



ROCKFORD MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT

Board of Trustees Annual Board Meeting #992 Minutes
Monday, June 24, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

RMTD Conference Room
520 Mulberry Street
Rockford, IL 61101

*The RMTD Board of Trustees Meeting was Live Streamed on Zoom and Recorded.
Live Streaming and Recorded Meeting information can be found on RMTD's website at www.RMTD.org

ROLL CALL:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Herbert L. Johnson – Board of Trustees, Chairman
Stephen K. Ernst – Board of Trustees, Vice Chairman
David Sidney – Board of Trustees, Secretary/Treasurer

STAFF:

Michael Stubbe – Executive Director
Susan Campbell – Director of Human Resources & Administration
Ron Schoepfer – Director of Finance
Paula Hughes – Grants & Procurement Manager
Ron Priddy – Paratransit Operations Manager
Cedrick Ketton – Fixed Route Operations Manager
Drex McCalvin – Risk & Safety Manager
Orlando Toatley – Marketing & Communications Specialist
Lawrence Tennial – Facilities Manager
George Orth – Maintenance Manager
Erin Jenkins – Executive Assistant & Assistant Board Secretary
Tak Chow - IT

GUEST(S)/PUBLIC PRESENT:

Jeffrey DiBenedetto, *DiBenedetto & Associates*

CALL TO ORDER:

The Board Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Board Chairman asked for and received a motion to approve the agenda for June 24, 2024. With no further discussion, the motion was seconded by the Vice Chairman. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The Minutes of the May 20, 2024 RMTD Board of Trustees Meeting were reviewed. The Board Vice Chairman asked for and received a motion to approve the Minutes of May 20, 2024. With no further discussion, the motion was seconded by the Chairman. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

A-COMMUNICATIONS:

No Report

B-MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC:

No Matters by the Public

C-REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

No Report

D-RECONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS:

No Report

E-CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS:

E-1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

(a) General Update

The Executive Director acknowledged Mr. Steve Ernst, RMTD Board of Trustees Vice Chairman, and stated this will be his last RMTD Board Meeting. The Vice Chairman has fulfilled his term which expires the end of June, 2024. The Executive Director stated he appreciates the Vice Chairman's leadership and thanked him for his support and dedicated service to the RMTD Board for the last 8 years. The Executive Director recognized a few accomplishments RMTD has achieved during his tenure on the RMTD Board. The Vice Chairman thanked the RMTD Staff and Executive Director for all of their hard work and stated he was proud to serve as a Board member for such a great organization.

(b) 2024 Illinois End of Session Report for RMTD – Prepared by Zephyr Government Strategies

The Executive Director presented a 2024 End of Session Report that was prepared by Zephyr Government Strategies. A discussion ensued regarding State and Federal funding program updates.

E-2 FINANCE

(a) Payment of Bills:

- Williams & McCarthy/Services Rendered through May 23, 2024
- AGHL Law/Services Rendered through April 30 & May 31, 2024
The above payment of bill(s) was presented for the Board of Trustees' review.
- Approval of Accounts Payable Invoices

The Accounts Payable Invoices totaling \$727,953.81 were presented for the Board of Trustees' review and approval. The Board Secretary/Treasurer asked for and received a motion to authorize the payment of the accounts payable invoices totaling \$727,953.81. The motion was seconded by the Board Chairman. With no further discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

(b) Approval of Unaudited Financial Statements for March & April, 2024

The Executive Director presented the unaudited Financial Statements for March & April, 2024 for the Board's review. The Board Secretary/Treasurer asked for and received a motion to approve the unaudited financial statements for March & April, 2024. The motion was seconded by the Board Vice Chairman. With no further discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

- (c) Pension Portfolio Review for period ending June 13, 2024 and Pension Investment Statement for month ending May 31, 2024

Mr. Jeffrey DiBenedetto presented the Portfolio Review Summary for period ending June 13, 2024 to the Board of Trustees for their review.

The RMTD Pension Trust Statement of Account Summary for month ending May 31, 2024 was also presented to the Board of Trustees for their review.

E-3 OPERATIONS

- (a) Fixed Route Ridership Statistics Report for May, 2024
And Demand Response Ridership Statistics Report for April, 2024

The Executive Director presented the Fixed Route Ridership Statistics Report for May, 2024 and Demand Response Ridership Statistics Report for April, 2024.

E-4 MAINTENANCE - VEHICLES & FACILITIES

- (a) Report on Fixed Route Buses & Paratransit Vehicles for May, 2024

The Executive Director presented the report on fixed route buses and paratransit vans for May, 2024.

- (b) Maintenance & Facilities Projects Update Report

The Executive Director presented a Maintenance and Facilities update report to the Board of Trustees. An update was provided and a discussion ensued regarding the charging infrastructure, paratransit van order, fixed route bus order, facility expansion project, Telephone system replacement, Paratransit Software project and shelter install. The Executive Director noted the Tripspark Paratransit Software project continues moving forward to ensure all of the elements are identified to transition from the old software.

- (c) Facility Expansion Update

The Executive Director stated a Pre-Bid Meeting was conducted and a walk through with the contractors took place thereafter. He noted there has been a positive response and questions will be compiled from the contractors and disseminated to all. He noted the original date of July 16 for bids to be due will likely be pushed to the following week due to the scope of the project.

E-5 HUMAN RESOURCES

- (a) RMTD Claims History for May, 2024

The Executive Director presented the RMTD claims history for May, 2024 for the Board of Trustees' review.

E-6 MARKETING

- (a) Approval of Advertising Contract(s)

The Marketing & Communications Specialist presented the following advertising contracts for Board approval:

- Rockford's Best Currency Exchange
- Ocreative/Academy of Pediatrics
- Janesville Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Board of Trustees reviewed the advertising contract(s) noted above. The Board Vice Chairman asked for and received a motion to approve the advertising contract(s). The motion was seconded by the Board Secretary/Treasurer. With no further discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

(b) Discussion (and take action as needed) to Approve of Making the U-Pass Pilot Program Permanent

The Executive Director stated in December of 2022, the RMTD Board approved a one year-pilot program for a new 30-day unlimited pass program for post-secondary education students in the Rockford area called the U-Pass. In January of 2023 RMTD Staff implemented the program into its system, making the pass available at all physical locations and virtually through the Token Transit application. The original intent of the pass program was to help relieve the financial burden of transportation for students in the area while promoting the use of public transit to a younger ridership demographic.

Since its introduction in January 2023, RMTD has seen positive ridership growth over the first year and one-half of the U-Pass program, particularly during months where traditional semester classes are in session and no extended break is in place. From January 2023 through May 2024, a total of 5189 rides have been taken using the U-pass, which is an average of 324 rides per month. The total revenue collected from the purchase of the U-Pass over the same period totaled \$5076.

In comparing ridership from the first semester of the program in spring 2023 to the second semester in fall 2023, average monthly ridership increased 40% (230 rides to 322 rides/month). In comparing ridership from the fall 2023 semester to the spring 2024 semester, average monthly ridership has increased 31% (322 rides to 422 rides/month).

In RMTD Staff's efforts to receive additional information on ridership from educational institutions, RMTD staff created a survey gauging student's prospective on public transportation and the U-Pass Program. Rock Valley College was the only contributor of the survey and results from students are attached. The following is an overview of the survey results:

- 49 RVC students completed the full survey.
- 8 students or 16% of respondents use RMTD to get to class.
- 16 students or 33% of respondents stated they've used RMTD before.
- 41 students or 84% of respondents stated they would use RMTD if it were free.
- 31 students or 63% of respondents stated sustainable transportation is important or very important to them.
- 16 students or 33% of respondents stated they've heard of the \$27/month U-Pass.
- 5 students or 31% of respondents, who have heard of the U-Pass stated they've used it.

Based on the positive growth of the U-Pass ridership to date, along with the potential for future ridership growth through further focused marketing efforts to post-secondary education students in the Rockford area, RMTD Staff is recommending the Board adopt the U-Pass as a permanent pass program. The Board Vice Chairman asked for and received a motion to approve making the U-Pass permanent. The motion was seconded by the Board Secretary/Treasurer. With no further discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

E-7 GRANTS

(a) Approval of Resolution No. R-24-06 – FTA 5307 Grant Application

The Grants Specialist presented Resolution No. R-24-06 requesting authorization for the filing and execution of this application for FTA 5307 Funds.

She noted this grant will utilize \$6,270,413 in Section 5307 Funds. The Projects include Preventive Maintenance, ADA, Operating Assistance and replacing Support Vehicle and miscellaneous Equipment.

The Board Vice Chairman asked for and received a motion to approve Resolution No. R-24-06 FTA 5307 Grant Application. The motion was seconded by the Board Secretary/Treasurer. With no further discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

E-8 SAFETY & TRAINING

(a) Safety & Training Update Report - May, 2024

The Safety & Training Update Data Report from May, 2024 was presented to the Board of Trustees for their review.

*NOTE: The Executive Director requested E-9 (a & b) be switched on the agenda having (b) be approved first.

E-9 OTHER BUSINESS

(b) Approval of RMTD Service Animal Policy

The Executive Director stated the purpose of the RMTD Service Animal Policy is to define service animal and Rockford Mass Transit Districts policy and procedures for service animals on RMTD vehicles and in facilities regarding the public. Public transit providers must follow the DOT definition when assessing whether to accommodate an animal. While most service animals are dogs, DOT's definition recognizes the possibility of other animals on fixed route, demand response, paratransit, and in facilities. He noted it is the policy of Rockford Mass Transit District to permit service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in RMTD vehicles and facilities subject to exceptions as stated in the Policy. A discussion ensued regarding the definition of a service animal as well as procedure if engaging an individual with an animal who has entered an RMTD vehicle or facility. The Vice Chairman asked for and received a motion to approve the RMTD Service Animal Policy. The motion was seconded by the Secretary/Treasurer. With no further discussion, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

(a) Approval of Updates to the RMTD Code of Conduct

The Executive Director stated in order to facilitate and provide a safer environment for our passengers, RMTD had developed and updated a rider conduct policy outlining the expected code of conduct from riders. This policy also enables RMTD Supervision and METRO Security to take an immediate response in dealing with unacceptable, illegal, and sometimes dangerous behaviors while on RMTD property or in our buses, thus ensuring the safety of all passengers. RMTD staff is requesting Board approval to approve additional updates to this policy (such as Service Animals) whereas RMTD may post and publish it for rider awareness and increased passenger safety. The Secretary/Treasurer asked for and received a motion to approve the RMTD Code of Conduct and Suspension/Exclusion Policy and its updates. With no further discussion, the motion was seconded by the Vice Chairman. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

(c) Approval to Updates to Accounts Payable Policy

The Executive Director reminded the Board of Trustees that on April 27, 2020, the RMTD Board of Trustees approved temporary electronic board approval of purchases during the "Stay at Home" order issued by Governor Pritzker. On August 24, 2020, the RMTD Board of Trustees extended this procedure for the duration of the COVID-19

Pandemic. He noted that because the approval process of invoices at Board Meetings had worked very well, the procedure was made a permanent policy. The Executive Director stated the proposed updates of Accounts Payable Invoices Policy increases the dollar amount from \$10,000 to any invoice over \$25,000 and shall be taken to the Board for approval prior to payment. This Policy will supersede section 6 in the Procurement Manual. The Executive Director stated this change will be reflected in the next Procurement Manual update.

Therefore, RMTD Staff is requesting the Board of Trustees approve the updates to the Accounts Payable Invoices over \$25,000 Policy.

The Vice Chairman asked for and received a motion to approve the updated Accounts Payable Invoices Policy. With no further discussion, the motion was seconded by the Secretary/Treasurer. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

- (d) Executive Session to discuss to discuss collective bargaining matters pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); and to discuss litigation matters pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act

At approximately 4:05 p.m., the Board Chairman asked for and received a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining matters pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); and to discuss litigation matters pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act. With no further discussion, the motion was seconded by the Board Secretary/Treasurer. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

At approximately 4:24 PM, the Board of Trustees Meeting reconvened into General Session.

E-10 NEXT MEETING SCHEDULE

The next RMTD Board of Trustees Meeting will be on July 22, 2024 at 3:30 PM.

F-ORDER OF ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and received to adjourn. The motion was seconded and passed. The Board Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Jenkins

Erin Jenkins
Executive Assistant and Board Meeting Secretary
Rockford Mass Transit District

