

Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority

Board of Directors Meeting

April 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, April 24, 2025.

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

Gail Carr Williams, Chair	Amanda Vandegrift, DCEO of Finance & Admin
Jessica Dauphin, Member	Andy Burke, Chief Operating Officer
Aron Thompson, Member	Vince Malone, Chief of Staff & Administration
Kathryn Hays, Member	Nick Oldham, Chief Safety & Security Officer
Margaret Behm, Board Secretary	Felix Castrodad, Dir. Of Planning & Grants
Stephen Bland CEO	Carl Rokos, Director of Maintenance
Debbie Frank, DCEO of Growth & Dev	Billy Higgins, Capital Grants Administrator
Monica Howse, Sr. Exec. Asst. & Bd. Liaison	Madeline Roberson, Transit Planner Analyst
	Hannah Schaefer, Performance Oversight Mgr.,

A quorum was established, and Board Chair Carr Williams called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Ms. Dauphin moved to approve the February 27th Nashville MTA Board minutes. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved the minutes.

IV. **Resolution Recognizing the Contributions of Former MTA Board Member Janet Miller (M-A-25-018):** Board Chair Carr Williams presented the following item for action:

Ms. Miller was appointed to the MTA Board in December 2014 by Mayor Karl F. Dean, filling the unexpired term of current State Senator Jeff Yarbro. She was reappointed by Mayor David Briley in 2019 and by Mayor Freddie O'Connell in 2024. Throughout her service, Ms. Miller provided exceptional guidance, particularly as Chair of the New Initiatives and Community Engagement Committee, where she helped improve services and facilities for customers. She has also been a strong advocate for public transportation in the Greater Nashville area and is widely respected in the community.

In recognition of her significant contributions to public transportation, the MTA Board formally honored Ms. Miller and granted her lifetime free ride privileges.

Mr. Thompson motioned to approve the Resolution Recognizing the Contributions of Former MTA Board Member Janet Miller; Ms. Dauphin seconded the motion, and the board unanimously approved it.

The audience responded with a round of applause and a standing ovation, followed by group photos with the board.

- V. **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:

- Peter O'Connor
- Richard Geiner
- Darius Knight

Ms. Carr Williams welcomed and introduced Captain Brian Williams, noting that in February, the Board took steps to improve security operations on the transit system. During that same week, Mayor Freddie O'Connell and Chief of Police John Drake announced Captain Williams as MNPD's first-ever "Transit Liaison." Captain Williams will lead the new Transit Police Unit, focusing on the safety and security of WeGo Public Transit patrons. She mentioned that he has already started meeting with staff, touring facilities, and familiarizing himself with operations. She then paused and invited Captain Williams to share any remarks.

Captain Williams expressed that he was honored to be in his current position, highlighting his 24 years of experience in law enforcement. He shared that building this team from the ground up was a unique honor. Since his first day, he has focused on opening communication lines. In the near future, a full staff of officers will be working closely with both the staff and Archangel Security.

VI. 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 Procurement Projects List – No questions

VII. Consent Agenda Items:

- **M-A-25-012** - Approval of Computer Server Storage, Equipment Software & Related Svc.
- **M-A-25-013** - State WeGo Ride Contract Renewal

Ms. Dauphin motioned to approve the consent agenda items. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hays, and the board unanimously approved it.

VIII. Operations & Finance Committee Report: Committee Chair Jessica Dauphin presented the following items for discussion and action:

a. Vehicle Maintenance Audit for 2024 (OF-D-25-003): Director of Maintenance Carl Rokos provided the following update:

The Transit Resource Center (TRC) of the WeGo Public Transit Fleet Maintenance program conducted the first maintenance performance audit in November 2015. This first audit was part of an extensive evaluation, and the findings indicated that annual audits were needed to track maintenance performance over time.

Since then, it has evolved into a phased working plan for transformation within the bus maintenance department at the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA). Based on the initial results from the 2015 audit, the maintenance department has initiated multiple strategies for enhancement, including manpower shifts, equipment purchases, documentation processes, and training updates.

This is the ninth maintenance performance audit conducted by the Transit Resource Center (TRC) of WeGo Public Transit. This audit consisted of a physical inspection of 24 vehicles (16 buses and eight vans) selected at random and a records review and fluids analysis of eight vehicles also selected at random, the same process used during previous audits. In addition, an audit of Gray Line, a contractor to WeGo, was conducted for the third time.

The WeGo Public Transit Fleet Maintenance program has renewed this independent audit practice with TRC to better understand how we have performed over the past year.

The annual fleet assessment has been completed, and WeGo is pleased to report on our annual progress results and the next steps for improving bus maintenance.

There was a general discussion.

- b. **Enterprise Asset Management Contract Award (M-A 25-014):** Performance Oversight Manager Hannah Schaefer presented the following for action:

WeGo's current Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system, implemented in 1990, no longer meets the needs of its growing fleet. The system lacks integration with other enterprise tools, has no mobile capability, and relies heavily on manual processes, leading to inefficiencies in maintenance, data analysis, and resource planning.

In April 2023, WeGo, with the support of consultants, conducted a comprehensive assessment of its asset management practices. The outcome recommended procuring a new EAM system with enhanced features, including asset condition tracking, maintenance planning, analytics, integration capabilities, and mobile accessibility.

A new EAM system will enhance workload management, reduce maintenance and labor costs, improve inventory and warranty tracking, and ultimately improve service reliability and customer experience.

WeGo issued an RFP for the new EAM system on June 19, 2024. Of the four submitted proposals, three were responsive:

- AtomAI Solutions, Inc.
- Interloc Solutions, Inc.
- Trapeze Software Group, Inc.

After a two-phase evaluation process that included cost and software demonstrations, Trapeze Software Group, Inc. was selected as the highest-scoring vendor. Trapeze committed to 7.97% DBE participation and demonstrated strong transit-specific experience and integration potential.

Cost Summary (Trapeze BAFO):

- Implementation: \$3,678,395.86
- SaaS & Subscriptions (10 years): \$5,663,016.01
- Total: \$9,341,411.87
- Not-to-Exceed (with 10% contingency): \$10,275,553.06

During the discussion of the Enterprise Asset Management Contract Award, Ms. Hays inquired about the other bidders' transit experience. Ms. Schaefer explained that while most were industrial firms with some transit components, they were not primarily focused on transit services. Ms. Hays also sought clarification on whether the \$5 million figure referred to the total project cost or a contingency amount and asked about the project timeline, which Ms. Schaefer confirmed would begin around July 1 and span 18 to 24 months.

Mr. Thompson inquired whether the contract included upgrades or if they would be covered under the contingency plan. CEO Bland said anything that goes above the amount of the contract would come back to the board.

Ms. Carr Williams requested that WeGo's general counsel review the final contract.

The Operations & Finance Committee motioned to approve the Enterprise Asset Management Contract Award action item. Ms. Hays seconded the motion, and the board unanimously approved it.

- c. **Reserve Fund Policy (M-A-25-015):** Deputy CEO of Finance and Administration Amanda Vandegrift presented the following for action:

The MTA currently lacks a reserve fund to address unexpected revenue losses or cost increases. Nashville's voter-approved *Choose How You Move* Transit Improvement Program (TIP) includes significant funding to establish this reserve. Funded by a new 0.5% sales surcharge effective February 1, 2025, the reserve is projected to start with \$36.5 million in FY2024–2025 and is expected to reach 30% of MTA's operating budget (\$47.2 million) by FY2026.

Staff recommended that the Operations and Finance Committee recommend to the Board that a formal reserve fund policy be adopted before transferring initial funds. The policy should define the reserve's purpose, minimum balance, approved uses, and replenishment plan. A national review of transit agency policies supports this approach, which aligns with practices in Denver, San Antonio, California, and Texas. Reserve funds are the best practice (per the GFOA) and help manage cash flow, avoid service disruptions, and improve federal grant competitiveness.

A revised draft policy now includes a clause allowing use of reserves (without Board approval) to cover short-term grant funding delays up to 180 days. A board approval of the reserve policy is recommended before the initial fund transfer in the coming weeks.

The Operations and Finance Committee recommended Board approval of the draft Reserve Fund Policy with one amendment: the final sentence of Section 3.0 should read, "*Reserves may be used without Board approval to address any unforeseen state or federal grant timing issues that are less than or equal to 180 days.*"

The Operations and Finance Committee moved to approve the amended Reserve Fund Policy. Ms. Hays seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved it.

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

- a. **Amendment of the FY2025 - 2030 Capital Investment Plan (M-A-25-016):** Capital Grants Administrator Billy Higgins presented the following item for action:

The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority's (MTA) Capital Investment Plan outlines the Authority's capital projects for FY2025- 2029, with a recommended \$434.8 million investment over the five-year period. The plan prioritizes regulatory needs, state of good repair, and growth and expansion, with projects in Year One (FY2025) being firmer in scope and budget. In November 2024, voters approved the Mayor's Choose How You Move (CHYM) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which funds transportation projects in areas such as sidewalks, signals, service, and safety. In March 2025, the Metro Council approved the first CHYM funding allocation to MTA for operating and capital initiatives.

An amendment to the capital plan has increased total funding from \$543.6 million to \$1.51 billion, with total project investments rising from \$434.8 million to \$1.29 billion. The amendment includes new projects such as Transit Security Upgrades, a new Bus Operations & Maintenance Facility, and the Upper Dickson Transit Center. The increase in funding has reduced operating expenditures, freeing up funds for critical state-of-good-repair projects. The amendment also includes funding for the expansion of MTA services, the rehabilitation of various transit centers, and new projects, including the Antioch Transit Center and the Murfreesboro High-Capacity Transit Corridor.

Staff requested that the Board formally adopt the amendment to the attached FY2025-2030 MTA Capital Investment Plan.

The NICE Committee motioned to approve the amendment to the FY2025-2030 Capital Investment Plan as an action item. Ms. Hays seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved it.

- b. **WeGo Link Program Update (NICE-D-005):** Transit Planner Analyst Madeline Roberson provided the following update:

The nMotion service strategic plan recommended creating "Mobility on Demand" zones to provide cost-effective transportation in lower-demand areas, improving connections to fixed-route services, particularly in areas with limited access and poor pedestrian infrastructure.

In 2021, WeGo launched the WeGo Link pilot in the Antioch area, where riders use microtransit (similar to Uber) to connect to transfer locations along fixed routes. Riders pay a \$2 fare (the same as a bus fare), with WeGo covering the rest of the ride up to \$10. Accessible vehicles and cash payment options are also available.

The program has expanded to 16 zones across Davidson County, focusing on areas lacking fixed-route transit but with access to high-frequency corridors, ADA-accessible transfer locations, and areas characterized by high transit demand, including low-income, minority populations, low car ownership, and high employment density.

With the program's success and growth, WeGo plans to expand the service countywide as part of the nMotion plan update.

Ms. Hays asked if we could report on the unique customers in future reports. Ms. Roberson said that we could.

Mr. Thompson asked whether the time of day was being tracked, and Ms. Roberson confirmed that it was.

There was no further discussion.

- c. **Summer 2025 Services Changes and Title VI Analysis (M-A-25-017):** Director of Planning & Grants Felix Castrodad presented the following for action:

The staff has requested approval from the Board of Directors for the proposed Summer 2025 service changes, as documented in this item, for implementation. The Access on Demand expansion and the implementation of the WeGo Link Zones will take effect on May 31, 2025. Proposed fixed-route changes will take effect on July 6, 2025.

There was a general discussion.

The NICE Committee motioned to approve the Summer 2025 Service Changes and Title VI Analysis action item. Ms. Dauphin seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved it.

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

1. Court proceedings continue regarding Mayor O'Connell's *Choose How You Move* initiative. The State Appeals Court heard the case on March 6 and issued its decision within the past two weeks, upholding nearly the entire program. Only about 1%—specifically portions related to affordable housing and park development—was struck down. While plaintiffs may still

appeal to the State Supreme Court, we are proceeding with project and service rollouts funded through the program.

2. The Metropolitan Council approved a supplemental appropriation for *Choose How You Move* initiatives, funded through FY2024- 25 half-cent sales tax revenue collected from February to June. The MTA received \$57.28 million, including:
 - \$36.47 million to establish an operating reserve
 - \$6 million for expanded operations and enhanced security
 - \$14.8 million in capital funding for fleet expansion, security upgrades, and initial planning for the SoBro Transit Center and a new Bus Operations & Maintenance Facility
3. Mayor O’Connell has appointed Sabrina Sussman as Chief Program Officer for *Choose How You Move*. Ms. Sussman brings deep expertise in transportation policy, having most recently served as Chief of Staff to USDOT Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg, and has held senior roles in both the public and private sectors. We’re excited to partner with her to advance the program.
4. Mayor O’Connell will deliver his State of Metro Address next week and submit his proposed FY2025- 26 Operating Budget to the Metropolitan Council for consideration shortly thereafter. Our total operating budget request, considering the supplemental appropriation, is \$126,547,600. The Council Budget hearing is scheduled for Thursday, May 15, at 4:30 pm in the Council Chambers, and we welcome your attendance.
5. As part of budget discussions, WeGo is reviewing how funds will be allocated to support a dedicated transit policing unit within MNPd. Meetings with the Mayor’s Office, Metro Finance, and the Police Department have explored various implementation options. A phased transition is expected—from current secondary employment arrangements to a fully staffed transit police unit.
6. Over the past few months, CEO Bland has participated in several public forums and panels, including events hosted by the Partnership for Miami, Women’s Transportation Seminar (Nashville Chapter), Leadership Nashville, Leadership Middle Tennessee, the Transit Alliance Board, the Tennessee Smart Mobility Expo, and the Connect Middle Tennessee group.
7. In March, Nashville welcomed a large group of U.S. Congressional staffers for a professional development conference. As part of their visit, about 35 attendees toured North Nashville, the Dr. Ernest Rip Patton, Jr. North Nashville Transit Center, and the East Bank to explore current and future transit opportunities. Thanks to Gabe Burgess and Kia Lewis for organizing and leading an excellent tour, which received enthusiastic feedback from the participants.
8. CEO Bland participated in our State Transit Association’s annual trip to Washington, D.C., meeting with Senators Blackburn and Hagerty, as well as Congressman Rose, to advocate for continued support of our transit efforts.
9. One of the early *Choose How You Move* initiatives includes a fare assistance program for low-income residents. Planning meetings have been held internally and with Metro partners. In the coming weeks, we’ll meet with local human services agencies to align eligibility verification. Community input sessions will follow, and the MTA Board will be briefed over the next few months. The goal is to launch the program later this year.
10. Earlier this month, WeGo’s Bus Operator and Maintenance Rodeo teams represented WeGo and Nashville at the International Rodeo in Austin, Texas. Results will be shared at the May board meeting, but our team’s performance was outstanding and reflective of their dedication and skill.

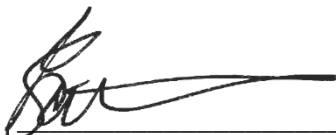
11. On the RTA side:

- a. WeGo continues to collaborate with developers on the Donelson Station upgrade project. This month, the RTA Board awarded design contracts for upgrades, including six new bus bays, a signalized intersection at Donelson Pike, driveway relocation, and quiet zones at nearby crossings. We expect to finalize a small land acquisition from the Nashville and Eastern Rail Authority in the next month or two, pending appraisal.
- b. Andy Burke and other staff have been evaluating proposals from commuter bus providers for RTA Regional services. This month, following a competitive evaluation process, the RTA Board awarded the regional commuter bus contract to Anchor Bus, replacing the long-time provider, Gray Line. The Anchor's strong technical proposal and competitive pricing stood out during the selection process.
- c. WeGo continues to work slowly but surely toward establishing a park-and-ride facility in Murfreesboro. The state has approved the transfer of the site from a dissolved church, and the closing is being scheduled. Engineering proposals for demolition and site prep are underway.
- d. We are in the process of developing the FY2025- 26 RTA operating budget, necessitating increases from several of our partner jurisdictions. The Wilson County Corridor meeting was productive, and a similar meeting in Rutherford County is being scheduled.

In conclusion, CEO Bland introduced and welcomed Osman Baker to the Engineering and Construction group as a project manager. Osman is a TSU graduate with a degree in civil and environmental engineering and has experience with both private firms and the Illinois Department of Transportation. His past work with CTA and Metra will be invaluable as we accelerate capital investment under *Choose How You Move*.

- XI. Chair's Report:** Chair Carr Williams thanked everyone for a productive meeting and motioned to adjourn.
- XII. Other Business:** There was no further business to come before this Board.
- XIII. Adjournment:** With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Attested:



Gail Carr Williams
Chair

Margaret L. Behm
Secretary