

**CONNECT TRANSIT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
PROCEEDINGS OF AUGUST 26, 2014**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was held at the Connect Transit Board Room #135, 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, Illinois 61761 on August 26, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.

TRUSTEES PRESENT:           Bill Wilson, Chairman  
                                  Mike McCurdy, Vice-Chairman  
                                  John Bowman, Secretary  
                                  Judy Buchanan  
                                  Felicia Shaw  
                                  John Thomas  
                                  Ryan Whitehouse

TRUSTEES ABSENT:

CITY MANAGERS:

STAFF PRESENT:            Andrew Johnson, General Manager  
                                  Kyle Boehm, Planner  
                                  Tom Crouch, Assistant Maintenance Director  
                                  Melissa Chrisman, Business Development Manager  
                                  Julie Phillips, Executive Assistant - Labor Relations

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 4:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Patricia Martin, 1114 E. Grove Street, Bloomington, IL 61701, addressed the Board. She stated that she has been a bus rider for many years. She uses the Blue E Route the most. She has lived on Grove Street for many years, and the bus used to pass in front of her house for many of those years. With the route restructure, she must now walk to the corner of Washington and State Streets in order to catch the bus. There are a number of problems with her ability to catch the bus at this intersection. In the winter months there is often mud, ice and/or water. Additionally, this intersection has a traffic signal with a turn lane and the light is too short to get all the way across before it changes. (Ms. Martin acknowledged this was more a City of Bloomington than a Connect Transit problem.) She hoped that the Board would consider adding Grove Street back to the fixed route structure to make this option more accessible to a number of riders like her, who had formerly accessed the fixed route buses on Grove Street. She wanted the Board to note that she has come to know many of the drivers and that for the most part they are very helpful and easy to get along with.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager stated that as part of the upcoming Comprehensive Operational Analysis, staff would be reassessing the public transit demands within the community. Public notices will be published and hearings will be conducted regarding any route restructuring. He encouraged Ms. Martin to stay involved with that process to voice her concerns.

Marilyn Evans, 710 W. Orlando, Normal, IL 61761, addressed the Board. She had comments regarding the recently passed Code of Conduct. Ms. Evans stated that, in her opinion, the Code of Conduct approved at

the last meeting of the Board had a negative tone to it. She further stated her belief that a Code of Conduct should have both negative and positive aspects to it, so that the majority of employees who meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct are rewarded. Additionally, she suggested that Connect Transit consider establishing a call-in line for customers to use in conveying their appreciation and concerns.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting of July 22, 2014 and Executive Session of June 24, 2014
2. Disbursements for Month of August, 2014
3. Financial Report for Month of June, 2014
4. Capital and Self Insurance Reserve Fund Balances for month of June, 2014
5. Monthly Statistical Report for month of July, 2014

Secretary John Bowman had a question about the Maintenance Equipment payment of \$10,604.96 as shown on the Disbursements report. Tom Crouch, Assistant Maintenance Director addressed the Board. He explained that several items had been purchased; a drill press, parts solvent tank and parts cleaner.

Motion by Trustee Judy Buchanan, seconded by Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy that the Consent Agenda items be approved as presented.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Recommendation of Lease Agreement for 104 E. Oakland Avenue

Andrew Johnson, General Manager addressed the Board. The City of Bloomington has agreed to lease the property at 104 E. Oakland Avenue for three (3) years for a total of \$62,718.50, payable in equal monthly installments of \$5,226.54 each. The City of Bloomington plans to use the property for storage, of vehicles that cannot be stored outside and their unused inventory of recycling containers.

Federal Transit Authority (FTA) approved grants were used for the initial purchase and development of the Oakland Avenue site. As such, it is required that the FTA concur with any sale or lease of the property. He advised that the Board would be voting to approve the lease contingent upon FTA concurrence.

Trustee Ryan Whitehouse questioned Connect Transit Johnson advised that since Connect Transit is the owner of the property, Connect would be responsible for any abatement or remediation. Currently there is no asbestos exposed.

The City of Bloomington would be using the property for storage purposes only. There would be no occupancy of any of the office spaces in the building.

Secretary John Bowman asked about the total acreage at the Oakland Avenue property and whether, in light of its central location, there might be a possible future use for the site by Connect Transit. GM Johnson responded that there were possibly two acres but that any future use would require the demolition of the existing building. One benefit of the lease is that it provides income to the System now while preserving the options for a future sale to a third party or redevelopment of the site by Connect.

Motion by Vice President Mike McCurdy, seconded by Trustee John Thomas that the Lease Agreement for 104 E. Oakland Avenue with the City of Bloomington be approved, contingent upon FTA concurrence.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

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

Andrew Johnson, General Manager, stated that the proposals for the Bus Procurement are due on September 4, 2014. One protest to the bus specifications within the Request for Proposal had been received from a prospective bidder. It is anticipated the FTA will be closing out this protest shortly so the RFP process can move forward. Staff expects to receive two competitive proposals, one from each bus manufacturer that is active in the market at this time. . The procurement is currently comprised of 360 buses with 8 states and 28 agencies participating. Connect Transit is currently the lead agency of the largest bus procurement in the nation.

Mr. Johnson requested that Kyle Boehm, Planner, update the Board regarding the Fixed Bus Stop Study. Mr. Boehm addressed the Board. He stated that the Fixed Stop Study is underway. The consultant has begun conducting the preliminary work for the study. A first draft is expected within the next few days. Once the draft is received, staff will review and make adjustments as necessary. The City of Bloomington, Town of Normal and McLean County Regional Planning Commission will have an opportunity to review the draft. Once the reviews are completed the draft will be sent back to the consultant to complete the final draft. Mr. Boehm expects the final draft to be presented to the Board at its September or October meeting.

Trustee John Thomas questioned how light timing and traffic counts were being considered. Mr. Boehm advised that the staff and the consultants would receive assistance from the Town of Normal and the City of Bloomington engineering personnel for this information.

Town of Normal, Town Manager, Mark Peterson arrived at 4:56 p.m.

Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy questioned when the new bus stops would be rolled out. Mr. Boehm advised that educating the public would begin immediately upon approval of the bus stop locations. He anticipates that the physical signage and in some cases structures would be in place by the fall of 2014 or spring of 2015. Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy observed that fixed stops would be a change for many of the riders and that we should expect some initial resistance to this change.

Chairman Bill Wilson(?) asked if the current policy of discharging passengers at any safe intersection, upon signaling for a stop by pulling on the cable on the bus would continue. GM Johnson responded that all stops for discharge or pickup of passengers would occur at signed stops once the fixed stops are in place.

Mr. Boehm announced that the Bloomington Walmart store had approached Connect Transit about installing a permanent bus stop location for the Lime I bus on the west side of their property. Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy suggested that we approach Walmart about paying for a bus stop shelter as well and stated that he hoped the partnership was successful and could possibly be expanded to other locations. Mr. Boehm indicated that the discussions with Walmart did include the possibility of a shelter.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager, stated that he had been contacted by another Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) provider about making a CNG Fueling Station presentation to the Board. This company had recently completed a similar project in Lafayette, IN, which GM Johnson and Operations Supervisor Roy Rickert may visit in the near future. The company is interested in building a CNG Fueling Station at the Connect Transit location due to its proximity to the Interstate and the potential for CNG fueled vehicles travelling through the area to use it as a refueling stop. Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy asked about the CNG option in light of the pending bus procurement, and whether the timeline for this would allow for specifying CNG vehicles if we decided to go this direction. GM Johnson noted that the current bus procurement RFP includes alternative fuel options and that there would be nothing stopping us from ordering some diesel buses now and later specifying CNG fueled vehicles..

Mr. Johnson indicated that he would be sending job descriptions for the two new employee positions, the Chief Operations Officer and Procurement Specialist, to the Board via e-mail. This provision of the job descriptions is advisory in nature and would require any further action by the Board.

Mr. Johnson stated that he was recently in Michigan to attend the Michigan Public Transit Association Statewide Annual Meeting as their keynote speaker. He was invited to tell the story about Connect Transit and it was well received.

Trustee John Thomas questioned the status of the new Connect Transit website. Mr. Johnson responded that the project was behind however, he expected that the website would be live in September.

Trustee Ryan Whitehouse questioned the trial IAA Universal Access Agreement. Melissa Chrisman, Business Development Manager addressed the Board. She stated that the trial period had just completed. The first month had been used as a benchmark and 507 riders were logged. The current number has increased to approximately 589 at the six week mark. This was a good percentage of employees. She stated that IAA would be moving forward with a Universal Access Agreement that would be evaluated every 6 months.

Secretary John Bowman questioned the status of the electronic fare box system initiative and whether a Request for Proposal (RFP) would be issued soon. Andrew Johnson, General Manager responded that the draft RFP would be reviewed within the next few days. Secretary Bowman asked whether ticket kiosks would be used as part of this system. Mr. Johnson responded that, because of their relatively high cost and required servicing wide-spread use of kiosks would be impractical. However, purchases of bus passes would be available online or on the buses. Cash will still be a payment option with an electronic fare box system. GM Johnson stressed the importance of implementing an electronic fare box system and stated that he anticipated a full service system would be in place within the next 18 months. Vice Chairman Mike McCurdy questioned the status of the electronic display boards at the Uptown Station. Mr. Johnson responded that the units were in place, but that there was more work to be completed by the programming personnel to make them operational.

## **TRUSTEE'S COMMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Trustee Ryan Whitehouse, seconded by Trustee Judy Buchanan to return to adjourn.

Time: 5:23 p.m.

AYE: All

NAY: None

Motion carried.

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John Bowman, Secretary