



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
AUGUST 18, 2021

- I. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) Board of Directors was held at the Downtown Nashville Public Library located at, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219 on Wednesday, August 18, 2021. A quorum was established, and the RTA Board Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Mayor Randall Hutto, Board Chair.

- II. **Roll Call:**

In Attendance Were:

Wilson County	Mayor Randall Hutto, Chair
City of Franklin	Mayor Ken Moore
Rutherford County	Mayor Bill Ketron
Sumner County	Mayor Anthony Holt
Governor Appointees	Ed Cole, Davidson County
	Darrell James, Dickson County
	Kenny Martin, City of Mt. Juliet

- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Mayor Ken Moore made a motion to approve the June 16, 2021 minutes; the motion was seconded by Mayor Bill Ketron and unanimously approved by the board.

- IV. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments at this time.

- V. **Finance:** Committee Chair Anthony Holt reported the following:
 - a. **Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget (R-D-21-008):** Chief Ed Oliphant to report the following

Attached are monthly operating statistics through June 2021. This month marks the end of the Fiscal Year, so it is worth spending a bit of time focused on the Fiscal Year to Date numbers in addition to the monthly statistics. Not surprisingly, ridership was down significantly for the year, though the last few months have shown a steady trend in the right direction. There remains some uncertainty regarding whether the trend will continue through the Summer given current COVID infection rates, but the RTA still plans to reinstate full service this Fall to ensure that the capacity is available when customers do return.

Aside from ridership, the Operational Key Performance Indicators were generally encouraging. Accident rates were fairly steady with very few incidents on either bus or rail service. We did see a bit of a decline in trip completion percentage, but much of this was due to the winter weather experienced in February. With the significant decrease in traffic due to work-at-home policies and other pandemic-related factors, on-time performance for bus services increased significantly, with express commuter and shuttle bus on-time performance at nearly 90% for the year.

 - b. **Debt Obligation Notification (R-D-21-009):** In its June 16, 2021 meeting, the RTA Board authorized the renewal of its line of credit with Fifth Third Bank up to \$5 million

effective July 1, 2021. While we continue to reduce the frequency of need to utilize the line, it is difficult to forecast the availability of future federal grant funding. Consequently, we believe it was imperative to renew the line of credit in order to ensure timely cash flow for expenses. RTA uses a portion of its grant funding to pay preventive maintenance operating costs and there are numerous times that the federal government has delayed the release of funding causing the cash flow issues. The State of Tennessee Comptroller's Office also requires any public entity to submit a report of debt obligations to be filed within 45 days of entering into any debt agreement. It must also be presented to the Governing Body of the public entity and be included in a public meeting. A copy of the July 2, 2021 submission is included for your reference.

On July 1, 2021, we entered into a Revolving Credit Promissory Note with Fifth Third Bank for \$5.0 million with an expiration of the note on June 30, 2022. This note is needed to cover our cash flow needs throughout the year. The terms of the loan are as follows:

Term	1 year
Maturity Date	June 30, 2022
Interest Rate	Variable – LIBOR Rate plus 1.20%
Legal Fee	\$771 paid to Sherrard Roe Voigt & Harbison, PLC representing Fifth Third
Non-Use Fee	7.5 basis points on the daily unused principal amount of the Note, charged quarterly. Maximum fee will not exceed \$3,750.

As soon as we receive these grant funds, the loan will be paid down to minimize our interest expense.

VI. Operations Committee Report: CEO Bland reported on behalf of Mayor Jerry Kirkman the following items:

a. Monthly Operating Statistics (R-D-21-007): CEO Bland reported on the monthly operating statistics report through June 30, 2021.

CEO Bland directed everyone's attention to page 15 of the board book and noted that ridership is certainly on the uptick compared to a year ago with June ridership overall up 56.9%. However, it is still severely depressed, down about 75% compared to June 2019. There were no accidents on either bus or rail in June. As ridership returns, so are traffic, with a bus on-time performance still higher than our historical levels, but down to 88% from over 92% last June.

The year-to-date figures are on page 16. July 2021 took place entirely after the beginning of the pandemic, while FY2020 had 8 normal months before both the pandemic and the March 2020 tornado began to take their toll.

CEO Bland directed everyone's attention to the route-by-route performance on page 21. He said ridership is severely depressed, but there were a couple of surprises, with the Springfield service and Clarksville service rebounding more quickly than others, and you'll notice that the per-trip ridership on the 93 Star-West End Shuttle is carrying more than half of the average number of overall Star passengers, illustrating the prevalence of employees out of the Vanderbilt/Midtown area on this service.

VII. Other Business:

VIII. CEO's Report: CEO Bland reported the following:

1. The Transportation Safety Administration requirement that public transportation passengers continue to wear facial coverings remains in effect, so customers and employees are required to wear facial coverings on RTA property.
 2. As reported in the Operations Committee report out, we are seeing a slow return of RTA riders. We will be restoring RTA service to full levels on October 4.
 3. We also had the opportunity to operate two special event services on the Star since we last met. We sold out of tickets for the 4th of July celebration at 750 round trips. We also provided service to the first Big Machine Music City Grand Prix race, with 355 passengers riding. This was a clear demonstration that people will ride when they come downtown.
 4. With respect to the locomotive overhaul on the Star, the last of the 4 locomotives is currently at the rebuilder. We expect it back by the end of this year, completing this project.
 5. On the commuter bus side, we are scheduled to receive 10 new commuter buses for RTA services in October, with an expectation that they will enter service in November. 7 of the 10 will replace buses that the MTA operates in the Rutherford County Corridor. The other 3 will go to Gray Line for other RTA routes.
 6. We are partnering with the City of Nashville, TDOT and the Nashville Downtown Partnership on a Downtown Nashville Traffic Study to examine the many competing uses for downtown Nashville streets and rights of way. One of our key objectives will be to try to identify transit priority corridors where we can gain transit priority measures like dedicated lanes and improved infrastructure. This will be essential for RTA commuters as the downtown workforce spreads well beyond the State Capitol complex. Proposals are due on August 25.
 7. We are also assembling a Request for Proposals to develop a range of options for the future evolution of the Star. With most of our State of Good Repair projects completed over the past 2 years, we can again look to the future, including an examination of how our long-term commuter markets might be impacted by the pandemic and changing work patterns. As part of the process, we did a formal request for information from the consulting community and received responses from 4 large, national consulting firms (all with a Middle Tennessee presence). We are currently talking to each of these firms, as well as RJ Corman, to develop the content of the Request for Proposals.
- XI. **Chair's Report:** Chair Hutto thanked everyone for being present at the board meeting and called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- XII. **Adjournment:** Proper motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Ed Cole, RTA Secretary &
Davidson County Governor Appointee