

**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  
September 16, 2020**

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met in public session on Wednesday September 16, 2020 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: Canning, Carr, Claar, Guerin, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Director McLeod moved, and Director Schielke seconded a motion to allow Directors Arfa, Hastings, and Soto to attend virtually. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Directors Hastings and Soto joined the meeting virtually immediately following the vote.

Director Arfa joined the meeting virtually at 9:35 a.m.

No Directors were absent.

**SBD #20-72 – Resolution** approving the minutes of the Open Session meeting of August 19, 2020.

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

**Public Comment**

Garland Armstrong commented with a sad heart that he and his wife, Heather Armstrong, will be moving to Iowa at the end of October. He and Heather thanked Pace for the opportunity to convey their ideas and recommendations hoping to assist Pace improve its services for all of its riders. He and Heather will miss Pace and its staff.

**Chairman's Report**

Chairman Kwasneski reported that the RTA had not passed the marks for Pace to stay on time with its 2021 budgeting schedule. Rocky Donahue will have more information in his report.

Chairman Kwasneski stated he, Rocky, and Pace staff are advocating at the federal and state level for funding. As for the state portion of the funding, he and Rocky have had conversations with legislators telling them that Pace has not received any funding. Legislators are upset because they took the vote, passed the capital budget, and IDOT has not released the funds. Pace has projects that are ready to roll and are moving forward. He and Rocky are coordinating with some of the leadership at the legislative level and hope to get answers.

Chairman Kwasneski thanked staff for their budget briefings to the Pace Board Members. Pace is beginning preparations on how the public hearings will go forward in our current environment. We want to make sure we get that information out to the public and receive input from riders throughout the region.

**Directors' Reports**

Director Marcucci thanked staff for budget briefings to the Board Members and stated he believed they went very well. The right amount of information was given and he stated he can begin preparing for his presentation to the public in his region. He also stated that he is not fond of the idea of conducting the public hearings on the budget virtually. Director Marcucci thanked Heather and Garland Armstrong for all of their efforts keeping the Board informed and sometimes holding Pace accountable regarding transportation for the ADA community. He believes Pace has been responsive to the needs of the ADA community and things are better for the people who need that service. Pace is better informed and makes better decisions because of Heather and Garland's advocacy.

Director McLeod echoed Director Marcucci's comments saying that the budget briefing was very informative. Director McLeod met with RTA Board Member, Mary Beth Canty, from Arlington Heights regarding transportation issues and will continue to meet with her on a regular basis.

Director Schielke commented that he began his 40<sup>th</sup> year in office on May 1 of this year and the challenges that the government is facing now is unlike anything he's ever seen before. Director Schielke doesn't know where the federal and state governments are getting all of the money they are giving away. He's worried about the deficits. Director Schielke also noted that at a time like

this when things are seemingly in a rough state, he feels blessed with Pace's staff. Pace knows what it's doing, doing it right, watches the budget, and is serving the public. He holds his head high with pride for the job that Pace has done and continues to do.

Director Wells commented to Heather and Garland Armstrong they have been great ambassadors of Pace and they will be missed.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

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

**SBD #20-73 – Ordinance** authorizing a change order to Contract No. 221980 with The Segal Company (Midwest), Inc. for group health and welfare and benefits consulting. This action extends the contract term for fourteen (14) months and increases the contract total from \$433,575.00 to \$533,575.00, an increase of \$100,000.00.

**SBD #20-74 – Ordinance** authorizing the award of a sole source contract to Frank M. Pawlak, P.C., for legal services for labor and employment matters, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.00.

**SBD #20-75 – Ordinance** authorizing the award of a sole source contract to Sudekum, Cassidy & Shulruff, CHTD. for legal services for labor and employment matters, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.00.

### **Items Removed from Consent Agenda**

No items were removed from the Consent Agenda.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Rocky Donahue thanked Heather and Garland Armstrong for all they've done for Pace. Rocky also thanked Pace staff. We are enduring the pandemic, civil unrest, and service issues putting a lot of stress on our agency and Rocky has never been prouder of how our staff responds on a daily basis.

Ridership remains steady at about 50,000 daily trips systemwide—about 45,000 daily trips on fixed route and 5,000 daily trips on ADA Paratransit. This is down approximately 55% from last year. The fall season is when we would normally see our highest ridership primarily due to school trips, but with most schools doing virtual learning, we're not seeing that ridership at this time.

The RTA did not approve 2021 budget marks at their September Board meeting. Rocky is hopeful they will be able to do so at their meeting in October. Rocky will attend a meeting next week with the RTA and other service boards to hopefully start those conversations and eventually come to a resolution on the marks.

We have had some positive conversations recently with RTA and IDOT concerning Rebuild Illinois. It is possible that PAYGO funding will be released in the near future. We are owed in excess of \$11 million from the state.

All of our non-bargained for (administrative) employees are now back on the worksite. Employees were brought back the week of August 31 on a rotational work schedule—in a ten day pay period they work onsite five days and work from home five days. This provides that HQ will be at roughly half capacity on any given day; allows for more social distancing between workstations; and overall, makes for a safer environment.

Our Citizen's Advisory Board met yesterday and discussed Cares Funding, the possibility of another round of financial aid from both Springfield and Washington DC, our budget, and an update on capital projects. Our two ADA Advisory Committees are scheduled to meet on September 25 and 26.

We continue to lobby our congressional delegation for another round of emergency funding for transit. \$32 billion is needed nationally to avoid major service reductions and layoffs throughout the country. We have also joined with over 100 other transit agencies in the country, including RTA, CTA and Metra, in signing onto APTA's Health and Safety Commitments Program, which is the public transportation industry's overarching pledge to passengers that our systems are operating safely as we recover from the pandemic.

### **Action Items**

**SBD #20-76 – Ordinance** authorizing the award of a contract to Shepard Bros., Inc. for the purchase of fifteen passenger paratransit buses, in an amount not to exceed \$69,991,387.65.

Melinda Metzger commented that 210 vehicles being replaced are all over-aged which is over 4 years or 100,000 miles and are on a maintenance program. When new vehicles arrive, they go through the South Holland acceptance facility and we replace the worst vehicles first. The old vehicles are stored at the South Holland facility and bid out to the highest bidder. Vehicles can be bid on individually or in groups.

Rocky Donahue stated that Pace previously had a program where it would give its over-aged vehicles to local municipalities; however, the Federal Transit Administration did an audit and found that even though Pace gave vehicles away, they still had monetary value and that dollar amount would have to be paid to the FTA by Pace. Pace discontinued the program.

Melinda Metzger stated that the new vehicles will be purchased over a period of five years and any modifications that may be needed during that time, such as driver barriers or new technology can be done through a change order.

Director Marcucci stated that the headline of our document , “Pace accepts a price proposal...for the purchase of 15 passenger paratransit buses...for \$69,991,387.65” struck him as steep and while the supporting documentation explained that Pace is actually purchasing approximately 750 buses, he suggested that the total number of vehicles or items be included in the staff recommendation. Melinda Metzger stated that this suggestion will be implemented. She added that the purchase of these particular vehicles is dependent on grant funding which we currently have for 210 buses. The per unit cost is \$92, 000.00 which is more than what we’ve paid in the past because the video surveillance, barriers, safety systems, new securement systems, and raw materials are more expensive at this time.

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

**SBD #20-77 – Ordinance** authorizing a change order to Contract No. 229757 with AKA Comp Solutions, Inc. for the purchase of additional laptops. This action increases the contract total from \$607,470.71 to \$754,614.25, an increase of \$147,143.54.

Chairman Kwasneski asked if employees are switching out desktop computers for laptops. Melinda explained that employees who require them, will receive laptops with docking stations so that employees can take them home while working on our rotating schedule, and this will also allow employees to have their workstations with them in the event they cannot enter the building due to the pandemic or some other emergency situation.

Melinda stated that while most employees have Pace issued laptops, those that don’t yet have them, do have the ability to log into their desktop from their own computer at home. Security systems are in place, but laptops will ensure more security.

Director Canning commented that it looks as if the laptops would cost about \$490 per unit; however, individual laptops purchased personally cost much more than that. Melinda stated the cost per unit is \$1,199.81, but that Pace has other funds that will be put toward the purchase, making the per unit cost appear to be low.

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

**Issues/Discussions/Reports**

Rocky Donahue stated he had hoped to provide a brief summary of RTA marks and what was anticipated with the 2021 Budget, but unfortunately, he cannot. We are still hopeful to bring a proposed 2021 budget to the Board at the October board meeting.

Rocky Donahue reported on the tentative schedule for the public hearings on the 2021 budget which are scheduled for the last week of October. For the first time, the hearings will be virtual, primarily because the locations where we historically hold the hearings are not allowing groups to use their facilities. While our interpretation of the RTA Act is that we are required to hold a public hearing in each county, because of COVID-19, we are holding the six hearings, one for each county, at a date and time prescribed here; however, being virtual, the public can go online any time and watch it on our website. A comment box will be available to the public. Staff will be reaching out to the Directors to see about their availability to act as hearing officer for the virtual hearings. We believe we can give more concrete information at the October Board meeting.

Rocky Donahue stated that this is the first time we need to orchestrate virtual meetings for this purpose, and he doesn't envision them to be interactive. It would be a presentation with the public having the opportunity through an email address or a "comment box" to send us their comments. Similar to a typical public hearing, a presentation would be given and comments written down. We would not engage in action. A report would then be provided to the Board.

Rocky spoke of a possible taped version of the presentation and making it available 24/7 on Pace's website. Anyone could view it at any time and provide their comments electronically.

Chairman Kwasneski asked about presenting to the county boards—presenting an overview of the entire budget and then zero in on the projects in the individual counties. Rocky stated we are working with the county boards to see how they want to receive the presentations. We are looking for their direction.

Director Marcucci stated he understands the meeting will start at a set time, the presentation will be made by the local board member for that county, but then there won't be live real time conversation. This is the opposite of what he wants to do in DuPage county. He prefers to take public input first for a set period time, and then the floor is open for conversation. This has proved informative to him and satisfying to the public, but he doesn't see that happening in this kind of situation. Director Marcucci asked if Pace would record the presentation, perhaps a week before the meeting, and then post it? Rocky stated that is an option. Dir. Marcucci stated that while this may cover the state statute, it doesn't cover the effectiveness of the meeting.

Director Schielke commented that he currently has five senior living communities in his region and the commonality is that many senior citizens say they are the lost generation who don't work well with technology. Director Schielke would rather appear in person.

Rocky Donahue stated that going virtual is not Pace's decision, but is a result of the limit to only have 50 people in a gathering at one time and we cannot guarantee public hearing attendance to be within that limit. In addition, the locations available to us in the past are not allowing any type of public meeting and are therefore not available. We are open to any suggestions on how to proceed.

Director Arfa stated it's been her experience with other online technology that there are people who would do better with virtual because of health issues or physical limitations preventing them from attending an in-person event. Virtual provides closed captioning and other accessibility assistance.

Director Soto suggested putting our recorded hearings on local public cable television. Municipalities and counties usually have access to a channel through cable TV. She also suggested we contact PBS.

Rocky Donahue stated we will look into that. We will look at a variety of options as to how we can reach the most people that we can, knowing everyone has different capabilities.

### **Adjournment**

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

### **Reconvene**

Chairman Kwasneski reconvened the Open Session of the Pace Board of Directors meeting at 10:37 a.m.

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

Directors Arfa, Hastings, and Soto attended the meeting virtually.

No Directors were absent.

**SBD #20-78 – Resolution** approving the minutes of the Closed Session meeting of August 19, 2020.

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

**SBD #20-79 – Ordinance** approving action on the purchase of real property located at 651 Mall Drive, Schaumburg, Illinois, as discussed in Closed Session.

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, Claar, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, 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 Claar 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 10:40 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace Corporate Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.



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Karen Kase  
Secretary, Board of Director