

**CONNECT TRANSIT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PROCEEDINGS OF SPECIAL MEETING OF OCTOBER 12, 2013**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit was held at Eastland Suites Hotel, Eastland Room, located at 1801 Eastland Drive, Bloomington, Illinois on October 12, 2013 at 8:00 a.m.

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

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Ryan Whitehouse

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Johnson, General Manager
Jenifer Clark, Human Resources Director
Patrick Kuebrich, Finance Director
Roy Rickert, Operations Director
Jennifer Sorenson, Community Relations Manager
Steve Stockton, Information Technology Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Kay Titchenal – Goranson Consulting
Dave Goranson – Goranson Consulting

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 8:11 a.m. Roll call was taken.

The following was presented:

A Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Bloomington Bicycle Plan.

Chairperson Buchanan opened the discussion regarding the Resolution. Trustee Bowman questioned the authority that Connect Transit Board had in relation to the creation of a bicycle plan. Andrew Johnson, General Manager, responded that the Board did not have any authority regarding the creation of same; the adoption of the Resolution would support the City of Bloomington creating a Bicycle Plan.

Chairperson Buchanan stated that it was her belief that other entities were also supporting the Resolution and noted that passing same was complimentary to Connect Transit's role in alternative transportation options, such as having bicycle racks on the front of buses for transporting bicycles while using the bus system.

Trustee McCurdy noted that he had just returned from attending the APTA conference with Connect Transit staff. He was amazed at the amount of discussion concerning bicycling as an alternative means of transportation at a bus and train conference. There was a lot of conversation regarding “livable – walkable – bikable cities” and the complimentary nature of them in relation to bus and train transportation options. Cycling helps Transit and Transit helps cycling.

Chairperson Buchanan noted that there was no cost or obligation to Connect Transit, but that adoption of the Resolution supported the measure and the initiative by the City of Bloomington.

Andrew Johnson, General Manager noted that it was staff’s opinion that the initiative provided a safer environment for everyone by creating dedicated and shared bicycle lanes; it would raise awareness and keep bicycles and auto traffic in the correct lanes.

Staff’s only concern was on Front Street and the transfer station located there. It was made clear to the City of Bloomington that any bicycle plan that included Front Street should be adaptable and compatible with the transfer station.

Trustee Bowman questioned if on street parking on Front Street would be eliminated with the creation of the bicycle lanes. Trustee McCurdy explained that there would not be any parking spaces eliminated. The sharrows (shared lane markings) would signal to motorists that there could be cyclists in the lane. Trustee Bowman noted that there were national standards regulating bike lanes. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is one of such organizations.

Trustee Shaw questioned if the City of Bloomington was modeling the Town of Normal’s bicycle plan. Chairperson Buchanan responded that the City of Bloomington was just beginning to explore its options, noting that the Town had made much more progress in its creation of bicycle lanes.

Trustee Thomas noted that one of the goals in the Town’s Bicycle Plan was to become recognized as a bicycle friendly community; there were bronze, silver and gold levels of recognition. The City of Bloomington’s participation in creating and implementing a Bicycle Plan would help the Town realize its goal.

Chairperson Buchanan inquired if there were any additional questions or comments. There were none.

Motion by Trustee Bowman, seconded by Trustee Thomas that the Resolution supporting the creation of a Bloomington Bicycle Plan be adopted.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF CONNECT TRANSIT
SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF A BLOOMINGTON BICYCLE PLAN**

WHEREAS, Connect Transit is the public mass transportation system in Bloomington-Normal; and,

WHEREAS, Connect Transit advocates for land use planning that embraces all modes of transportation; and,

WHEREAS, Connect Transit recognizes bicycling as a complement to and facilitator of public transportation use; and,

WHEREAS, the League of Illinois Bicyclists has proposed an agreement with the City of Bloomington to create a Bicycle Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington will consider the creation of a Bicycle Plan at their Council Meeting on October 14, 2013; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Connect Transit, now meeting in special session, as follows:

(1) The Board of Trustees of Connect Transit supports the City of Bloomington and the League Illinois Bicyclists in their efforts to create a Bloomington Bicycle Plan that establishes on-street bicycle routes and increases the safety of bicyclists and other modes of transportation, and

(2) The Board of Trustees of Connect Transit further supports the establishment of an on-street route on Front Street connecting the Constitution Trail and Downtown Bloomington as part of the Bloomington Bicycle Plan.

ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System on this the 12th day of October 2013.

APPROVED:

Judy Buchanan, Chairperson
Connect Transit

ATTEST:

Mike McCurdy, Secretary
Connect Transit

ATTEST:

John Bowman, Secretary
Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System

The following was presented:

Connect Transit Strategic Planning Session.

Chairperson Buchanan introduced Kay Titchenal – and Dave Goranson – Goranson Consulting, the facilitators for the session. Ms. Titchenal opened the session by stating that there would be several components of focus. The components of focus would lead to the finalization the Vision and Mission; finalizing the Vision would lead to finalizing the Mission. The components of focus were Strategies, Goals, Tactics and Methods. The draft Vision and Mission Statements from a prior session were reviewed.

The session began by the Trustees and Staff members breaking into three work groups. Each group was allowed several minutes to create a vision statement. Each group designated a spokesperson who presented its vision statement to the entirety.

Group one presented its vision statement: “Reliable and Convenient Transportation Connecting the Community”. It was this group’s belief that convenience was all encompassing; however, if it is not reliable or safe, it is not necessarily convenient.

Group two presented its vision statement: “To Provide a Reliable, Safe, Transportation Option that is Customer Focused that Connects the Community”.

Group three presented its vision statement: “Connecting Individuals and Communities”.

Ms. Titchenal noted that all three groups had a common theme: reliability, convenience and connectivity. She suggested that the group as a whole evaluate what was most important. She requested that each group clarify its vision statements so that the group as a whole could pick the best and most important pieces for the final vision statement.

Group one believed that reliability and being a safe means of transportation were the most important factors. Dave Goranson, Goranson Consulting facilitator acknowledged that safety and reliability were very important to any form of public transportation for any community.

Group two noted that there were many communities within a community. For example, the business community, the health community, the higher education community, etc. Another focus for this group was the word *options*. This group believed that Connect Transit was only one alternative transportation option.

Group three believed that reliability was the most important component of the vision statement. Group one and two agreed that reliability was an important component, but that connecting via transportation was also important as the word connecting has many connotations in today’s world. The entire group agreed.

There was discussion that the vision statement needed to be short and savvy, but self-explanatory. Some considered the words reliable and transportation as “dry” words, however, reliability and transportation were common themes among all three groups during the vision statement discussions. Ms. Titchenal reminded the group that the vision statement could possibly be displayed on the side of a bus, as part of the organization’s letterhead, and/or on the wall of the facility. It was important that a vision statement be an accurate depiction of the organization.

The groups were brought back together as a whole for discussion on the finalization of the vision statement. Ms. Titchenal started the discussion by pointing out that the three groups had considered, “Reliable Transportation Connecting Communities” as the most fitting vision statement. She questioned the group about their feelings about this vision statement. She questioned if the group felt comfortable with and believed in it. She questioned if the group believed that this vision statement was a good depiction for and branding statement for Connect Transit. Mr. Goranson reminded the group to not confuse marketing with a vision statement.

Discussion involved the use of the word community vs. the word communities. Connect Transit is the only entity that services both the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal. There was concern that the singular word singled out one community over another, whereas the plural word could be misconstrued to include outlying communities such as the Village of Heyworth, Village of Downs, City of Leroy, etc. Trustee Shaw stated that the plural use of the word was more inclusive of the variety of people that are served by Connect Transit. Ms. Titchenal stated that overall everyone believed the plural word was the best option.

Ms. Titchenal polled the group and it was decided that the final vision statement would be “Reliable Transportation Connecting Communities” and that it was time to begin focusing on the mission statement. She stated that a mission statement described the reason the organization existed. It could include bullet points, a simple sentence or a paragraph, but should be something that people could understand and relate to.

She instructed the group to break back into the smaller three focus groups. The groups were given time to brainstorm ideas for the mission statement. She instructed the groups to list what they believed was the culture and personality of Connect Transit. It could include that the organization is a non-profit entity that enjoyed providing a variety of services. It could include making sure that buses were timely, safe and reliable. She suggested that each individual brought their own personality into the project. There was no right or wrong way to focus on what the mission statement should be. She noted that the mission statement would describe why the organization existed, what drives its purpose, its goals and why the service was needed.

After a brief period, Ms. Titchenal opened the discussion between the three groups regarding the mission statement. She began with team two. Team two used the bullet point style which included: “to provide a safe, courteous, reliable, convenient, cost effective and comfortable means of transportation option to our customers”. Discussion included the word customers; the word customers included a variety of individuals and businesses. It was suggested that the word *our* could be removed to be inclusive of the variety of different citizens served.

Additional discussion centered on the need of the mission statement to include individuals who may not use the bus system. It should describe to those individuals the importance of the bus system, how it is important for economic development; it is important for senior citizens to maintain independence. The mission statement should describe its importance to everyone, including those who do not use the services.

It was determined that group two's mission statement described accurately the service aspect of Connect Transit. Additions to the mission statement could include the operations aspect, and quality of life. Ms. Titchenal reminded the groups that the mission statement should also explain how these goals are accomplished such as having bike racks on the front of buses, etc. She also noted that the mission statement should not be too lengthy.

Group three's mission statement included: "Connecting customers with transportation options that are safe, affordable, reliable, convenient, and courteous, valued and technologically advanced both internally and externally. The word safe inferred to several aspects such as comfort, (heating and air conditioning) personal safety and driver safety.

Group one's mission statement included: "Improving the quality of life and communities through the provision of superior customer service, independence through transportation, access to economic opportunity and access to education in a more sustainable environment". Discussion involved what superior customer service and access to economic opportunity meant. Access to economic opportunity and education meant individual ability to travel to/from work and/or school. Trustee Buchanan noted that access included several things, shopping, theater, work, school, health care, etc.

Additional discussion included the concept of a more sustainable environment. Questions arose regarding the meaning of the phrase. Andrew Johnson, General Manager stated that it provides citizens the opportunity to not use their individual vehicles, saving them wear and tear. It also provides opportunity to take more vehicles off of the streets, lowering carbon emissions, as well as allowing more individuals to utilize one vehicle that has low emissions and burns cleaner. Mr. Johnson also noted that every trip on public transit is multi-modal; each trip begins by walking, contributing to a healthier environment both locally and for the greater environment, as well as better personal physical health.

Trustee Buchanan noted that Illinois State University has been a large proponent of sustainable transportation. The University has been reluctant to build additional parking lots. Discussion between Trustees Bowman and McCurdy included additional traffic on streets and highways as more roads are built. Ms. Titchenal confirmed that environmentally friendly, sustainable and multi-modal were several important features of public transportation.

Ms. Titchenal reminded the group that the mission statement should include the goals for the current as well as the future. A goal should be to include Connect Transit as a transportation option. She requested that the groups review their mission statements to make any changes or additions for further discussion.

After reviewing the mission statements the groups were brought back together as a whole for further discussion. Ms. Titchenal stated that a common theme was providing comfortable and safe transportation. She noted that the word comfortable could encompass the word safe. It was also noted that the statement of “Ensuring Quality of Life in the Community by providing, comfortable, reliable,” etc., was a very powerful statement. Customer Service was also a common focus for all of the groups. She suggested that the group as a whole discuss together the prevailing themes for the individual group and create a single mission statement that included all of them.

Ms. Titchenal noted all of the different bullet points that could have several sub points. For example, Comfortable could include the sub points of safe, and clean. Reliable could include sustainable, environmentally friendly, and timely. She suggested that the group as a whole break back down into the three smaller groups to discuss how quality of life is improved by creating a list of only five reasons. After a brief discussion, Ms. Titchenal had each group explain their five reasons. There was a common theme between the three groups: Safety, Customer Service, Sustainability, Connectivity and Reliability. Ms. Titchenal then encouraged the group as a whole to consider all the subjects that could be listed under each heading. Several items were discussed and listed under each heading. Through the discussion, the five reasons were narrowed down to four goals that explained the vision statement; “Reliable Transportation Connecting Communities” were 1.) Independence through transportation, 2.) Economic opportunities, 3.) Sustainability and 4.) Customer Service.

Ms. Titchenal encouraged the group to continue discussing the four goals of the mission statement. The group believed that economic value should be included with economic opportunities. They were two separate items. Economic value is an asset to the community as a low cost means of transportation. There was discussion whether goal two should be changed to “Adding Economic Value to Communities through Transportation Opportunities”. Through discussion it was determined that the word *opportunities* was a better description for this goal than *options*. The definition of both were discussed.

Discussion continued with goal four, Customer Service. The group determined that adding the word quality was beneficial. Ms. Titchenal commented that the word quality is interpreted on an individual level. Using the words reliable or caring as opposed to quality was considered. The group determined that goal four should be “Service to our customers that is safe, affordable, accessible, reliable and valued”.

Goal three, Sustainability, included two key points, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability. The group determined that goal three would read, “Improving the quality of life of our communities by being economically and environmentally sustainable”.

Ms. Titchenal announced that the meeting would conclude for the day. The mission statement had been finalized, the vision statement had been finalized, and the mission statement supported the vision statement. She stated that another component of the session was to review opportunities. She provided the group members with a list of strengths that they had listed previously. She instructed the group to review the listed strengths and to prepare to discuss them at the next strategic planning session. She reminded the group that the focus was a three year

strategic plan and that the discussion would continue on the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results) path. She requested that the group take some time to think about what they believed were the top five aspirations for Connect Transit and to bring their ideas with them to the next meeting.

There being no further business, Chairperson Buchanan requested that a formal motion to adjourn be made.

Motion by Trustee McCurdy, seconded by Trustee Shaw that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion passed.

Mike McCurdy, Secretary