (not operations)
- Balance taxpayer stewardship with community progress
- Clarity on expectations/decision-making with staff – Staff understands/push for clarity
- Trust the outcome
- Broad guidance for inter-organization, Board, community interaction/communication

Next Steps

Lynn said a record of the session would be prepared from the flip chart pages generated and distributed to participants. Planning Session #2 will take place on April 18, and six staff managers will join the Board for that exercise.

Close

The session closed with expressions of appreciation, and completion of an evaluation and feedback form.