



**AGENDA**  
**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

**BOARD MEETING**

10:00 AM WEDNESDAY, April 21, 2010

**1101 Kermit Drive, First Floor  
Nashville, Tennessee**

1. Call to Order – Establish Quorum
2. Approval of March 17, 2010 Board Minutes
3. Public Comments
4. Marketing Committee Report – Lebanon Mayor Philip Craighead
5. Operations Committee Report – Robertson County Mayor Howard Bradley
6. Finance & Audit Committee Report – Brentwood Commissioner Paul Webb
7. Chair's Report – Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson
8. Vice-Chair's Report – Gallatin Mayor Jo Ann Graves
9. Chief Administrative Officer's Report – Lora Baulsir
10. CEO's Report – Paul J. Ballard
11. Other Business
12. Adjournment



**MINUTES**  
**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**  
**MARCH 17, 2010**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Regional Transportation Authority Board of Directors was held in the first floor conference room at 1101 Kermit Drive on March 17, 2010. A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by Chairman Rogers Anderson.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Chair Rogers Anderson entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2010 meeting. Motion was made and seconded. The vote of approval was unanimous and the minutes were adopted.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.
- IV. **FINANCE & AUDIT REPORT:** Franklin Mayor Schroer reported that the committee reviewed the budget through January 31<sup>st</sup> and the budget is on track. Ridership is up on the Relax and Ride and the trains; both are above projections. He reported that the nine hundred thousand dollars from the Federal Highway Administration had not yet been received. However, as of last Thursday (March 11) all the payables on the train that were due have been paid as a result of receiving the federal stimulus funds. The committee worked hard and diligently to get this done.

Continuing, Mayor Schroer reported that the committee is beginning to look at the 2011 budget. He noted that budgets for this fiscal year are going to be difficult both locally and across the state and also extremely difficult for the RTA. With the known current funding levels, it is anticipated that next year the RTA will have a two million dollar short fall. Before a balanced budget can be approved, the funding sources must be identified. It will be necessary to identify two million dollars between now and July 1<sup>st</sup> to continue operating as we are operating today. A request for additional funding from Metro Nashville, Wilson County, Mt. Juliet and Lebanon has been made since they are the main users of the train, which is where most of the money is going. Additionally, staff is working on ways to identify additional federal money. Mayor Schroer wants to encourage those of us who feel comfortable with it to write a letter to our legislators requesting their support and expressing how important we feel this is for our region.

In closing, Chair Schroer reported that the line of credit with SunTrust had been approved. Bank of America will no longer be involved and all financial business of the RTA will be with SunTrust.

- V. **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:** Mt. Juliet City Manager Randy Robertson reported that ridership on the Music City Star had reached its highest daily average of 849 and that a third rail car had been added to the 7:30 a.m. train. Ridership for the Gallatin/Hendersonville route continues to grow

with over 25,400 passengers for the month. The Murfreesboro Express route continues to grow well with nearly six thousand passenger trips reported. Wi-Fi will start on the 96X route beginning in March. Continuing, he noted that the Franklin and Brentwood route, as well as the Spring Hill and Thompson's Station route, shows steady ridership increases with a combined 1,938 passenger trips. He noted that a ridership survey is being conducted and in response to that some slight changes will be made to the schedule. Additionally, there will be a change with the Music City Star downtown shuttle at the end of March. The shuttle will be replaced with another route, the Music City Circuit, and this will produce a one hundred thousand dollar per year savings for the RTA.

- VI. **CHAIR'S REPORT:** Chair Rogers Anderson acknowledged Ed Cole's years of service and congratulated him on his new position with Transit Alliance. He then gave the floor to Ed Cole. Mr. Cole reiterated Commissioner Nicely's commitment to public transportation and introduced Joe Carpenter who will act as the Commissioner's alternate at these meetings. Mr. Carpenter is currently the Assistant Chief Engineer at TDOT for design construction. He will assume responsibility for the commissioner on April 15. Various members of the board offered their congratulatory remarks to Mr. Cole.
- VII. **VICE CHAIR'S REPORT:** Gallatin Mayor Jo Ann Graves reported that the corridor study is coming together and there are three types of mass transit being considered – commuter rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit. These are being evaluated and they are in a very preliminary stage trying to make sure that they are touching all the communities that want to be touched and they are trying to look at cost considerations and redevelopment around the stops. There will be more information on this in the coming months.
- VIII. **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT:** Ms. Baulsir presented the following report:
- a. **EasyRide Program Update (I-10-006):** Ms. Baulsir reported that there is a transportation fringe benefit that allows employers and employees a pre-tax credit for using public transit and the current benefit is \$230 a month. Starting in 2005, she explained, MTA developed the EasyRide program and hired Eric Beyer as the program manager. Initially MTA fixed route service and bike/transit riding were promoted. With the administrative oversight of the RTA by MTA that began in late 2008, the promotion of the Relax & Ride express buses, the Music City Star, vanpool and carpool services were also included. These products are paid for or tracked in several different ways and this flexibility offers the opportunity to purchase fare media in the quantities and types as needed or the convenience of receiving a single invoice for services provided.

Vanderbilt was the leader in getting this program started and they offer this benefit to their employees as a way to manage their parking problem. Between MTA and RTA, Vanderbilt averages up to 45,000 monthly trips for their employees. Many of these are commuter bus riders and train riders. Vanderbilt also encourages vanpools because they have employees that work shifts that are not conducive to riding the bus or the train.

Other successful businesses that are using this program include the State that has almost 6,000 employees enrolled in their program and Metro that has 1,800 employees enrolled.

Continuing, Mrs. Baulsir noted that the Federal Government has been a customer for quite a while. However, many of the court employees and the Corps of Engineers' employees are about to lose their parking because of the convention center being built and now have a more pressing interest in public transit. They have asked us to come in and to work with their employees to help them get signed up for the EasyRide program. They have shown a lot of enthusiasm and interest for this program and most especially for the express service to Hendersonville and Gallatin and the new Franklin services. We already have a lot of train riders with the Corps of Engineers. We have seen a spike in interest in vanpool programs because there are several employers in the area that are not right on a convenient route. Again, one of the reasons for the success of this program is the flexibility we offer employers based on their individual needs and any budget or technology restrictions. Ms Baulsir encouraged the board to feel free to contact her with any potential customers.

- IX. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT:** Paul Ballard stated that he has been involved with RTA for eight years and he feels that RTA is in the best position he has ever seen it for making progress - with Ed Cole accepting his new position with the Transit Alliance, the leadership on the board, the well functioning committees that are in place – he is very optimistic and feels that RTA is well poised for wherever we go from here to expand public transportation. In spite of the challenges in the budget report, RTA has made tremendous progress and he sees great progress in the future for RTA and the region. Concluding his comments on the budget report, he stated that we are very fortunate to have a budget committee under Mayor Schroer who has worked hard and has spent a long time studying these numbers.

Mr. Ballard encouraged the board to keep transportation in the forefront in their conversations as they have contact with federal officials from time to time, elected officers and representatives. As a management team we are going to continue to work on these issues and continue to look for alternative sources of funding. This coming year will probably be the toughest. The management team's budget focus will be in three areas as we move forward:

- 1) Continue to pursue federal funds from any programs that can be accessed.
- 2) Partner with others to pursue dedicated funds locally.
- 3) Continue to control expenses every way possible.

- X. OTHER BUSINESS:** There was no other business.

- XI. ADJOURNMENT:** There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25a.m.

Respectfully,

*Debbie Frank*

Debbie Frank  
RTA Secretary