



MINUTES
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
APRIL 16, 2014

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority Board of Directors was held in the meeting room at Music City Central, 400 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, TN on April 16, 2014. A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by RTA Chair Nashville and Davidson County Mayor Karl Dean.

- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chair Dean entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2014 meeting. Proper motion was made and seconded. The vote of approval was unanimous and the minutes were adopted as presented.

- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Dwayne Sweat, a construction worker from Knoxville, TN, addressed the Board with his concerns for job safety for construction workers on state projects. He is part of an organization, Bridges to Justice, a worker and community alliance that seeks to improve safety and working conditions for the men and women who build Tennessee's bridges and other public infrastructures. A primary aim of the group is to promote responsible contracting reform at TDOT to prevent the needless deaths of workers on bridge projects. Mr. Sweat was seeking the support of the Board at their local level in their communities and with TDOT contracts.

There were no other public comments.

- IV. **MARKETING REPORT:** Williamson County's Governor Appointee Kelly Dannenfeler reported that the committee did not meet last week but their ad hoc rebranding task force did meet for the first time. They had great participation and all the individual transit partners were represented at the meeting. The next session is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22nd. She also noted that Sullivan Branding is doing a great job facilitating the process.

Continuing, Ms. Dannenfeler reported that the communications team has been promoting the upcoming Dickson County pilot project which begins on April 28th. Last Friday the *Music City Star Tracks* newsletter was released electronically and hard copies were available at the meeting.

- V. **OPERATIONS REPORT:** Committee Chair Portland Mayor Ken Wilber reported that General Manager of Operations and Maintenance, Dawn Distler, has accepted the position as the Director of Transit for the city of Knoxville. He noted that she will be missed but wishes her the best in her new position.

Continuing, Chair Wilber reported that the Operations Committee met last Tuesday, April 8th and looked over the statistics for February 2014 which had 16 operating days with four Fridays.

The month to month comparison numbers show a 7.8% increase for all RTA services. Our corridor services all displayed outstanding numbers. The Clarksville and Franklin express bus services exhibited a 67.8% and 19.6% increase respectively. The total RTA services are averaging 34 passengers per trip. The combined public transportation numbers for Middle Tennessee were about even when comparing fiscal year 2013 and fiscal year 2014. These are all good numbers when considering February 2014 was one of the coldest in history with adverse weather conditions throughout the month.

Lora Baulsir commented on the increasing numbers in Clarksville and how the demand is being handled. Gray Line has begun a pilot project using a double-decker bus on this service. This is alleviating the problem of leaving passengers at the park and ride lot when the bus is full. The feedback has been mostly positive. A discussion also ensued about the continuing drop in passengers on the Springfield-Joelton express. Increased marketing plans as well as changes in routing and schedules are being considered for this route.

He then presented the following action items:

- a. **Country Music Marathon Train Service (A-014-004):** It has been requested by Wilson County to use the Music City Star to bring people into Nashville for the Country Music Marathon on April 26th. The service has an associated cost of \$4,000 which will be covered by Wilson County either on its own or through public/private partnerships. The committee recommends this action item to the board for approval. Motion was seconded.

Discussion was opened and General Manager Lora Baulsir updated the Board from an earlier discussion with Mayor Hutto and reported that he has a sponsor for part of it and will know whether he has a sponsor for the rest of it by the end of the day. This will be a free service with no ticket sales for the event. There was no further discussion and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- b. **Update to Public Participation Plan (A-14-005):** Jim McAteer presented an action item to the operations committee which updates the public participation plan which came about at the urging of the FTA as a result of the recent triennial review. The update has the Public Participation Plan include a description and explanation of how the comments are considered through the service planning process. The committee reviewed and discussed the proposed plan and voted to recommend this action item to the board for approval. Proper motion was made and approved and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- VI. **Finance Report:** Committee Chair Rutherford County Mayor Earnest Burgess reported that the committee met and received an excellent report. Revenue is favorable both current month and year-to-date and expenses are favorable both current month and year-to-date.

He then reported on the following item:

a. **Suntrust Revolving Line of Credit Renewal (A-14-006):** RTA has an operating line of credit through SunTrust Bank in the amount of \$1.5 million for general borrowings to cash flow expenses for the Music City Star. Currently we owe no money on this line of credit, but we need it in place in the event cash flow would require it. The fee has been decreased from 1% to 0.5% which means we will pay \$7500 for this annual renewal. The committee recommends to the Board that we authorize our interim CEO, Ed Oliphant, to sign a one-year extension of the Sun Trust Bank revolving credit agreement for \$1.5 million. Motion was seconded. There was no discussion and the vote of approval was unanimous.

VII. INTERIM CEO'S REPORT: Interim CEO Ed Oliphant reported that MTA is in the process of doing a national search for a new CEO and he has accepted this interim role to keep things moving forward. In his stead as CFO, Mr. Oliphant introduced Shelly McElhaney, Controller. She will be giving the reports to the Finance Committee during this interim phase. Mr. Oliphant also reported that he had participated in the Nashville Chamber's Inter-City visit to Vancouver, British Columbia recently. He noted it was a leadership conference to learn more about how Vancouver has been so successful in what they do. They looked at green technologies, transit, how they deal with their homeless population and more.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT: Chair Dean also noted that he enjoyed the Vancouver trip as well. Chair Dean reported that the US Secretary of Transportation was in Nashville yesterday (April 15th) as part of an eight state bus tour he is doing to highlight the need for federal transportation funds.

The Secretary was the former Mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina and understands most of the issues with which mayors are confronted. The Secretary was seeking support of the transportation funding efforts on which the administration is working. He talked about the need to deal with infrastructure. There are lots of highway issues, bridge issues, and mass transit issues that need to be addressed and that we are running out of highway funds. There is not much of a desire in congress to continue deficit funding of transportation. If a source of funding is not found in the next year or so, then we will run out of funds and this will be fairly devastating to all parts of the country and all transportation concerns whether it is mass transit or interstates or infrastructure such as bridges.

Continuing, Chair Dean reported that he had created an advisory committee on the East West Connector Amp project made up of business owners, neighborhood members, and other stake holders including members who are opposed to the project. Meetings will begin at the end of the month.

IX. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT: General Manager Lora Baulsir reported that we are out to bid on the express bus service. Gray Line operates the majority of our express routes and also use of the Riverfront Train Station selling MTA and RTA tickets. This is out to bid and will come before the Board next month.

Ms. Baulsir also reported that there is a train excursion tonight for Try Transit month leaving out of the downtown station and will make an extra stop at the

Hamilton Springs transit oriented development and will return on a Gray Line bus to downtown afterwards.

Last week she was in New York for a mandatory meeting of all commuter rail operators with the Federal Railroad Administration to talk about what we are doing to make sure that we are keeping our operations as safe as possible. She reported that Nashville is doing all the appropriate things.

Ms. Baulsir noted that several had asked about the use of Skype for committee meetings and last month it was set up for the meetings but no one called in to use it. They will try again in May.

Concluding, she stated that the short line railroad funding issue continues to cause a lot of discussion among the Music City Star riders. It does not affect the Star financially but does affect the Nashville and Eastern Railroad who owns the line. We have been using social media to ensure our riders that the Star is not going to stop because of this issue.

X. OTHER BUSINESS: There was discussion concerning the bills in both the house and the senate concerning the state legislature's involvement in approving the operation of BRT on any state routes that requires dedicated lanes. Motion was made that RTA would send a letter to the governor and to the legislative body stating that they are opposed to the proposed language of the conference committee. Motion was seconded and the vote of approval was unanimous.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Respectfully,

Paula Mansfield

Governor Appointee
RTA Secretary