



**Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority
550 West Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, Illinois
Minutes of the Open Session Virtual Meeting of the Pace Board of Directors
June 17, 2020**

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met virtually in public session on Wednesday June 17, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. pursuant to notice.

Chairman Kwasneski announced the meeting is taking place virtually in accordance with Executive Order 2020-07.

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 virtually present: Canning, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Director Larson was absent.

Director Carr joined the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

Chairman Kwasneski introduced new board member, Director John Schmitt.

Director Schmitt commented he became involved with the Village of Algonquin in 1992 and was elected as the Village of Algonquin President in 2005. During his tenure, he has been in every county area working on development of transportation. He was born and raised in Pennsylvania and joined the service during Vietnam. Director Schmitt also attended Penn State University where his education was in technology—computer operating and programming. He is married with two children and five grandchildren.

Chairman Kwasneski welcomed Director Schmitt to the Board.

Chairman Kwasneski commented there is a new rule in the Open Meetings Act wherein the roll will be called on all voting matters; meaning no 'all in favor' votes are allowed.

SBD #20-44 – Resolution approving the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of May 20, 2020.

Director Schielke moved, and Director Soto seconded a motion to approve the Resolution. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye. Dir. Schmitt abstained.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Kwasneski commented he was saddened and sickened about the situation in Minneapolis with Mr. Floyd. Chairman Kwasneski's prayers go out to Mr. Floyd's family. We certainly support everyone's First Amendment rights to protest; however, we certainly do not condone any violence, and we try to encourage everyone to voice their opinions in a more respectful manner. The safety of Pace riders and employees are always of utmost importance. We will continue to evaluate the situation. Rocky, in his report, will update the Board on some service suspensions.

Chairman Kwasneski thanked staff for their efforts due to the COVID situation that continues to be an issue. Melinda Metzger's staff has done an excellent job in making sure everyone stays safe in Pace's facilities and vehicles.

Chairman Kwasneski commented on the loss of Sheila Schultz, former mayor of Wheeling and also the Chairperson of Pace's Citizen's Advisory Committee. She was a great advocate for public transit and for Pace. Chairman Kwasneski was glad Pace had an opportunity to honor her prior to her passing. She will be missed.

Chairman Kwasneski commented that Larry Walsh, Sr., a Will County Executive, passed away this past week. He was a good friend of the Chairman and a good friend to a number of the Board members.

Chairman Kwasneski and Rocky have drafted congressional delegation letters to Chairman DeFazio and to all Illinois members supporting the infrastructure bill. Chairman Kwasneski and Rocky continue to push for the budget. Chairman Kwasneski will speak with Chairman Dillard (of the RTA) regarding moving forward to getting definitive answers from the state as to when Pace will see some of the funds it needs.

Chairman Kwasneski met virtually with staff weekly. Most topics discussed were COVID-related, ridership, etc. Staff also updated him on a number of projects that are in the works.

Chairman Kwasneski thanked Laurie Dittman for her work while on the Pace Board of Directors. Today is her last board meeting. A new commissioner has been appointed from the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities and she will join the Pace Board in July. Pace thanks Laurie for her efforts and knows she will continue to be an advocate for Pace and transit in the city.

Directors' Reports

Director Canning reported that the Committee on Planning met in May. Due to the pandemic, the Driving Innovation had stalled; however, staff is now moving forward with short-term and long-term planning including working out transportation if schools open in the fall.

Director Dittman thanked the Board, Rocky Donahue, Melinda Metzger and Pace staff for welcoming her. She has enjoyed her time on the Board and will continue to be an advocate for Pace and for paratransit.

Director Dittman updated the Board that she and Rocky spoke extensively with a representative from Uber transit about different programs it has with other transit agencies throughout the country. Many good ideas were exchanged. Rocky and Melinda will continue to look for opportunities Uber to provide unique service in our region.

Director Dittman and Rocky continue to meet with Access Living regarding how COVID has affected rides. In their last two meetings, Director Dittman brought in a physician from the Chicago Department of Public Health to provide guidance on how to address different issues; one of which is how to manage vehicle capacity with increased ridership. Discussions will continue.

Director Schielke reported that in his capacity as the Chairman of the Council of Mayors of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, he is involved in the discussions of many situations—specifically COVID and the costs to be recovered. Many people wonder where the funds will come from to help pay for all of the things that they say they are going to do. This seems to be the open-ended question in the region currently.

Executive Director's Report

Rocky Donahue thanked staff for their efforts. From Pace's front-line employees, who are truly heroes moving heroes, to its telecommuters – Rocky has never been prouder of this agency.

Pace is dealing with various COVID-19 issues. The communities have seen historic protests which required Pace to shut-down its entire system for three evenings. He believes this was the first time in the history of the organization that Pace had to suspend service system-wide.

Ridership is starting to rebound. While Pace is still far below pre-COVID levels, in the last week ridership has grown approximately 30% to nearly 40,000 trips a day.

As the region and state begin to reopen, Pace is reopening. We are looking at when to bring suspended service back; when to start charging fares again; and how to continue to social distance as ridership grows. We also are beginning to reopen our facilities, bringing back employees to headquarters in Arlington Heights, the Vanpool office, the ADA office in Chicago, and to all the divisions.

Over the past few weeks, Rocky had many virtual meetings with legislative staff, lawmakers, officials in the Governor's Office, the RTA, and state legislative lobbyists concerning operating funding and capital. The state adopted a status-quo budget for FY 2021. Our funding was held harmless from FY 2020; however, the state budget is balanced with \$5 billion of federal funds needed. If the federal funds do not materialize, it is quite possible that the state may have to cut some of our earmarks; however, as of today, we are expected to receive our ADA grant of \$8.3 million— half-fare reimbursement to the region at \$17.5 million—and full funding of state PTF funds. As for capital funds, we have yet to receive funding commitments for many of our shovel ready projects, including Plainfield, Wheeling, and ADA Technology upgrades. We continue to work with IDOT, the Governor's Office, and the RTA on the release of this funding as well as the \$11 million we expect to receive in pay-as-you-go funding. Pace is expecting over \$300 million in Rebuild Illinois funds over the next five years.

Later in the meeting you will hear from our CFO, Dominick Cuomo and our external auditors, Baker Tilly, concerning our 2019 end of year audit. I am happy to report it is a clean audit and we ended 2019 with a \$5.3 million positive budget variance for suburban services and a \$4.2 million positive budget variance for ADA.

Rocky expressed his condolences and sympathy to the families of Sheila Schultz and Larry Walsh. Both individuals were pillars in our communities and will be missed.

Rocky introduced Melinda Metzger who gave a report on capital projects. The enhancement of the I-55 Bus on Shoulder service is being hindered by the fact that the Pace Heritage garage is at capacity. The Plainfield garage is being developed to alleviate the overburdened Heritage garage. The Plainfield facility will be adjacent to the park-n-ride and will be approximately 189,172 square feet housing approximately 110 45-foot buses and 12 maintenance bays. Staff is meeting weekly with Northern Builders and Harris Architects. The site plan has been completed and will be sent to the Village of Plainfield with a hearing scheduled for July 7. Design is set to be completed in September with construction to begin in October of this year.

The Wheeling garage will house the Northwest Garage, Vanpool, and the Printshop and having space for 150 CNG buses, 60 vanpool vehicles, and 10 non-revenue vehicles. The Village of Wheeling is proceeding on the Willow Road improvements and staff is meeting with the A/E firm to review drawings which will then go to the Village for review and approval.

A new South Campus will be adjacent to the South Division Garage on 22 acres and will house the Acceptance Facility and Customer Relations. The project is scheduled to go out to bid in September. The construction contract is anticipated to go to the Pace Board in December for approval with construction scheduled to begin in January 2021.

The Southwest Division roof repair project was approved at the April Board Meeting and includes the repair of the 26-year old roof. Construction is expected to start mid to late June with a substantial completion date of October 2020.

The Joliet Transfer Center project includes a partnership with the City of Joliet for the construction of a multi-modal facility that will provide 12 bus bays of which 11 will be designated for Pace service. The facility will be located at Chicago/Marion Street—across from Union Station. The design is complete and Pace is waiting on the City of Joliet to bid out the construction. The City of Joliet is waiting for IDOT to respond regarding funding before they proceed with the bid package.

The Board approved a contract for the purchase of up to 185 40-foot New Flyer vehicles to replace the 15 and 17-year old buses at West Division. Forty-four vehicles have been delivered, 37 have been inspected, prepared, and placed into revenue service. Ten new paratransit vehicles have been inspected for service in the city. Vehicles include such enhanced safety features as a backup camera and video surveillance.

Trip notification to ADA riders via text and email is on schedule for July. Trip Check upgrade “Where’s my ride” is on track for end of July/early August.

Rocky introduced James Caronis who gave a report on Pace’s Project Management Office. Pace was awarded funding for all of its requested capital projects. Over the next six years, the state is estimated to fund about \$340 million worth of Pace’s capital program, \$228 million of which is earmarked for eight high-priority projects. Rocky put together a Priority Project Management Office (PPMO) team, comprised of a cross functional team of members from Strategic Services, Community Relations, Procurement, Ethics and Compliance, Budget and Finance, and Capital Finance and Infrastructure, to facilitate managing these projects. The team’s mission was to create a strategy that will allow us to complete the Priority Projects on time and within budget.

The PPMO request for quote includes a base contract for consulting services to be assigned on a task order basis. The contract term will be 5 years with 5 one-year options. Total cost of the contract, if it were to run 10 years, is projected to be \$7 million. The PPMO will create a uniform roadmap by which Pace can deliver and coordinate its capital projects now and in the future.

Rocky introduced Erik Llewellyn who gave a report on Planning Initiatives. He began with updates on Pulse.

On the Pulse Milwaukee Line, the last two shelters, at southbound Devon and northbound Central, are nearly complete. Remaining work at these two locations include the installation of railings, fencing, and landscape plantings, ComEd has only one meter left to install, and punch list work is ongoing in the corridor.

On the Dempster Line, engineering is ongoing with the plans for the vertical markers and shelters being finalized. The draft plans for the civil construction work have been submitted and are currently under review. It is anticipated that the shelters and vertical markers will go out to bid this summer with the construction bid going on the street this fall. Stakeholder coordination is ongoing via virtual meetings and the team has met with all of the impacted municipalities. We are currently scheduling virtual meetings with private property owners to secure easements over the next couple of months.

On the Halsted Line, the project is moving through the environmental review process and the team is currently analyzing the potential traffic impacts related to the proposed improvements. Coordination with the respective departments of transportation is ongoing. We have also initiated the Section 106 process under the NEPA guidelines and will continue with subsequent environmental documentation following the completion of traffic analysis.

Pace continues its coordination with RTA, IDOT, and CDOT regarding the Transit Signal Priority, or TSP, Program. TSP enables bus on-board computer to communicate with the traffic signal system without any action taken by the bus driver. The TSP system allows the traffic signal network to shorten red lights and extend green lights to give buses an advantage and keep them on a reliable schedule. Staff continues to work with Trapeze to remotely fine tune the deployed TSP System on Pulse Buses. Also, Pace and our installation contractor, Parsons, continue to coordinate with IDOT to obtain permits to allow TSP equipment installation along Dempster Street.

Erik reported on updates regarding Ventra. The RTA is currently reviewing the proposed Pace/CTA RFP for the procurement of fareboxes. Regarding the Ventra Mobile App, Metra has created and approved a special \$10 daily fare, available only on the Ventra mobile app, for two months, beginning June 15. The target date for the introduction of the mobile app is August or September. Our current mobile app provider will no longer support our legacy mobile app after December 31, 2020.

Paratransit, Trapeze, and Cubic (Ventra) continue to work on integrating automatic fare collection into ADA Paratransit. The use of the Ventra system on paratransit has been requested from the ADA community for some time and during the COVID-19 pandemic, it would help to reduce operator/customer contact.

Rocky introduced Maggie Daly Skogsbakken who gave a report on Pace's new website. The new Pace website successfully launched this past Sunday evening. This was a soft launch and we will continue to fine tune the site over the next few weeks.

The new website was built from the ground up using a modern drupal platform, expert assistance from two technology firms, Clarity Partners and Acquia, and a great deal of user testing. It represents the first major upgrade of our web presence since 2007 and our first site overhaul since 2004.

The primary goal for the new website was improved accessibility, for both people with disabilities and mobile users, which was achieved, with improved site organization, navigation, search features, route pages, and content management and menu system. Benefits of the new content management system include the ability to make immediate fixes and updates taking the updating process for most issues from 6-24 hours to just minutes.

Maggie thanked all who worked on this project, especially core team members Doug Sullivan, John Kokoris, Chuck Steneck, Art Mack, and Elia Carmona. We had just started training and content transfer when the state's stay at home order went into effect and a number of employees stepped up to the plate to adapt to our new remote work environment to bring this project to launch, especially those who took on the task of transferring all the content, including the core team members mentioned and Charles Aikerson, Ed Madden, Elissa Ledvort, and Robert Benedetto. There are many more thanks owed as this was truly and agency-wide effort.

A few highlights of the site's new features are a mobile-friendly design, easier site management, immediate alerts, an improved search engine, improved route pages, improved customer service, and a more accessible design.

Action Items

SBD #20-45 – Resolution honoring Larry Walsh.

Director Schielke moved, and Director Claar seconded a motion to approve the Resolution. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

Director Claar commented on the passing of Larry Walsh. Will County experienced the loss of probably one of the most respected leaders in its history. He lost his six-year fight to cancer. He was for the people, a partisan, and a Democrat. Director Claar stated that he himself is a Republican, but they often laughed about that. The day after an election, it was business as usual, forgetting all about partisan politics, something we need to do more of today. He clearly cared about people. He wanted to get the people's business done. He appointed Director Claar to the board and was criticized by his colleagues because Director Claar was a Republican and others thought he should've appointed a Democrat. When Larry would come into the room he would light it up. Larry had a great smile, saying hello to everybody regardless of their position within the political structure in the community. He was truly interested and would look you in the eye and he truly cared about what you were going to say. He fully supported Pace, the transit center and regional transportation in general, and major capital projects not only in Will County, but for

the region. He was adamant about getting the I-55 construction complete. He had a great sense of humor, truly fun to be around. He would periodically insist getting together with Director Claar to discuss what was going on in Will County. People were flattered and honored that he wanted to spend time with them. He lived in the southern part of Will County which is a very large county. Larry was everywhere—he showed up for all events. Director Claar commented that it is truly a privilege for him to speak about his good friend, Larry Walsh and what a loss his passing is to those in government.

Director Schielke commented on the passing of Larry Walsh. Director Schielke, Chairman of the Metropolitan Agency Council of Mayors, has a seat on the state Transportation Policy Committee. One of the membership requirements is that each County Board Chairman in Cook County and surrounding counties is a seated member with voting rights on that group. Having done this now for number of years, Director Schielke commented most County Board Chairmen don't attend meetings, but in the case of Larry Walsh, he was as good at attending as anyone Director Schielke could think of. Besides Larry's significant understanding of what was happening in Will County and what he wanted to accomplish for the County, he also had a widespread knowledge of everything happening in Chicago and the six-county surrounding area. He knew the territory and the terrain having driven them. He had a dynamic vision of what this region is all about. Larry really made a positive difference in the future of the Chicago region for what he works for and for what he was able to obtain. Director Schielke joined in sadness and noting his loss. Larry was somebody that really was here for good government and produced it.

Chairman Kwasneski commented on the passing of Larry Walsh. He was very close to Larry, he was a great friend and he spent a lot of time with him. Director Claar gave a good tribute to Larry and hit the nail on the head. Larry was the everyday person type of guy. No matter if you were the CEO of a Corporation, a man on the street, or somebody that needed help, Larry would talk with you and spend time with you. Larry made a difference in a lot of people's lives. Chairman Kwasneski is thankful Larry was involved in his life. He was a great advocate of public transportation. He was probably one of the best and as Director Schielke said, he looked beyond Will County. The region is much better because Larry Walsh was involved. Will County will not be Will County without Larry Walsh. We will miss him. We offer our prayers and condolences to his family.

SBD #20-46 – Ordinance authorizing a Change Order to Contract No. 220923 with PNC Bank, National Association for banking services. This action extends the contract term for five (5) years, adds Payer Express service and increases the contract total from \$212,216.14 to \$529,064.28, an increase of \$316,848.14.

Director Dittman moved, and Director Claar seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

SBD #20-47 – Ordinance authorizing acceptance of the Annual Financial Report, the Report on Federal Awards, and the Reporting and Insights from 2019 Audit for Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the RTA.

Director Wells moved, and Director Schielke seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

Dominick Cuomo gave an overview on the audit reports. The 2019 audit went very well; Pace received good audit results with no audit findings or audit issues. From the operating standpoint, Pace Suburban Services fund finished the year with a \$5.3 million positive budget variance which is a \$5.3 million surplus. In terms of recovery ratio performance, the Pace Suburban Services fund received a recovery ratio of 30.8%—which is above the RTA recovery ratio requirement of 30.3%. Pace also experienced positive budget performance with the Pace regional ADA Paratransit Services fund. The ADA fund finished 2019 with \$4.2 million surplus; however, that amount is returned to the RTA and retained in the ADA fund for future ADA service needs. The regional ADA fund finished 2019 at a break-even point. In terms of recovery ratio performance, the ADA fund achieved the recovery ratio of 10.4%. This was also above the RTA recovery ratio requirement of 10%. From the government-wide standpoint, we ended 2019 with total assets for the agency at \$460 million, and total liabilities at \$167 million.

Dominick introduced Jason Coyle, from Baker Tilly, who reiterated much of what Dominick stated. Jason also stated that with the COVID situation, the Governmental Accounting Standings Board issued a delay in some of the financial reporting implications that will impact organizations in the future. Pace will have one or more years to implement some reporting standards.

Issues/Discussions/Reports

No reports were given.

Adjournment

Chairman Kwasneski asked for a motion to adjourn into Closed Session for the purposes of discussing closed session minutes (2-C-21), pending litigation (2-C-11), and real estate purchase (2-C-5). Director Marcucci moved, and Director Schielke seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

Reconvene

Chairman Kwasneski reconvened the Open Session of the Pace Board of Directors meeting at 10:57 a.m.

Directors virtually present: Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Director Larson was absent.

SBD #20-48 – Resolution approving the minutes of the Closed Session meeting of April 15, 2020.

Director Schielke moved, and Director Wells seconded a motion to approve the Resolution. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

SBD #20-49 – Ordinance approving the release of Closed Session Minutes of December 9, 2015, June 8, 2016, July 13, 2016, August 10, 2016, September 14, 2016, October 12, 2016, February 14, 2018, August 21, 2019, October 16, 2019, December 18, 2019, and January 15, 2020 for public inspection, and the Closed Session Minutes of January 14, 2015, February 11, 2015, March 11, 2015, May 13, 2015, June 10, 2015, February 13, 2019, September 18, 2019, November 13, 2019, and February 19, 2020 require confidentiality and are not made available for public inspection.

Director Dittman moved, and Director Wells seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

SBD #20-50 – Ordinance approving the destruction of verbatim records of Closed Sessions of July 11, 2018, August 8, 2018, September 12, 2018, October 10, 2018, November 14, 2018, and December 12, 2018.

Director Schielke moved, and Director Dittman seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Canning, Carr, Claar, Dittman, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, Schielke, Schmitt, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Kwasneski asked for a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting.

Director Wells moved, and Director Schielke seconded a motion to adjourn the Pace Board of Directors meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace Corporate Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.



Karen Kase
Secretary, Board of Directors