



MINUTES
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
AUGUST 21, 2013

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority Board of Directors was held in the meeting room at Music City Central at 400 Charlotte Avenue on August 21, 2013. A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by RTA Chair Karl Dean, Metro Nashville and Davidson County Mayor.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chair Dean entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2013 meeting. Proper motion was made and seconded. The vote of approval was unanimous and the minutes were adopted as presented.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.
- IV. **MARKETING REPORT:** Committee Chair Governor's Appointee Kelly Dannenfeler stated that she asked Ed Cole to brief the committee on his transit experiences on his recent trip to Europe. He discussed connections to different modes, way finding materials, and the benefit of helpful staff. Mr. Cole also suggested that we should approach marketing and way finding from the tourist perspective because everyone who rides transit for the first time in a region is a tourist. If we plan in this way, we will serve our visitors and our residents very well.
- Continuing, Chair Dannenfeler reported that Ms. Morehead provided marketing updates on several Music City Star related projects including the 4th of July train, Game Day Express, and the start of services to the Wilson County Fair.
- In closing, she thanked Mayor Craighead and Mayor Hutto for their participation last Saturday greeting customers on the Music City Star train ride to the fair.
- V. **OPERATIONS REPORT:** Committee Chair Portland Mayor Ken Wilber reported that the Fiscal Year 2013 numbers show an excellent year with a total of 802,273 rides provided by RTA to riders in Middle Tennessee. This is a 2.6% increase over FY 2012. The RTA Bus express and shuttle services boasted double digit increases of 21.9%, with the Clarksville service having the largest increase at 38.1%.

The combined public transportation report for fiscal year 2013 showed a 2.1% increase for Nashville MTA and RTA public transportation services with total ridership at 10,456,094. This is a new record for these services. Additionally, the combined public transportation numbers for Middle Tennessee for FY 2013 is 11,653,945 rides. This is a 1.2% increase over FY 2012. This combined ridership

includes ridership for RTA and MTA as well as the Murfreesboro ROVER local bus service, the Franklin Transit local bus service, and the Clarksville Transit local bus service. These numbers reinforce the need for public transportation in Middle Tennessee.

A discussion ensued on the ridership numbers for the Music City Star and the need for the passenger siding at the Martha Station which will allow staff to reevaluate the schedules for the Star. This is necessary as many passengers are working adjusted hours and also some Metro and State buildings have been relocated and their employees are now outside of the Nashville downtown area.

The operations committee also received an update on the 4th of July service which was resoundingly successful with another sellout of 940 tickets. Even though it was rainy, about two-thirds of those passengers rode to see the fireworks downtown.

Jim McAteer reported on the Title VI Plan. The plan is slated to be brought before the Operations Committee for final approval in September.

In conclusion, Chair Wilber noted that all in all, it has been another successful year for RTA and for public transportation in Middle Tennessee.

VI. FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT: Committee Chair Rutherford County Mayor Ernest Burgess presented the following items to the Board for their consideration:

- a. **Adoption of FY 2014 Budget (A-13-012):** The budget was reviewed at the last Finance Committee meeting. This budget is a continuation of the present budget with a few minor changes including a 3% increase with the Gray Line services and a 3% increase with the MTA contract for services. The Finance Committee recommends to the Board that they approve and adopt the proposed FY 2014 budgets for the annual regional bus operations and the annual Music City Star commuter rail operations as presented. Motion was seconded. There were no further comments and the vote of approval was unanimous.
- b. **RTA-MTA Contract for State EasyRide Program (A-13-013):** For several years Nashville MTA and RTA have participated in the Easy Ride program with the State of Tennessee where both agencies provide transit rides to State employees and the State reimburses both MTA and RTA on a cost per ride basis. MTA has been and will continue to be the principle party in this contract with the State of Tennessee and, by agreement, will pass through RTA's portion of the contract revenue for the rides provided through RTA transit services at a cost of \$2.70 per ride.

The Finance Committee has thoroughly reviewed this contract and recommends to the Board their approval for RTA to enter into an agreement with MTA that calls for MTA to reimburse RTA for Easy Ride trips provided to State employees participating in the Easy Ride program at a rate of \$2.70 per ride for a period of one year, beginning July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. Proper motion was made and seconded. There were no comments and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- c. **Grant Application Resolution (A-13-014):** Every year we have many opportunities for grants for which we can apply. The list included in this action item includes *5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funds, State Operating Assistance, JARC/New Freedom, CMAQ Funds, and STP Funds*, all of which we have been applying for and, in certain cases, we are in receipt of some of these grant awards.

The purpose of this resolution is to give authority to our RTA staff to be able to be in a position to submit grant applications as they become available and we find a need.

The Finance Committee recommends to the Board that they adopt Resolution #14-01 (included at the end of these minutes); that they authorize the application for 5307 capital dollars and state/local match; and that they authorize the submittal of the applications for State Operating Assistance, JARC, and CMAQ/STP for the amounts indicated within the action item. Proper motion was made and seconded.

It was asked if the CMAQ total given was just federal dollars; and, it was verified that the CMAQ total reflects both CMAQ funds and local match. Further, it was noted that the local match for all of these grants comes from varied local sources depending on the type of grant. There was no further discussion and the vote of approval was unanimous.

At this time, Chair Karl Dean excused himself from the meeting and asked Vice-Chair Kim McMillan to reside for the remainder of the meeting.

- d. **Mt. Juliet Property Update (A-013-015):** Over the past several committee meetings there has been discussion about the property that RTA owns at the Mt. Juliet station and the interest the City of Mt. Juliet has in putting a park on that property. In the ongoing discussions between staff members and the city officials there has been some specific discussion about how this might happen. At the last committee meeting, there was follow up discussion and it was felt that this may yet be a little premature to make a long term commitment on how the RTA may or may not use that property. We are going to potentially need that area for future parking and other needs as time moves forward.

It is the consensus of the Finance Committee, and our recommendation to the Board, that we defer any action on this for ninety days to allow time to work with the City of Mt Juliet on a site plan for development of the property that will meet approval of the Planning Department. Proper motion was made and seconded. There was no further discussion and the vote of approval was unanimous.

- VII. **CHAIR'S REPORT:** Vice-Chair Kim McMillan deferred this report since Chair Dean had to leave early.
- VIII. **CEO'S REPORT:** CEO Paul Ballard deferred his time to General Manager Lora Baulsir.
- IX. **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:** General Manager Lora Baulsir gave an update on the train accident that happened at the end of July when a LoJac truck was on

the tracks and the train hit it. There was about \$34,000 of damage done to the cab car and the work is now almost completed and the cab car will be back into service soon. We are working with the insurance company to file a claim with their insurance company.

On a sad note, we lost a very strong Music City Star supporter a few weeks ago, Sheila Varga,. She had ridden the Star since day one and was always very active in all the train work, attended the anniversary events, and was a very vocal supporter. Sheila lost her battle with cancer and we are planning to do a memorial to her at the Mt. Juliet station since that is where she boarded.

A couple of months ago we brought before the Board an action item for track rehabilitation work and that work will start in the next few weeks. The process will be fairly long as it is over one million dollars' worth of work replacing rail ties and rail. Once completed, this will help with the smoothness of the ride and we will be able to increase some of the speed on the train, with a reduction in slow orders. This work will be done in-between the train operations in order to not delay any of the normal train services.

The Wilson County Fair train service was a great success. Two-hundred and thirty-two (232) passengers actually rode the train last Saturday (August 17). Mayor Hutto and Mayor Craighead rode the train and greeted everyone along with Representative Mark Pody and some of the Lebanon council members. Everyone was really excited about it. For the upcoming weekend, we have sold, thus far, one hundred and sixty-nine (169) tickets.

The emergency drill that we are required to do every two years will happen this year on September 12th. The exercise will simulate a derailment due to a possible terrorist activity in Wilson County. This will give emergency responders a chance to test their skills; and, we can test our emergency plans to make sure we are prepared should anything like this happen.

The Friday night train is going really well this year. Last week we had three hundred and thirty-seven (337) people ride the train.

In closing, Ms. Baulsir reminded the members of the Board to send her their conflict of interest forms. They were sent out a couple of weeks ago and we need to make sure we have everyone's updated form.

X. OTHER BUSINESS: There was no other business.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Respectfully,

Paula Mansfield

Governor Appointee
RTA Secretary