

NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting
July 28, 2022

I. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) Board of Directors was held at the Tennessee Bankers Association, located at 211 Athens Way, Ste. 100, Nashville, TN 37228 on Thursday, July 28, 2022.

II. **Roll Call of Persons Present:** Gail Carr Williams, Chair; Janet Miller, Vice-Chair; Mary Griffin, Member; Walter Searcy, Member; Jessica Dauphin, Member; Margaret Behm, Board Secretary; Chief Executive Officer Stephen Bland; Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant; Chief Administrative Officer Rita Roberts-Turner; Chief Operating Officer Andy Burke; Chief Development Officer Trey Walker; Director of Maintenance Carl Rokos, Deputy Chief Operating Officer-Operations Systems Dan Freudberg; Director of Planning & Grants Felix Castrodad, Director of Marketing & Communications Renuka Christoph, Procurement Administrator Denise Richardson and Board Liaison Monica Howse.

A quorum was established, and Chair Gail Carr Williams called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

III. **Approval of Minutes:** Jessica Dauphin made a motion to approve the June 23, 2022, MTA Board minutes; the motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Janet Miller and unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. **Public Comments:** Chair Gail Carr Williams opened the floor for public comments. The public was reminded that comments were limited to three minutes. The following members of the public had these comments:

Ms. Marcia Sanders-Patterson

Ms. Patterson's comments were as follows:

- Ms. Patterson requested that policies and procedures be changed for Access riders, especially for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Currently, there is a 30-minute window for when the vehicle arrives, but only a five-minute window for passengers to be outside and ready to board. She said this is not good for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, as they cannot stand outside in 100-degree weather for long periods.
- Ms. Patterson's said the reservation process is wonderful, but customer service in the scheduling department is not too good.

V. Ms. Patterson said that she's expressed concerns with customer service about the vans with Mobility Solutions not being suitable for people with disabilities.

VI. **Informational Items:** There were no informational items on the packet that were pulled for discussion.

VII. **Consent Agenda Items:** There were no consent agenda items this month.

VIII. **Operations & Finance Committee Report:** Committee Chair Walter Searcy presented the following action items for approval:

- a. **WeGo Parking Lease Option (M-A-22-020):** CFO Ed Oliphant reported on the evolution of our lease with Premiere Parking (now called Metropolis) to manage the public parking garage at the Elizabeth Duff Transit Center at WeGo Central. At the outset of the pandemic, with parking patronage sharply reduced, we approved a rent abatement agreement with the contractor to allow them to sustain employment and maintain normal business operations. Like transit ridership, downtown parking is returning but is not yet close to pre-pandemic levels. Under the original rent abatement, MTA received 50% of gross parking revenues in lieu of a guaranteed amount. In February 2022 (with patronage increasing) Metropolis voluntarily

increased this to 75% of gross revenues. Following discussions with staff, Metropolis proposed that the 75% of gross revenues remain in effect until a trigger point of \$115,111 in monthly gross revenues is achieved consistently, at which time the original terms of the contract would be reinstated at the equivalent of the 4th year of the contract through the balance of 2022, and that we extend the contract through December 2023 with the original 5th year payment provisions in place for January 2023 – December 2023.

The Operations & Finance Committee recommended that the Board approve the proposed amendment with Metropolis Parking for the Parking Lease at the WeGo Central parking garage for the remainder of the calendar year 2022 with an option for the calendar year 2023 and it was unanimously approved by the Board without further discussion.

- b. **Purchase of 40 Body on Chassis Buses (M-A-22-021)**: Chief Operating Officer Andy Burke and Maintenance Director Carl Rokos presented the following:

Staff recommended the Board provide the Chief Executive Officer authority to approve a purchase contract for the purchase of Forty (40) replacement Body on Chassis Cutaway Buses from Southern Bus and Mobility for replacement vehicles used in WeGo Access service and on lower patronage fixed bus routes contingent upon the completion of a satisfactory Buy America pre-award audit of this specific vehicle prior to the execution of any purchase agreement. Twenty (20) of each configuration (Access and Fixed Route) would be acquired, with delivery spread to accomplish desired average fleet age goals.

The vendor submitted a price of \$157,695 per bus for 20 buses in the Access configuration, and \$197,317.75 for 20 buses in the fixed route configuration, which includes tools and training, for a total cost of \$7,100,255.00. As the final cost of the vehicles will be adjusted to reflect price increases, the project budget includes a 20% contingency (\$1,420,000) for a total budget of \$8,520,306. Funding for the replacement of Body on Chassis vehicles is currently available through grants made for this purpose by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Section 5307 urbanized area formula program, Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) matching funds, and previously approved Capital Spending Plans of the Government of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County.

The Operations and Finance Committee made a recommendation to approve the Purchase of Forty (40) Replacement Body on Chassis Cutaway Buses and it was unanimously approved by the Board.

- IX. **New Initiative & Community Engagement Committee Report**: Vice-Chair Janet Miller presented the following items for discussion and action:

QuickTicket Update (NICE-D-22-019): Performance Oversight Manager, Bryan A. Williams, provided an overall project update, and Director of Marketing, Sales, and Communication Renuka Christoph provided an overview of ongoing marketing and sales efforts for QuickTicket.

WeGo Public Transit is currently in the deployment phase of the QuickTicket – Next Generation Fare Collection System project. Over the past few years, we have installed new fareboxes and smart media validators on all WeGo revenue vehicles, provided smart cards to customers, deployed the QuickTicket by WeGo mobile app, and deployed the software and hardware needed to power the system. QuickTicket allows customers to pay using a self-managed mobile application or reloadable smart card, which can be managed on the QuickTicket website. Payment across WeGo Local, Regional, and Train services are completed using a single phone or card scan.

Recent Activities:

- The official launch of WeGo Local and Regional service
- Discontinued sales of magnetic tickets at WeGo Central
- Migration of WeGo Ride (formally EasyRide) partners to QuickTicket

Since our launch in early February 2022, adoption has increased steadily and represented 38% of WeGo Local ridership in April 2022. Many of the core systems are functioning well and riders have accessed the benefits associated with an account-based system. As we move through the system launch, we continue to adjust QuickTicket to eliminate any barriers to accessing the system. This has positively positioned WeGo to develop a list of final tasks to be completed for contract completion.

Gail said that she recently noticed a WeGo Public Transit advertisement on her Nextdoor neighborhood app and thought that it was cool to see us out there and people are saying good things about it.

Janet asked what percentage would we claim as an “off-the-chain victory” or dream goal. CEO Bland said around the 80% range. Also getting Vanderbilt, schools, and some of our other business partners converted over will be essential to make a large dent in these numbers.

Mary asked if someone could buy a ticket for someone else to use. Bryan said yes. If a person gives someone access to their account information, that person will have the ability to add funds to it. He mentioned that WeGo is partnering with the homeless impact division on this as well.

There was no further discussion at this time.

- b. **Transit Origin-Destination Onboard Survey Award (M-A-22-022)**: Transit Planner Hannah Schaefer presented the following item for discussion and action:

Every 5 years, WeGo completes a systemwide Origin-Destination Survey which provides specific data about travel patterns, transit use, and socio-demographic information of transit riders. Not only does this process and resulting data satisfy FTA requirements for the Agency’s Title VI Equity Analyses for Major Service and Fare Changes, but it also provides valuable insights into who our riders are and where they are going to inform future service planning initiatives that best serve our community.

2022 On Board Passenger Survey will build upon the previously completed surveys from 2011 and 2017, which will aid staff in the following areas:

- Service expansions and amenity placement: the collected data will guide decision-making for where fixed routes will run and equitable placement of shelters and other amenities.
- nMotion Update: compare travel patterns over the last decade to inform future service initiatives and the agency’s service strategy over the next 5 – 20 years.
- Customer Attitudes: gauge general customer attitudes towards the service and WeGo’s recent service and other initiatives.
- QuickTicket: help identify what markets have not yet made the transition to the agency’s QuickTicket system to better align outreach efforts.
- Travel Demand Model: The Metropolitan Planning Organization’s regional travel demand model relies on transit origin-destination survey data collected in this effort to appropriately account for transit ridership in the region.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued on May 18, 2022, to solicit proposals from consulting firms to provide a systemwide Transit Origin-Destination Survey. The solicitation was advertised on the Agency website, in Transit Talent, and B2G. The solicitation was sent directly to 10 (ten) consultant firms with backgrounds in transit data collection. Four firms participated in the May 25th pre-proposal conference. Two firms: ETC Institute and Michael Baker International submitted proposals on the due date of June 22, 2022, with the following proposed costs:

<u>Proposals</u>	<u>Proposed Cost</u>
1. ETC Institute	\$472,451.97
2. Michael Baker International	\$483,186.63

Each submitter was interviewed on June 28, 2022, to determine a final score for each based on technical ability to satisfy the full project requirements. Following a review of the written proposals and interviews and presentations from both firms, the Evaluation Committee unanimously agreed that the ETC Institute proposal offered an approach and schedule that best met the project needs.

Staff requested that the Board of Directors provide the Chief Executive Officer the authority to enter a professional services contract with ETC Institute to conduct the systemwide Transit Origin-Destination Survey in the amount of \$472,451.97. The total project term is 9 months with surveys to be conducted during the months of October and November 2022. The funding for the study comes from FTA's Section 5307 funds. The DBE participation in this contract will be 8% and will consist of the following:

- ANIK Inc. – Staffing Labor 4%
- Stat Team – Staffing Labor 4%

Chair Carr Williams suggested that Hannah work with Board Member Mary Griffin on the survey process; more specifically, the approaches to surveying non-English speaking customers and communities.

Walter Searcy asked Hannah Schaefer if she could provide the Board Members with the sample survey. Hannah said that a sample survey could be provided for the Board Members to review once developed.

The NICE Committee made a recommendation to approve the Transit Origin-Destination Survey-Onboard Survey Award and it was unanimously approved by the Board.

There was no further discussion at this time.

X. CEO's Report: CEO Steve Bland provided the following report:

1. On July 27th, CEO Bland, Gail Carr Williams, Janet Miller, and Margaret Behm had the opportunity to review a draft outline of Board Governance recommendations with Doug Eadie following up on our May 19 workshop. Doug is going to produce a final draft for review with this committee again, and then the full Board will receive this information. We will likely review the material and have a significant discussion as an agenda item in the next 2 – 3 months.
2. At the July 19th meeting, the Metro Council unanimously approved both actions to formally rename WeGo Central after Elizabeth Duff and to name the North Nashville Transit Center after Rip Patton. Vice Mayor Shulman did an outstanding job commemorating the event by having members of both families join him at the podium to gavel in the meeting, and the members of both families who were present were formally recognized by the Vice Mayor. All Council Members asked to officially be listed as co-sponsors. With respect to WeGo Central and Elizabeth Duff, we have engaged our term contract architects from Smith Gee to help us design signage and other appropriate design elements to recognize her. We will engage the Duff family to help us in this regard, and you can also expect to see us have this on a future Board agenda for discussion and review of concepts.
3. With respect to the North Nashville project, there was much activity this month. We did receive two responsive construction bids and, as expected given the current global economic climate, both were significantly higher than the original project budget. Between now and the September meeting, we will be conducting due diligence on the apparent low bidder and revisiting our plan of finance for the project to identify additional funding sources. I anticipate that this can all be done in time for a recommended contract award at your next meeting.

4. Also relative to the North Nashville project, we awarded a contract this past month to the Don Hardin Group to serve as curator of the cultural programming aspects of the Center. These services will include elements such as public art, the historical accuracy of the events surrounding the Freedom Riders that we intend to commemorate in the Center, public engagement, and construction management support for the integration of these elements into center construction. As with the Duff family at WeGo Central, we will be inviting the Patton family into this process to properly recognize Mr. Patton in the facility.
5. We continue to be heavily involved with NDOT, the Mayor's Office, and Metro Planning on advancing mobility plans associated with pending East Bank development. The northern segment of this alignment will be moving fairly quickly, as Oracle is rapidly advancing plans for their campus with an expectation to break ground next year. Metro Planning expects to release a final East Bank Vision report in early August.
6. We were pleased to be joined by Mayor Cooper, Council Member Toombs, and Judge Rachel Bell at an event commemorating the completion of the 250th shelter in our system last week. This site was at 600 Revels Drive in Bordeaux, in front of the Faith United Missionary Baptist Church along the number 14 – Whites Creek Route. This project was funded with Metro Capital Spending dollars directed by the community as part of the Mayor's North Nashville Participatory Budgeting initiative. As part of the brief ceremony, Pastor Walker from the church spoke about the importance of public transportation to many of his members, and MTA Board Member Jessica Dauphin also provided some moving remarks about the impact of public transportation in the lives of individuals and its role in building communities. Thanks to Renuka Christoph and her team for staging the event, and special thanks to Trey Walker, Kia Lewis, D'nese Nicolosi, and their respective teams for a first-rate project.
7. Trey Walker is making slow but steady progress on resolving our bus shelter issues at the Fairgrounds. With completed Wingrove Street intersection redesign concepts from NDOT, he was able to complete the design of the outbound shelter. This will require an easement from the Fairgrounds, and we anticipate that action to come before their Board and your next month. On the inbound stop, we have hit a roadblock with Metro Water on our original design concept, so Trey Walker is working with the design team to downsize the station in the hope of being able to complete it entirely within the public right of way.
8. Nick Oldham has continued to convene meetings of our Operator Assault Task Force. This group has been very effective in developing recommendations for mitigation strategies to curb this issue, and several have been implemented already.
9. CEO Bland said that he participated in the Tennessee Public Transportation Association Board Planning Workshop in Pigeon Forge this month and he serves as Vice President of the Board. Major topics included the development of a legislative agenda for the upcoming legislative session, discussion of operator assault trends and mitigation strategies, staffing shortages, and the critical shortage of small bus chassis that Andy outlined. On this last issue, the Association will work with our Washington lobbyists and other trade groups to raise the profile of this issue at the FTA and in Congress.
10. On the RTA side:
 - a. A We received 7 proposals on a future visioning study for the WeGo Star. With changing commute patterns post-pandemic, and various growth and development opportunities along the Star corridor, we thought it was time to take a step back and assess the future direction of the Star. Although the study is specifically targeted at the Star, we do expect many of its findings to be more broadly applicable to all regional markets as begin to update the nMotion Plan later this year.
 - b. We received an unsolicited proposal for joint development of the Donelson Station property. The proposal was sufficiently strong that we are advancing it through our

unsolicited proposal process with an expectation to recommend a period of exclusive negotiation to the RTA Board in the near future.

- c. For those of you looking forward to the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix on August 7, the WeGo Star will be operating to get people to and from the event. It may not be as fast as the race cars, but it will be easier than driving and it's a whole lot less likely to crash. Tickets are still available.

CEO Bland availed himself of questions and there were none at this time.

XI. Chair's Report: Chair Carr Williams provided the following report:

Chair Carr Williams said that she was excited that we're getting close to having a working document to enhance our board work. She also said that she was excited about the support that we have from Metro Council for the naming of both of our facilities.

Chair Carr Williams acknowledged CAO Rita Roberts-Turner for her 5+ years of service with the WeGo Public Transit family. She said that this was Rita's last day with us and that she was going back to working in the legal arena. Rita received a plaque and was honored for the following contributions and accomplishments: she led community engagement efforts on the North Nashville Transit Center Project; she led the creation and successful evolution of our first business diversity plan; she developed our first in-house leadership development curriculum for mid-managers and supervisors; she helped in the creation and advancement of our Maintenance Apprenticeship Program; she was on the team that successfully negotiated two collective bargaining agreements with the Amalgamated Transit Union; she led the creation of our Chief Safety Officer position and (with Nick) developed our Safety Management Systems Plan, and she quietly handled dozens – if not hundreds – of contract, legal and Freedom of Information Act issues.

All members and staff joined Chair Carr Williams in a standing ovation for Ms. Roberts-Turner and all wished her well in her future endeavors!

XII. Other Business:

- a. **Board Ethics & Conflicts of Interest Review (M-I-22-022):** Board Secretary & General Counsel Margaret Behm reviewed the Code of Ethics and applicable procurement policies and procedures with the Board. The most recent code was adopted by the Board on June 19, 2007. The Code of Ethics is reviewed with all new Board members as they are appointed, and regularly reviewed with the full Board on an annual basis.

There was no further discussion at this time.

- b. **2022-23 Election of Nashville MTA Board Officers (M-A-22-023):** Board Secretary & General Counsel Margaret Behm presented the following:

Ms. Behm reported as Secretary of the Board it was her role to conduct the 2022-23 Election of Nashville MTA Board Officers. Currently, Gail Carr Williams and Janet Miller serve as the Chair and Vice Chair respectively for the Board.

The Board Secretary opened the floor for nominations; Mary Griffin nominated and made a motion that the current officers be retained for the FY2022-23 year, and it was unanimously approved by all board members to retain Gail Carr Williams as Board Chair and Janet Miller as Vice Chair.

Vice-Chair Janet Miller asked Chair Carr Williams if she could have the floor to speak. Ms. Miller acknowledged and congratulated Chair Carr Williams for being reappointed by the Mayor's office for another 5-year term on the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority Board. She said this also happens to be Gail's twentieth year of service on the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority Board. She, along with the other board members and staff presented Chair Williams with a 20-year crystal award and a leather bag to commemorate this milestone. The

board members, staff, and members of the public gave Chair Carr Williams a round of applause and a standing ovation.

- XIII. **Adjournment:** With no further business, Chair Carr Williams called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, a proper motion was made and seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Attested:

Gail Carr Williams
Chair

Margaret L. Behm
Secretary