

Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority

Board of Directors Meeting

July 24, 2025

- 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, Nashville, TN 37228, on Thursday, July 24, 2025.

II. **Roll Call of Persons Present:**

Gail Carr Williams, Chair	Debbie Frank, DCEO of Growth & Dev
Jessica Dauphin, Member	Amanda Vandegrift, DCEO of Finance & Admin.
Aron Thompson, Member	Vince Malone, Chief of Staff & Administration
Margaret Behm, Board Secretary	Nick Oldham, Chief Safety & Security Officer
Stephen Bland CEO	Katie Freudberg, Director of Service Dev.
Monica Howse, Sr. Exec. Asst. & Bd. Liaison	Dan Freudberg, Deputy COO of Op Systems

A quorum was established, and Board Chair Carr Williams called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Ms. Dauphin made a motion to approve the minutes of the Nashville MTA Board meeting held on June 26, 2025. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved the minutes.

- IV. **Public Comments:** Chair Carr Williams opened the floor for public comments. The public was reminded that comments were limited to two minutes. The following members of the public gave public remarks:

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| • Peter O'Connor | • Darius Knight |
| • Cade Wooten | • Santana Loven |

- V. **Informational Items:** The following items were presented for the board members' review:

- Monthly Financial Report Compared to Budget – No questions
- Monthly Operating Statistics – No questions
- Upcoming Procurements – Mr. Thompson suggested implementing project forecasting to allow procurement items to be viewed six to eight months in advance.

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

- VII. **Operations & Finance Committee Report:** Committee Chair Dauphin introduced the following items for action:

- a. **Smart Grant Contract Award:** Deputy COO of Operating Systems, Dan Freudberg, presented the following item for action:

In July 2024, WeGo applied for the U.S. DOT FTA's competitive SMART Grant program and was awarded \$1.98 million in December for "Fixed-Line Transit 2.0: Real-time Optimization of High-Frequency Transit Service." Final federal approval was announced on May 6, 2025.

The 18-month project will focus on Route 55 Murfreesboro, WeGo's highest-ridership corridor, and aims to improve reliability of high-frequency service through tools such as:

- Real-time operations monitoring for supervisors and operators
- Next-generation transit signal priority (TSP)
- Improved bus arrival predictions

- Passenger volume and wait-time tracking
- Traffic-adaptive signal timings

Project Partners include Vanderbilt University (with Penn State), LYT, NDOT, Miovision, Transit, Swiftly, and March Networks.

Board Actions Requested (three contracts requiring authorization):

- Vanderbilt University – Sole-source 5-year agreement not to exceed \$2.5M, including \$766,533 for the SMART Grant project. Vanderbilt will provide data analysis, AI solutions, predictive modeling, and other research support.
- LYT – Piggyback contract of \$348,100 for a 12-month TSP pilot on Murfreesboro Pike, leveraging TriMet's competitively bid contract.
- NDOT – Interagency MOU totaling \$620,747 for traffic-adaptive signal technology and an optional TSP pilot, with Miovision as technology vendor.

This initiative builds on prior collaborations with Vanderbilt, NDOT, and TDOT, and will position WeGo to operate high-frequency services more proactively and reliably. The Operations and Finance Committee presented a motion to approve the Smart Grant Contract Award action item. Mr. Hayne seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved it.

Staff recommended that the MTA Board of Directors authorize the MTA CEO to execute agreements as detailed below, with funding available through the SMART Grant as well as other Federal, State, and Local sources:

1. Vanderbilt University
 - Contract Value (SMART Grant work): **\$766,533 for 24 months**
 - Contract Value (task-based services): not-to-exceed **\$1,735,380 for five years**
 - Contract Mechanism: Sole-source agreement
2. SinWaves Inc, dba LYT
 - Contract Value: \$348,100 plus 20% contingency, or \$417,720 for 24 months
 - Contract Mechanism: Piggyback competitive contract
3. Metro Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure
 - Contract Value: \$620,747 plus 20% contingency, or \$744,896 for 24 months
 - Interagency MOU and subrecipient agreement

The Operations & Finance Committee recommended a motion to approve the Smart Grant Contract Award. The motion was seconded by Mr. Haynes and unanimously approved by the board.

VIII. New Initiative & Community Engagement Committee Report: There were no consent agenda items this month.

IX. Election of 2025-2026 MTA Board Officers: Board Secretary & General Counsel Margaret Behm presented and conducted the election:

Currently, Ms. Carr Williams and Mr. Thompson serve as the Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, for the Board.

Ms. Behm opened the floor for nominations. Ms. Dauphin nominated and moved to retain the current officers for FY2025-26; Mr. Haynes seconded the motion, and all board members unanimously approved it.

X. Annual Review of Board Ethics: Board Secretary & General Counsel Margaret Behm presented and reviewed the Code of Ethics and applicable procurement policies and procedures with the

Board. The Code of Ethics 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 annually.

Chair Carr Williams expressed her appreciation for the MTA Board's Annual Review of Board Ethics, noting that it serves as an important reminder not only for board members, but also for WeGo staff and the public. She emphasized that the review demonstrates the Board's commitment to exercising strong ethical standards, receiving annual training, and dedicating the time necessary to fully understand its responsibilities.

In conclusion, Chair Carr Williams thanked Board Secretary and General Counsel Margaret Behm for highlighting the timely preparation of board materials, and she expressed appreciation to Ms. Monica Howse for consistently ensuring that materials are provided to both board members and the public in advance of meetings, allowing members to come prepared and well-informed.

XI. CEO's Report: CEO Bland provided the following report:

1. Through the facilitation of Mayor O'Connell's Office, WeGo met with several social service agencies and advocates to discuss implementation of the low-income free fare program funded under Choose How You Move. The program is preliminarily being branded as "The Journey Pass." We plan to provide the Board with a program design briefing at your August meeting, followed by a recommendation for formal adoption in October, with program launch targeted for November.
2. Earlier this month, WeGo initiated the first round of service expansion using funds from Mayor O'Connell's Choose How You Move dedicated funding initiative, with off-peak improvements to several routes. The transition has gone smoothly, and we continue to add new Operators to relieve pressure on current staff. In June, nearly 2,000 weekend trips were taken on Access on Demand—representing about 22% of all Access on Demand trips—demonstrating the popularity of this service enhancement.
3. CEO Bland joined several WeGo staff at the annual Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) in New York earlier this month, where he participated in the CEO Summit alongside about 25 peers from across the nation. Valuable insights were exchanged on a variety of topics, and WeGo representatives who attended the larger conference found the sessions highly beneficial. Special recognition goes to Kia Lewis, Chair of the Middle Tennessee Chapter of COMTO, whose leadership has driven the chapter to tremendous success.
4. WeGo continues to participate in multiple interorganizational meetings with Metro departments on Choose How You Move implementation. This month, WeGo hosted Mayor O'Connell's new Chief Program Officer, Sabrina Sussman, and her staff for an extensive tour of WeGo facilities. As part of their visit, they attended the graduation ceremony of our latest WeGo Academy class, which produced 22 graduates, the largest class in our history. These results highlight the impact of our increased investments in recruitment and training.
5. On July 9, WeGo staff were joined by Mayor O'Connell and Nashville Farmers Market Director Darrell Lane to promote WeGo Market, a collaboration between WeGo and the Market that brings local vendors to the plaza outside Central every other week. Special thanks to Chair Gail Carr Williams for attending and sharing her remarks. The next WeGo Market is scheduled for August 13.
6. This month, CEO Bland participated in a panel discussion at TSU for the Mandela Washington Fellows Program, alongside Michael Briggs (Mayor's Office), Diana Alarcon and Derek Hagerty (NDOT), and Tanisha Hall (Fairpointe Planning). This program brings young African professionals to the U.S. for academic and leadership training. The panel focused on

Nashville's transportation system and the importance of public engagement, design, and operations in delivering high-quality projects and services.

7. On the RTA side:

- a. Donelson Station Improvements – Design work continues on planned public improvements, including development of a 6-bay transit center, relocation of the access road, utility relocation, installation of a new traffic signal, and quiet zone upgrades at two grade crossings. In August, RTA Board committees will review both the project status and the proposed joint development.
- b. Murfreesboro Park-and-Ride – WeGo successfully closed on the property adjacent to Murfreesboro Transit's new Transit Center to construct a park-and-ride lot. Many thanks to Vince Malone for his perseverance throughout this extended process. Next steps include demolition of existing structures and finalizing the design. Once complete, Route 84 Murfreesboro service will operate from this facility.
- c. Regional Bus Operations Transition – In July, WeGo successfully transitioned regional bus service operations from Gray Line to Anchor with minimal disruptions. Special thanks to Andy Burke, Nick Pecenka, Gabe Burgess, and the Anchor team for ensuring a smooth transition. CEO Bland also extended his appreciation to Chuck Abbott and the Gray Line team for their many years of excellent service to RTA riders.

- XII. **Chair's Report:** Chair Carr Williams expressed her gratitude to the Board for the opportunity to continue serving as Chair for another year, noting that she was humbled by their trust. She stated that she is honored to serve alongside Vice Chair Aron Thompson and fellow board members.

Chair Carr Williams emphasized the importance of collaboration, echoing earlier remarks from Ms. Dauphin. She highlighted the remarkable partnerships with organizations such as Higher Air, NDOT, the Nashville Farmers Market, and other community partners, noting that these efforts strengthen transit for citizens, the agency, and the region as a whole.

She remarked that not every city can point to so many meaningful and successful collaborations, and she believes the outcomes will likely exceed expectations. Chair Carr Williams concluded by expressing pride in the Board's collective work and the spirit of teamwork that makes it possible. She reaffirmed the Board's commitment to continued collaboration, preparation, and hard work to ensure that Nashvillians and Middle Tennesseans have the kind of transit system they need and deserve.

XIII. **Other Business:**

- XIV. **Adjournment:** With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

Attested:

Gail Carr Williams
Chair

Margaret L. Behm
Secretary