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**Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority
550 West Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, Illinois
Minutes of the Open Session Meeting of the Pace Board of Directors
March 20, 2024**

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met in open session on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace corporate headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois, pursuant to notice.

Chairman Kwasneski led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Kwasneski called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Roll Call

Directors physically present: Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Director Schielke moved and Director McLeod seconded a motion to allow Directors Hastings and Noak to attend via phone. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. Directors Hastings and Noak joined the meeting via phone immediately following the vote.

Directors absent: None.

SBD #24-09 – Resolution approving the open session meeting minutes of February 21, 2024.

Director Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded a motion to approve the Resolution. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Public Comment

None.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman Kwasneski recognized the women who work for Pace during Women’s History Month, pointing out that a lot of senior staff and Directors are women. He reported on how

Richard A. Kwasneski, *Chairman*
Rachel Arfa Christopher S. Canning Terrance M. Carr David B. Guerin Kyle R. Hastings Thomas D. Marcucci
William D. McLeod John D. Noak Jeffery D. Schielke Erin Smith Linda Soto Terry R. Wells
Board of Directors
Melinda J. Metzger, *Executive Director*

national Transit Employee Appreciation Day encouraged riders to thank transit employees when using public transit and thanked all Pace employees.

Chairman Kwasneski reported that he and Melinda continue to meet with the legislators about funding issues and they are getting good responses. Pace is working on messaging with Metra and reaching out to Councils of Government. He is pleased that members of Congress are eager to help Pace with projects; Pace was recently awarded community project funding from Congressmen Ramirez, Jackson, Schneider, and Foster, and Congresswoman Underwood.

Directors' Reports

Director Arfa said she was proud Pace's Executive Director is a woman, especially in transportation where women are underrepresented. She is proud to serve with Directors Smith and Soto. She thanked all women who work for Pace for paving the way for future female workers.

Director Canning invited the Directors to attend the Joint Meeting of Pace's Planning and Infrastructure Committees on March 22, Driving Innovation progress, an analysis of 2023 Ridership, and Pace's Facilities Study will be discussed.

Director Schielke reported on a new partnership between Batavia High School and senior living communities. Students pay weekly visits to senior centers to answer senior citizens' questions about technology. Chairman Kwasneski suggested incorporating Pace into those programs to show seniors how to use Pace apps and app-based services like RAP.

Director Smith wished everyone a happy Women's History Month. She is proud to serve with the women on this Board and to see so many females leading Pace, which is unusual. In her professional and political career, she was oftentimes the only woman at the table. She encouraged more women to seek elected positions.

Director Soto acknowledged the progress women have made in the world today. She thanked her family for encouraging her from a young age to be anything she wanted to be. Director Soto praised the informative postcard on expanded Round Lake Area On Demand service that Pace mailed throughout the region it serves. This is important for people who do not know that the program is open to everyone, not just seniors and paratransit.

Executive Director's Report

Melinda Metzger said she is grateful to work alongside a talented group of women and was proud of the female leaders on the Board who lend their expertise to public transportation. Melinda shared that when she started her career, there were no women working at Pace predecessor companies. Pace celebrated International Women's Day with a panel discussion. Pace's female leaders shared stories about their careers and what motivates them at work.

Melinda reported that Pace celebrated Transit Employee Appreciation Day with posters, audio announcements on buses, and thank you messages on bus headers. She thanked frontline employees for putting customers first every day.

Melinda presented the 2023 Pacesetter “employee of the year” Awards. The team award went to individuals who accelerated the interviewing, hiring, and training of 60 new employees to launch the Pulse Dempster Line last fall. A third of employees at Northwest Division Garage are new.

Melinda reported that the Des Plaines Chamber of Commerce and Industry awarded Pace its Community Enhancement Award for how Pulse Dempster station designs strengthened accessibility and enhanced corridors. The Illinois General Assembly also formally recognized Pulse Dempster in House and Senate resolutions for the positive impact bus rapid transit has had on the Des Plaines community. Melinda thanked Illinois State Senator Laura Murphy and Illinois State Representative Michelle Mussman for the honors.

Melinda reported that last week, Pace received five community project funding grants as part of the FY24 appropriations bill:

- Congresswoman Delia Ramirez (District 3) secured \$840,000 in several community project funding grants, which will help Pace implement transit signal priority (TSP) along Harlem Avenue in western Cook County.
- Congressman Jonathan Jackson (District 1) secured \$840,000 to implement TSP along Western Avenue in Cook County.
- Congressman Brad Schneider (District 10) secured \$840,000 to implement TSP along Washington Street in Waukegan.
- Congressman Bill Foster (District 11) secured \$1 million to purchase five battery electric paratransit vehicles in McHenry County.
- Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (District 14) secured \$826,779 to purchase a battery electric bus for Heritage Division.

Pace appreciates elected officials’ continued support and investment in public transit, which is important as we face the upcoming fiscal cliff. Funding helps make Pace more efficient; for example, TSP technology ensures Pace runs on time and doesn’t have to send out extra buses.

Melinda thanked Chief Auditor Colette Thomas Gordon and the Pace Audit staff for their efforts achieving a Certificate of Compliance from the Association of Local Government Auditors, which recognized Pace’s internal quality control system covering the period of 2017-2022.

Melinda reported that she and Director Schielke attended a roundtable discussion on the future use of hydrogen fuel cell energy in Kane County. This will be an ongoing committee that she and Director Schielke will continue to support as Pace moves forward on Project Zero.

Melinda reported that Pace extended 56 offers to candidates at Hire-on-the-Spot events since the last meeting. Pace has seven more events planned at area colleges, in addition to weekly Hire-on-the-Spot events at Pace headquarters.

Melinda reported that the January 2024 budget is favorable for both suburban and ADA service. Melinda reported that February 2024 overall systemwide ridership is up 28.9% over February 2023, which is the highest average weekday ridership Pace has experienced since 2019. There was one additional weekday in 2024, but that only accounts for 4% of the increase. Paratransit ridership is above 2019 levels, which is made possible by increasing capacity using TNCs and expanding On Demand service. Since the launch of the new TNC Rideshare Access Program (RAP) on March 11, 172 individuals have enrolled in RAP with Uber and UZURV.

Adjournment

Chairman Kwasneski asked for a motion to adjourn into closed session for the purposes of discussing closed session minutes (2-C-21), collective bargaining (2-C-2), and pending litigation (2-C-11).

Director Schielke moved, and Director Marcucci seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All directors voted aye.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Reconvene

Chairman Kwasneski reconvened the open session of the Pace Board of Directors meeting at 10:37 a.m. and asked for a roll call.

Directors physically present: Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Directors telephonically present: Hastings and Noak.

Directors absent: None.

SBD #24-10 – Resolution approving the closed session meeting minutes of February 21, 2024.

Director Schielke moved, and Director Smith seconded a motion to approve the Resolution. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. All directors voted aye.

SBD #24-11 – Ordinance approving Collective Bargaining Agreement between Pace Northwest Division and the Teamsters, Local #731.

Director Soto moved, and Director Wells seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All directors voted aye.

SBD #24-12 – Ordinance approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement between Pace Southwest Division and the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local #241.

Director Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All directors voted aye.

Items removed from the Consent Agenda

None.

Approval of Consent Agenda

SBD #24-13 – Ordinance adopting the Third Amended Bylaws of Pace’s Chicago ADA Advisory Committee.

SBD #24-14 – Ordinance approving and adopting the Pace Internal Audit Charter revised March 7, 2024.

SBD #24-15 – Ordinance authorizing Change Order No. 2 to Contract No. 228777 with Five Star Kleen LLC for advertisement passenger shelter cleaning services. This change order increases the contract total from \$479,334.00 to \$833,778.29, an increase of \$354,444.29.

Director Smith moved, and Director Guerin seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All directors voted aye.

Action Items

SBD #24-16 – Ordinance authorizing Board Member travel and business expenses for February 2024 pursuant to Public Act 099-0604 Local Government Travel Expense Control Act – Richard Kwasneski.

Director Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. Chairman Kwasneski abstained. All other directors voted aye.

SBD #24-17 – Ordinance amending the 2024 Operating and Capital Program Budget (Amendment #1)

Kris Skogsbakken, Manager of Capital Grants, presented on reprogramming portions of Rebuild Illinois funds designated for certain priority capital projects towards River Division expansion,

which is advancing faster than other projects and costs more than initial funding estimates to incorporate charging for electric buses. Director Marcucci asked for more information on I-294 station projects. Melinda and Chairman Kwasneski described future express service between Harvey and O'Hare along the I-294 Tollway, but I-294 is still under construction.

Director Marcucci moved, and Director McLeod seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. Chairman Kwasneski abstained. All other directors voted aye.

SBD #24-18 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to Central States Bus Sales, Inc. for the purchase of 28 seven-passenger high-roof lift equipped vans in an amount not to exceed \$2,273,600.00

Melinda presented on how lift equipped vans are used in the Vanpool programs of Pace and certain townships, and at operating divisions to transport riders in the event of fixed route issues.

Director McLeod moved, and Director Marcucci seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. Chairman Kwasneski abstained. All other directors voted aye.

Issues/Discussion/Reports

Chairman Kwasneski encouraged Directors to review the January 2024 budget reports and financial statements contained in their packets.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Kwasneski asked for a motion and second to adjourn the Pace Board of Directors meeting. Director Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote; all Directors voted aye.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace Corporate Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Elissa Ledvort
Board Secretary, Board of Directors