



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
Of Middle Tennessee

BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, April 20, 2022 | 9:30 a.m.

**TN State Library & Archives
1001 Rep. John Lewis Way N.
Nashville, TN 37219**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Minutes** - The January 19, 2022 Board minutes were approved by the Executive Committee at the February 16, 2022 meeting.
3. **Public Comments**
4. **Finance Committee Report – Sumner County Mayor Anthony Holt**
 - Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget – Ed Oliphant, CFO **R-D-22-011 Pg. 1**
5. **Operations Committee Report – Mayor Rick Bell, Chair**
 - RTA Monthly Operating Statistics – Andy Burke, COO **R-D-22-012 Pg. 4**
 - Nashville & Eastern Freight Derailments - WeGo Star Service Impacts – Andy Burke, COO **R-D-22-013 Pg. 12**
 - Regional Bus Service Restoration & Reliability – Andy Burke, COO **R-D-22-014 Pg. 14**
 - WeGo Star Future Direction Strategy Planning Process – Felix Castrodad, Director of Planning & Grants **R-D-22-015 Pg. 16**
6. **CEO’s Report – Stephen G. Bland, CEO**
7. **Chair’s Report – Mayor Randall Hutto, Chair**
8. **Other Business**
9. **Adjournment**

Note:

A meeting of the Executive Committee has been scheduled concurrent with the full Board Meeting. In the event a quorum of the Board cannot be achieved, the Executive Committee will meet to conduct the scheduled business of the Board. If a quorum of the Board is present, there will be no Executive Committee meeting.



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
Of Middle Tennessee

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

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Nashville, TN 37219**

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Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee

- Committee Discussion Item Exec. Committee Discussion Item Board Discussion Item
 Committee Action Item Exec. Committee Action Item

Item Number:	R-D-22-011	Meeting Date:	04/20/2022
Item Title:	Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget		

BACKGROUND:

Attached is a statement of operations for the month of February 2022 compared to the budget and a balance sheet as of February 28, 2022.

Year-to-date through February fare revenues continue to lag behind budgeted estimates. We had budgeted for fare revenues to recover to about 25% - 30% of pre-covid revenues. Through the first 7 months of the year through January regional bus revenues are running at approximately 19% and train revenues at about 20% when compared to pre-covid numbers through January 2020. It becomes a little more difficult to get comparisons to pre-pandemic revenues since we started seeing impacts of the pandemic in February 2020. However, in month-over-month comparisons total fares for buses and trains combined outperformed revenues in January 2022 despite having the shorter month in February. Most of the increase was seen in train revenues compared to January.

As of February 28, 2022, RTA owed Nashville MTA approximately \$258,000 for services provided to and from Rutherford County as well as management fees due. RTA also had accounts receivable from Nashville MTA of approximately \$19,000 for fares collected as well as Easy Ride revenue sharing due.

CURRENT STATUS:

Chief Financial Officer Ed Oliphant will be available to answer any questions regarding the statements at the committee meeting.

APPROVED:



Chief Financial Officer

April 15, 2022

Date

Regional Transportation Authority
Statement of Operations Compared to Budget
For the Period Ending February 28, 2022
UNAUDITED

	Actual Month	Budget Month	Month End Variance	F/ U	Prior Year Y-T-D	Actual Y-T-D	Budget Y-T-D	Y-T-D Variance	F/ U	Budget
Revenue from Operations:										
R&R Revenues	\$9,485	\$14,765	(\$5,280)	U	\$78,706	\$97,131	\$122,475	(\$25,344)	U	\$185,757
Train Revenues	14,157	21,105	(6,948)	U	60,051	123,641	182,060	(58,419)	U	272,939
Special Events	16,274	0	16,274	F	0	87,099	43,980	43,119	F	74,250
Advertising	0	750	(750)	U	0	0	6,440	(6,440)	U	9,900
Other Non-Trans Revenue	5,970	37,890	(31,920)	U	223,413	232,402	204,705	27,697	F	267,872
Total Operating Revenue	45,886	74,510	(28,624)	U	362,170	540,273	559,660	(19,387)	U	810,718
Federal/State/Local Income:										
Local Assistance	267,396	60,000	207,396	F	488,535	704,321	1,095,000	(390,679)	U	1,561,751
Regional Assistance	48,850	45,505	3,345	F	839,211	495,761	617,625	(121,864)	U	647,625
State Assistance	0	0	0	F	633,400	642,300	633,400	8,900	F	633,400
Federal Assistance - CMAQ	137,968	108,148	29,820	F	934,814	886,328	903,034	(16,706)	U	1,373,477
Federal Assistance - CARES Act	32,385	350,000	(317,615)	U	706,372	1,351,319	1,185,563	165,756	F	2,710,068
Total Assistance Income	486,599	563,653	(77,054)	U	3,602,332	4,080,029	4,434,622	(354,593)	U	6,926,321
Capital Revenue:										
Capital Operating Reimbursement	5,167	97,812	(92,645)	U	1,269,415	208,711	816,727	(608,016)	U	1,242,208
American Rescue Plan Operating	0	0	0	F	0	1,000,000	1,000,000	0	F	1,000,000
Total Capital Income	5,167	97,812	(92,645)	U	1,269,415	1,208,711	1,816,727	(608,016)	U	2,242,208
Total Revenue	\$537,652	\$735,975	(\$198,323)	U	\$5,233,917	\$5,829,013	\$6,811,009	(\$981,996)	U	\$9,979,247
Expenses from Operations:										
Management Contract - MTA	\$70,338	\$70,338	\$0	F	\$562,704	\$562,704	\$562,704	\$0	F	\$844,056
Services	551,203	656,419	105,216	F	3,418,817	4,156,429	5,266,878	1,110,449	F	8,089,201
Fuel	38,470	25,132	(13,338)	U	227,695	220,637	209,849	(10,788)	U	319,175
Materials and Supplies	2,896	1,921	(975)	U	4,949	13,425	15,329	1,904	F	22,975
Utilities	16,071	14,777	(1,294)	U	93,355	112,677	117,820	5,143	F	177,010
Casualty and Liability	34,198	41,080	6,882	F	309,994	286,346	332,412	46,066	F	496,730
Other	101	2,200	2,099	F	11,528	11,389	19,655	8,266	F	30,100
Total Operating Expenses	713,277	811,867	98,590	F	4,629,042	5,363,607	6,524,647	1,161,040	F	9,979,247
Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$175,625)	(\$75,892)	(\$99,733)	U	\$604,875	\$465,406	\$286,362	\$179,044	F	\$0
Capital Grant Revenue	121,994		121,994	F	3,445,135	1,236,950		1,236,950	F	0
Gain / (Loss) on Sale	0		0	F	0	0		0	F	0
Vanpool Replacement Revenue Fund	29		29	F	1,250	237		237	F	0
Depreciation	(284,322)		(284,322)	U	(1,640,187)	(2,314,387)		(2,314,387)	U	0
Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$337,924)	(\$75,892)	(\$262,032)	U	\$2,411,073	(\$611,794)	\$286,362	(\$898,156)	U	\$0

Regional Transportation Authority

Comparative Balance Sheets

	Month Ended February 28, 2022	Month Ended June 30, 2021
	(unaudited)	(preliminary)
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,206,990	\$976,448
Receivables from federal, state and local government	675,548	656,134
Accounts receivable	51,068	155,121
Materials and supplies	415,197	434,672
Prepaid expense and other	144,954	43,095
Total Current Assets	2,493,757	2,265,470
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT		
Land	3,382,052	3,382,052
Building, shelter and benches	19,355,429	16,730,983
Guideway Improvements	7,703,596	6,594,944
Revenue equipment and parts	24,078,586	22,773,460
Office equipment	544,913	526,144
Work-in-Progress	4,538,902	6,123,347
	59,603,478	56,130,930
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(19,001,005)	(16,686,619)
Total Property and equipment, net	40,602,473	39,444,311
OTHER ASSETS		
Cash and investments restricted	5,562,135	4,575,088
TOTAL ASSETS	\$48,658,365	\$46,284,869
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$2,855,485	\$703,289
Accrued expenses	16,868	24,500
Deferred Revenue	3,106,035	2,284,334
Note Payable	0	0
Total Current Liabilities	5,978,388	3,012,123
NET ASSETS		
Invested in capital assets	40,602,473	39,444,311
Restricted - Self Insurance Reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000
Restricted - Administrative Reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000
Restricted - Reserve for van pool replacement	456,100	517,374
Restricted - Regional Bus Reserve	3,106,035	2,057,714
Unrestricted	(2,872,837)	(2,985,841)
Current Year Surplus / (deficit)	(611,794)	2,239,188
Total Net Assets	42,679,977	43,272,746
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$48,658,365	\$46,284,869

	Current	> 30 days	> 60 Days	> 90 days	Total
Accounts Receivable	\$45,098	\$5,970	\$0	\$0	\$51,068
	88.3%	11.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Accounts Payable	\$2,819,489	\$23,314	\$0	\$12,682	\$2,855,485
	98.7%	0.8%	0.0%	0.4%	100.0%

Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee

- Committee Discussion Item Exec. Committee Discussion Item Board Discussion Item
 Committee Action Item Exec. Committee Action Item

Item Number:	R-D-22-012	Meeting Date:	04/20/2022
Item Title:	Monthly Operating Statistics		

BACKGROUND:

Attached are monthly operating statistics through February 2022. Ridership continues its gradual but steady recovery, holding at between 25% and 30% of pre-pandemic levels but up strongly year-over-year. It is worth noting some context in the year-over-year numbers, as last February saw significant winter weather. As a result, percentage increases in ridership and bus trip completion percentage are quite a bit higher than we've typically seen so far this fiscal year.

It is still a bit too early to tell the extent to which rising fuel prices will drive increases in ridership, but in general, the longer-distance commuter market is somewhat sensitive to such changes

Staff continues conversations with our primary contractor for RTA express bus services, Gray Line Tennessee, regarding bus operator availability to facilitate previously approved service increases. Currently, there are insufficient operators available to begin providing these additional trips.

CURRENT STATUS:

Staff is available to address committee member questions regarding the attached report. Please direct any inquiries to Monica Howse.

APPROVED:



Chief Operating Officer

April 15, 2022

Date

RTA Monthly Dashboard Report *

Metric	February 2022	February 2021	Pct. Change
Ridership			
			% Change
Total RTA Bus Passengers	7,926	3,474	128.2%
WeGo Star Passengers	5,669	2,109	168.8%
Total RTA Passengers	13,595	5,583	143.5%
Percentage of Pre-Pandemic Ridership	27.5%	11.3%	16.2%
Safety			
RTA Bus Total Accidents	0	0	N/A
WeGo Star Total Accidents	0	1	-100.0%
RTA Bus Total Miles btwn Accidents	N/A	N/A	N/A
WGS Total Miles btwn Accidents	N/A	4,984	N/A
Service Quality			
RTA Bus Total Trip Completion %	99.48%	85.05%	16.96%
WeGo Star Total Trip Completion %	100.00%	99.38%	0.62%
RTA Bus Total Miles btwn Service Interruption	5,383.0	213.4	2422.9%
WGS Total Miles btwn Service Interruption	N/A	4977.4	N/A
On-Time Performance ^			
RTA Bus	86.7%	88.1%	-1.6%
WeGo Star	97.1%	98.1%	-1.1%
Customer Care			
RTA Bus Total Passengers per Complaint	3,963	N/A	0.0%
WeGo Star Passengers per Complaint	N/A	422	N/A

* RTA Dashboard submitted for discussion and for Committee and Board review.

^ On Time Performance reporting began September 2017.

N/A - metric cannot be calculated due to not being divisible by "0"

RTA Monthly Dashboard Report *

Metric	FY 2022 February	FY 2021 February	Pct. Change
Ridership			
			% Change
Total RTA Bus Passengers	56,178	34,224	64.1%
WeGo Star Passengers	42,154	19,750	113.4%
Total RTA Passengers	152,308	53,976	182.2%
Percentage of Pre-Pandemic Ridership	23.5%	12.9%	10.6%
Safety			
RTA Bus Total Accidents	0	1	-100.0%
WeGo Star Total Accidents	1	2	-50.0%
RTA Bus Total Miles btwn Accidents	N/A	228,987	N/A
WGS Total Miles btwn Accidents	44,383	20,781	113.6%
Service Quality			
RTA Bus Total Trip Completion %	98.56%	98.12%	0.44%
WeGo Star Total Trip Completion %	99.60%	99.93%	-0.33%
RTA Bus Total Miles btwn Service Interruption	2,053.9	1,700.4	20.8%
WGS Total Miles btwn Service Interruption	6,340.4	41,561.3	-84.7%
On-Time Performance ^			
RTA Bus	98.3%	98.9%	-0.6%
WeGo Star	97.9%	98.7%	-0.9%
Customer Care			
RTA Bus Total Passengers per Complaint	2,554	3,422	-25.4%
WeGo Star Passengers per Complaint	4,215	1,411	198.8%

* RTA Dashboard submitted for discussion and for Committee and Board review.

^ On Time Performance reporting began September 2017.

N/A - metric cannot be calculated due to not being divisible by "0"

RTA Operations Dashboard Glossary

Metric	Definitions
Ridership	
Total Passengers	
RTA Bus	Total fixed route passenger boardings on all MTA operated RTA routes (84, 86, 93, 96) and Gray Line operated RTA routes (87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95)
WeGo Star	Total passenger boardings on WeGo Star Rail Service
Safety	
RTA Bus Accidents	A motor vehicle collision, either preventable or non-preventable, in which the Operator did not do everything reasonable to avoid a collision, committed an error or failed to react to the errors of others. A motor vehicle collision in which the Operator committed no driving error and reacted reasonably to the errors of others. (Gray Line & MTA operated RTA metrics combined)
WeGo Star Accidents	Accident – an unexpected, unforeseen, or unintended event that causes injury, loss, or damage. These events can include any event arising from the operation of the railroad which results in the death of any person; or an injury to any person that requires medical treatment, except suicides or attempted suicides; any collision between railroad on-track equipment and an automobile, bus, truck, motorcycle, occupied bicycle, pedestrian or trespasser at any location on the railroad; any collision, derailment, fire, explosion, failure of equipment or infrastructure, act of nature, or other event involving damage to the railroad’s on-track equipment, signals, track, track structures, and/or roadbed.
Service Quality	
RTA Bus Missed Trips	The total number of Bus revenue trips not completed or departing more than 30 minutes late -vs- scheduled. (Gray Line & MTA operated RTA metrics combined)
WeGo Star Missed Trips	A train that is disabled in transit or cancelled prior to embarking. A missed trip is reported as an annulment and is when the train is cancelled and doesn’t complete the run or make it to its final destination.
RTA Bus Missed Trips	The total number of Bus revenue trips not completed or departing more than 30 minutes late -vs- scheduled. (Gray Line & MTA operated RTA metrics combined)
RTA Bus Trip Completion Percentage	Percentage of one-way fixed route revenue trips completed versus scheduled.
WeGo Star Trip Completion Percentage	Percentage of one-way rail trips completed versus scheduled.

RTA Operations Dashboard Glossary

Metric

Definitions

On-Time Performance

RTA Bus OTP

MTA operated RTA routes - OTP is the Percentage of total scheduled fixed route timepoint departures occurring between 59 seconds early and 5 minutes 59 seconds late obtained from AVL data. Gray Line operated routes - OTP is the Percentage of total scheduled fixed WeGo Central route arrivals and departures occurring no later than 5 minutes 59 seconds late obtained from data provided by Gray Line personnel. (Gray Line & MTA operated RTA metrics combined based on a weighted average of total trips)

WeGo Star OTP

A train is considered on time when the train arrives at the final destination less than 6 minutes from the scheduled time. If a train is held up for 6 minutes or longer it is considered delayed and not on time. Intermediate station times are not included.

Customer Care

Passengers Carried Per Complaint

RTA Bus

Total RTA Bus passengers divided by total RTA Bus customer complaints. (Gray Line & MTA operated RTA metrics combined)

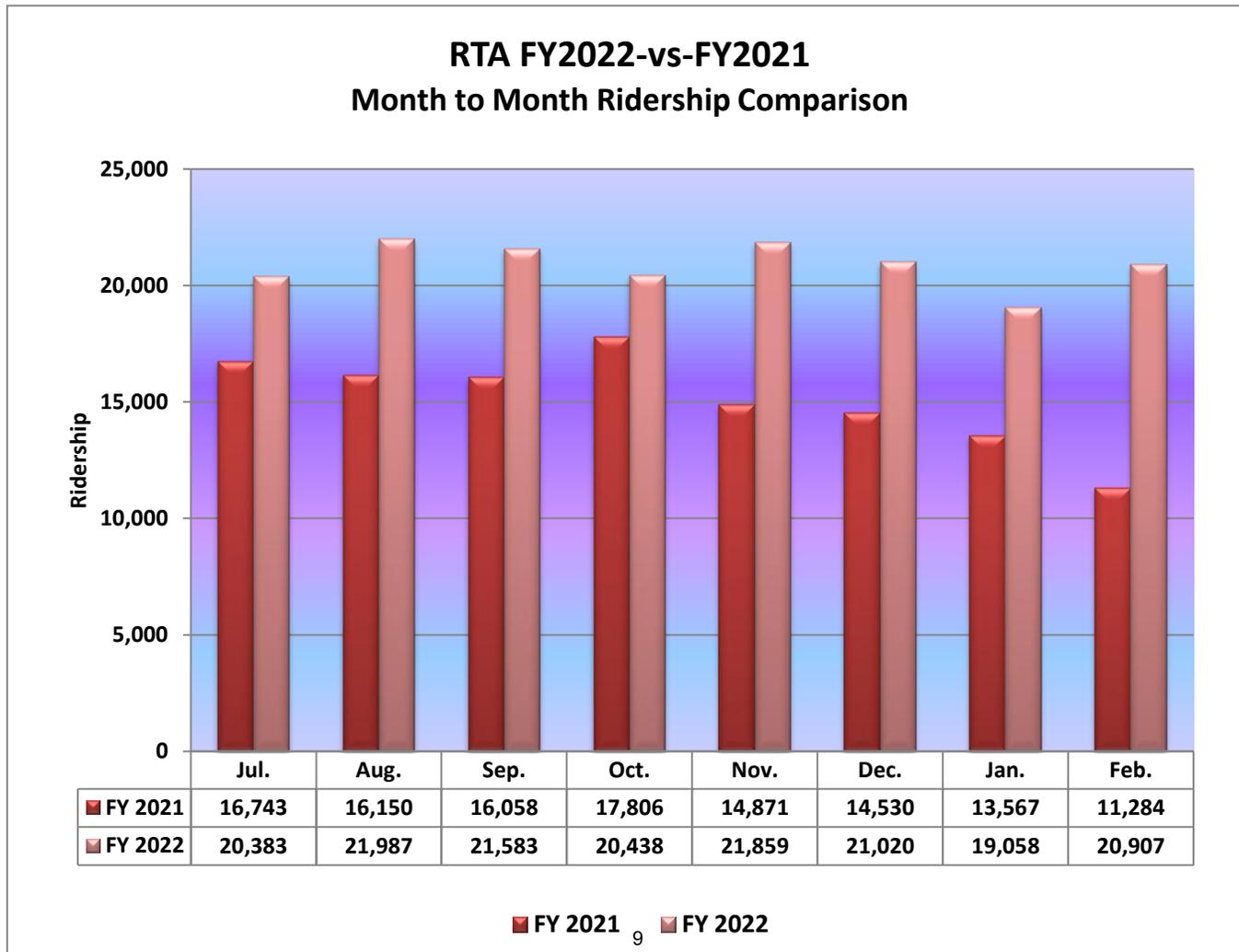
WeGo Star

Total WeGo Star passengers divided by total WeGo Star customer complaints.



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY FISCAL YEAR AND MONTH TO MONTH RIDERSHIP COMPARISON - FY 2022 -vs- 2021

	Month to Month Comparison			Fiscal Year Comparison		
	Feb-21	Feb-22	Percentage Change	FY 2021	FY 2022	Percentage Change
WeGo Star	2,109	5,669	168.8%	19,750	42,154	113.4%
Express Bus & Shuttle Services	3,474	7,926	128.2%	34,224	56,178	64.1%
RTA VanStar Vanpool Service	872	1,242	42.4%	13,740	12,566	-8.5%
Total RTA Ridership	6,455	14,837	129.9%	67,714	110,898	63.8%





**NASHVILLE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
FISCAL YEAR AND MONTH TO MONTH RIDERSHIP COMPARISON - FY 2022 -vs- 2021**

	Month to Month Comparison			Fiscal Year		
	Feb-21	Feb-22	Change	FY 2021	FY 2022	Change
MTA Local Bus Service	257,876	463,987	79.9%	2,618,457	3,757,661	43.5%
MTA Local Paratransit Service	16,502	23,248	40.9%	158,161	195,625	23.7%
RTA Regional Bus Service	3,474	7,926	128.2%	34,224	56,178	64.1%
RTA VanStar Vanpool Service	872	1,242	42.4%	13,740	12,566	-8.5%
RTA Regional Rail Service	2,109	5,669	168.8%	19,750	42,154	113.4%
* RTA Special Events Rail Service	0	0	N/A	0	6,855	N/A
Subtotal RTA Rail Service	2,109	5,669	168.8%	19,750	49,009	148.1%
Subtotal MTA & RTA Bus & Rail Service	280,833	502,072	78.8%	2,844,332	4,071,039	43.1%
Williamson County VanStar Vanpool Service	4,829	6,070	25.7%	53,295	49,482	-7.2%
Murfreesboro ROVER Local Bus Service	5,881	8,056	37.0%	65,928	69,081	4.8%
Franklin Transit Local Bus Service	2,364	3,909	65.4%	25,922	44,023	69.8%
Clarksville Transit Local Bus Service	28,581	36,062	26.2%	286,698	302,547	5.5%
Total Area Ridership	322,488	556,169	72.5%	3,276,175	4,536,172	38.5%



**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
ROUTE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT**

For the Month of: **February-22**

Rte. No.	Route Name	Monthly Ridership	Ridership Change vs Last Year	Revenue Hours Of Service	Average Passengers Per Trip	Per Hour
CORRIDOR SERVICE COMPARISONS - COMMUTER BUS SERVICE						
	North Corridor (Route 87)	1,305	117.9%	144	11	9.1
	Northwest Corridor (Routes 89 & 94)	1,565	113.2%	222	8	7.0
	South Corridor (Route 95)	625	158.3%	165	5	3.8
	Southeast Corridor (Routes 84 & 86)	1,789	176.5%	821	3	2.2
EXPRESS BUS ROUTE SERVICE						
84	Murfreesboro Express	1,342	N/A	664	3	2.0
86	Smyrna - LaVergne Express	447	N/A	157	3	2.8
87	Gallatin Express	1,305	316.9%	144	11	9.1
88	Dickson Express	211	229.7%	42	5	5.1
89	Springfield - Joelton Express	355	69.9%	54	9	6.5
94	Clarksville Express	1,210	110.8%	168	8	7.2
95	Spring Hill Express	625	544.3%	165	5	3.8
	Express Bus Route Totals	5,495	112.9%	1,393	5	3.9
OTHER ROUTES						
64	Star Downtown Shuttle	130	N/A	63	0	2.1
93	WeGo Star West End Shuttle	2,301	80.5%	81	19	28.5
	RTA Bus Route Monthly Totals	7,926	105.5%	1,474	6	5.4
COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE						
90	WeGo Star Commuter Rail	5,669	162.3%	228	24	24.8
	RTA Commuter Rail and Bus Totals	13,595	125.9%	1,702	9	8

Regional Transportation Authority

of Middle Tennessee

- Committee Discussion Item
 Exec. Committee Discussion Item
 Board Discussion Item
 Committee Action Item
 Exec. Committee Action Item

Item Number:	R-D-22-013	Meeting Date:	04/20/2022
Item Title:	Nashville & Eastern Freight Derailments – WeGo STAR Service Impacts		

BACKGROUND:

Since its inception in 2006, the Star has operated with a high level of reliability and safety, with an overall trip completion percentage of over 99% annually. During the history of the Star, “major” disruptions have generally been beyond the control of the Operator, such as in the aftermath of the 2020 Middle Tennessee Tornado, when downed power lines on the tracks resulting from the tornado required a long-term suspension of service, or washouts of track sections following significant rainfall.

In March 2022, two incidents occurred involving the derailment of freight equipment on the Nashville and Eastern Railroad (NERR) that required a suspension of WeGo Star passenger service while clean up occurred, and the track was inspected for safety. The relative proximity of these events caused alarm among RTA Operations Staff, who sought to determine if there were underlying issues of concern. Below is an overview of the recent events:

On March 21st at approximately 12:30 PM CST, 12 freight rail cars derailed at Mile Post 14.3 between Hermitage and Mt. Juliet Stations causing service disruption to the WeGo Star’s March 21st evening and March 22nd morning service.

At the time of the derailment, the Nashville and Eastern Railroad (NERR) was undergoing tie and surface rehabilitation as part of the general program of maintaining a state of good repair. Immediately following tie replacement, ballast (crushed stone material that stabilizes the trackbed) was dumped and surfaced to secure the curves from any lateral movement and track buckling. The freight operator (RJ Corman) connected the evening freight service rail cars to the ballast cars – a practice that is not uncommon in the freight industry – and upon dumping the ballast at Mile Post 14.3 moved on into the city to prepare for the evening freight service. After dumping ballast on the high side of the curve it was determined that the low side did not need ballast and therefore, they did not empty the low side of the ballast car. This created an imbalance and the ballast cars started to lean, one turned over which caused a chain reaction of the trailing 11 cars.

Contributing factors:

- 20+ tons of rock still on the low side of the train sitting on an elevated curve
- 2 of the ballast cars had excessive side bearing clearance

Investigation Results and Corrective Action:

- Local NERR ballast car fleet inspected for compliance **(completed)**
- Limiting work trains between commuter service and no commingling of work and freight trains **(completed)**
- Review current design elevation calculations along the commuter route **(completed)**

The findings and corrective actions are deemed adequate to prevent similar incidents in the future to the extent possible.

Nashville MTA assisted the RTA WeGo Star by providing bus bridges (supplementary bus service to connect commuter rail customers to their destination on the following days):

MONDAY MAR 21ST

AM Service - No Impacts

PM Service - MTA provided bus bridges to serve the WeGo Star riders with 10 buses.

TUESDAY MAR 22ND

AM Service - MTA provided bus bridges to serve the WeGo Star riders with 10 buses.

PM Service - No impacts. WeGo Star ran its regular schedule after the tracks were cleared of the derailed cars and inspected by the FRA, TDOT, and other agencies.

WEDNESDAY MAR 23RD

At approximately 2:00 PM CST, while servicing a freight customer on the east side of the NERR rail yard in Lebanon, a locomotive derailed pushing cars into the customer's property. This blocked the WeGo Star PM service from leaving the yard.

The locomotive wheels were inspected and found to be in compliance. The contributing factor in this derailment was a yard lead switch out of compliance. As follow-up, RJ Corman leadership has reviewed proper switch maintenance with the staff and inspected the remaining yard switches, all found to be in compliance.

AM Service - No Impacts

PM Service - MTA provided bus bridges to serve the WeGo Star riders using 10 buses.

MTA invoiced RTA for the bus bridges and services rendered for the incidents above based on the contractual agreement between MTA and RTA for bus service compensation for the 84 & 86 express service. In turn, RTA has been reimbursed by RJ Corman for these expenses.

CURRENT STATUS:

The staff has found the investigation and corrective action completed by RJ Corman to be adequate, and that proactive steps are being taken to avoid future such occurrences. WeGo Public Transit Staff and RJ Corman Staff will be available to address committee member questions regarding these issues.

APPROVED:



Chief Operating Officer

April 15, 2022

Date

Regional Transportation Authority

of Middle Tennessee

- Committee Discussion Item
 Exec. Committee Discussion Item
 Board Discussion Item
 Committee Action Item
 Exec. Committee Action Item

Item Number:	R-D-22-014	Meeting Date:	04/20/2022
Item Title:	Regional Bus Service Restoration & Reliability		

BACKGROUND:

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) operates commuter-oriented transit services within the 10-county regional area. RTA contracts for commuter bus service in 5 corridors (Montgomery, Dickson, Sumner, Williamson, and Robertson Counties) to Gray Line of Tennessee, a 3rd party provider. Gray Line is responsible for providing labor, materials, and all administrative, operations, and maintenance resources required to perform the transportation services detailed by RTA times, schedules, and service hours. The current agreement with Gray Line was entered into on July 1st, 2015. We are currently in the first of two optional extension periods for this service. RTA also contracts with the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) for commuter bus service in the Rutherford County Corridor, and for connector bus services to the WeGo Star.

Prior to the pandemic, Gray Line operated its service with a high level of reliability, completing approximately 99.6% of scheduled trips. However, since the onset of the pandemic Gray Line has experienced severe staffing shortages common to many employers. This has forced us to defer the full restoration of pre-pandemic service levels, as we have on the WeGo Star and Rutherford County Commuter service operated by the MTA.

Staff would like to engage in preliminary discussions with the Board relative to various options for improving this condition and restoring full-service levels. Among the options staff have begun to examine are:

1. Gray Line Contract Amendments - This option would entail an increase in unit pricing for Gray Line-operated services to allow the company to restructure its operator compensation to be more competitive. Any increase in rates would be connected to an incentive/penalty structure to provide accountability for service performance.
2. Potential Partnerships with Regional Operators – Engaging in conversations with neighboring operators (specifically Franklin Transit and Clarksville Transit) about potential interest/capacity to operate commuter-oriented services under contract to the RTA. This option has become more practical as the RTA has acquired its rolling stock that could be provided to regional operators.
3. Potential Expanded Contracting to MTA – Examining options for the MTA to provide contracted bus service in additional corridors for RTA.
4. Examination of Alternate Providers – In the previous solicitation for contracted service providers, Gray Line provided the only competitive proposal (the only other proposal received was over twice the price of Gray Line’s proposal). This alternative would amount to communicating with large, national operators to determine the conditions that would need to be present for them to offer competitive proposals.

While ridership levels remain depressed on RTA services since the onset of the pandemic, ridership has been gradually increasing and the recent increase in gasoline prices provide even more incentive for our regional commuters to use this service. As such, we will need to address the overall issue of service reliability and service restoration to be effective.

CURRENT STATUS:

Staff would like to engage the Committee in discussion to refine and expand the various options under consideration, and to gauge the committee's level of interest in various alternatives before proceeding to a recommended action plan.

APPROVED:



Chief Operating Officer

April 15, 2022

Date

Regional Transportation Authority

of Middle Tennessee

- Committee Discussion Item
 Exec. Committee Discussion Item
 Board Discussion Item
 Committee Action Item
 Exec. Committee Action Item

Item Number:	R-D-22-015	Meeting Date:	04/20/2022
Item Title:	WeGo Star Future Direction Strategy Planning Process		

BACKGROUND:

Prior to the pandemic, the RTA engaged in an alternatives analysis to assess various options for improving and expanding the availability of WeGo Star commuter rail service. With a federal requirement that all commuter railroads deploy Positive Train Control (PTC), the RTA pursued an exception due to the extremely high cost of this system (approximately \$50 million) and ongoing annual operating expense (approximately \$500,000 annually). The limited use exception that was approved by the Federal Railroad Administration came with several conditions, including a requirement that the Star does not exceed 12 trips per day.

The planning study (reviewed with the RTA Board in January 2020 – immediately before the onset of the pandemic) outlined 3 phases of possible improvements to the Star with associated high-level cost estimates: (1) extending all trips to Lebanon and providing additional peak-direction service through the creation of an additional passing siding at Martha station and the creation of a downtown-adjacent storage yard; (2) Extension of the line to the Wilson County Expo Center; and (3) a large-scale investment to facilitate expanded service with the deployment of positive train control (PTC), additional rolling stock, and various associated improvements such as additional protected crossings and quiet zones.

With the onset of the pandemic and associated issues over the past 2 years, staff believes that additional analytic work is necessary to determine recommendations for the future direction of the Star. Some of these issues include likely long-term changing commute patterns including hybrid and remote office environments and reverse commuting, station area development as we have seen around Mt. Juliet, Hamilton Springs, and Donelson Stations, and changing trends in local development as reflected in initiatives such as Lebanon’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Mt. Juliet’s Comprehensive Transportation Plan, and Nashville’s ongoing Connect Downtown mobility plan. The RTA is currently soliciting professional services to examine the future direction of service models, financial models, and project development for the Star, but also with an eye toward transferrable information to other aspects of RTA operations.

CURRENT STATUS:

Director of Planning Felix Castrodad will review the overall intended scope with the Committee seeking input on the direction of the effort and engagement with stakeholders through the course of the process.

APPROVED:



 Chief Development Officer

April 15, 2022

 Date