



**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
October 21, 2020**

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met in public session on Wednesday October 21, 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, McLeod, Schielke, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

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

Directors Arfa, Hastings, Marcucci, and Soto joined the meeting via teleconference immediately following the vote.

No Directors were absent.

SBD #20-80 – Resolution approving the minutes of the Open Session meeting of September 16, 2020.

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

Richard A. Kwasneski, **Chairman**

Rachel Arfa Christopher S. Canning Terrance M. Carr Roger C. Claar David B. Guerin
Kyle R. Hastings Thomas D. Marcucci William D. McLeod Jeffery D. Schielke Linda Soto Terry R. Wells

Board of Directors

Rocky Donahue, **Executive Director**

Public Comment

Chairman Kwasneski presented Heather and Garland Armstrong with a Pace bus stop sign and thanked them for their advocacy for ADA Paratransit riders. Heather and Garland have been a great asset for Pace in supporting public transit. They will be missed.

Garland and Heather thanked the Pace Board and spoke about Pace staff stating they are always pleasant and helpful. Garland offered his and Heather's assistance to Pace in the future, if needed. They will miss Pace and its staff. Heather thanked Pace for the opportunity to sit on the ADA Advisory Committee and thanked the drivers for their professionalism and kindness.

Director Soto gave her best wishes to Heather and Garland and asked that they stay in touch with the Board. They will be missed.

Director Arfa thanked Heather and Garland for their advocacy. She's known them for a long time and wishes them the very best. She knows they will keep up their advocacy work in Iowa.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Kwasneski thanked Pace staff for their continued efforts during these unprecedented times, they are doing a great job providing service for the region.

Last week, a transportation tribute was held for former Will County executive, Larry Walsh, who was involved in government for 40 years as a local representative, state senator, and Will County Chairman. He was a big advocate for transportation. The event was well attended by several agencies including Metra, RTA, Pace, Will County, and CMAP. COVID safety protocols were in place and had there not been a pandemic, there would have been many, many more people in attendance.

Chairman Kwasneski had conversations with RTA Chairman Dillard and former Metra Chairman Carlson concerning the 2021 budget and marks. Pace is glad RTA was able to adopt marks at their Board meeting last week.

Chairman Kwasneski had a conversation with Senate President Harmon and Rocky focusing on funding and obtaining his support. He also had conversations with Senator Durbin's office as well as members of the Illinois congressional delegation concerning another round of stimulus funding. He believes the Illinois delegation understands our issues and are supportive of our needs.

Directors' Reports

Director Claar commented the Chairman did a great job putting together the tribute to Larry Walsh. Larry was very supportive of Pace activities such as the Plainfield Park-n-Ride,

Bolingbrook Bus on Shoulder program, the Joliet Transit Center, and the widening of I-55. Larry was a pleasure to work with.

Director Schielke stated he spoke at the tribute to Larry Walsh. He had a long relationship with Larry who did an outstanding job for Will County. Larry and Director Schielke worked together for an “Illiana Expressway” at the south end of Will County. Larry was passionate that it be built. Director Schielke hopes Larry’s legacy lingers on. Director Schielke stated that hopefully future leaders will follow Larry’s lead by figuring out how to work in the political process, without being political. Our region is better for having had Larry with us.

Executive Director’s Report

Rocky Donahue thanked Heather and Garland for their advocacy on behalf of public transit and Pace. He wished them well in Iowa. Rocky also thanked the entire Pace team for all they do for the agency and the public.

Fixed route ridership remains steady with nearly 50,000 weekday riders, 25,000 Saturday riders and 13,500 Sunday riders. Compared to this same time last year, weekday ridership is down approximately 50 to 55% and weekend ridership is down about 35%. ADA Paratransit ridership is down 40% in the City of Chicago and 45% in the suburbs.

Pace ridership is down approximately 50% from last year, Metra’s is down 85 to 90%, and CTA’s is down roughly 60-70% from last year. Since the pandemic started, for the first time in Pace’s history, we are carrying more riders than Metra. No disrespect to Metra and CTA; however, this shows how essential Pace is to the region.

In September, Pace received an additional \$3.7 million in sales tax funding due to the June actual results coming in higher than budgeted estimates. This additional funding will allow Pace to utilize less CARES funding, of which year-to-date we have used approximately \$22 million. Rocky is hopeful to receive another round of stimulus money. Regionally, our sales tax is down approximately 20-25%, and coupled with farebox revenue, total revenue is down much more than that. Pace anticipates it will spend approximately \$30 million of CARES funding by the end of 2020.

Pace, along with RTA, CTA, and Metra met virtually with Senate President Harmon, Leader Cunningham, Transportation Chairman Villivalam, and members of the President's staff to discuss the challenges we are currently facing in this pandemic—not only service, but financial challenges and how the state may be able to assist. They are very interested in helping us with the mandated farebox recovery ratio, especially with the lack of ridership during this crisis.

We have had productive conversations with Cook County concerning a potential pilot for increasing service on Route 352-Halsted. The County is willing to subsidize and pay for additional service on this route. We will likely bring an agreement to the Board in the near future.

Pace is receiving the APTA Innovation Award for our collaboration with Hoffman Estates and the Tollway on I-90. This is one of the most prestigious awards in our industry. Rocky thanked all the Pace staff who have worked on this successful project. Rocky thanked Mayor McLeod for Hoffman Estates' contributions and commitment to this project.

Pace has been recognized three times for excellence in the design of Pace's new website that launched in June. In early fall, Pace received the 2020 Vega award, and this month Pace will receive a Silver W3 Award from the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts, and an Engage Award naming Pace a Leader of the Pack in the Travel and Transportation Category. Rocky congratulated staff who worked on this project.

Rocky reminded the Board that the November Board meeting will occur on the second Thursday in November, November 12, because Pace is required by statute to adopt its annual budget prior to November 15.

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 #20-81 – Ordinance establishing Pace Board of Directors' meeting dates and time for the year 2021.

SBD #20-82 – Ordinance authorizing execution of a technical assistance grant agreement and any necessary amendments with IDOT to investigate the feasibility of constructing an inline bus rapid transit (BRT) station along the Interstate 55 Stevenson Expressway.

SBD #20-83 – Ordinance authorizing execution of a technical assistance grant agreement and any necessary amendments with IDOT to obtain grant assistance to investigate potential transit markets within a three-mile radius of the Interstate 290 Eisenhower Expressway, between the Interstate 355 junction in Addison and IL-171/1st Avenue in Forest Park.

SBD #20-84 – Ordinance amending the 2020 Operating Budget (Amendment #2).

SBD #20-85 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a sole source contract to GR Consulting LLC for legislative services, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00.

SBD #20-86 – Ordinance authorizing a change order to Contract No. 230644 with Luminator Technology Group, Inc. for the purchase of on-site maintenance and service for ninety-one (91) newly acquired buses.

SBD #20-87 – Ordinance authorizing a change order to Contract No. 225875 with Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless for mobile broadband wireless communication services.

Items Removed from Consent Agenda

No items were removed from the Consent Agenda.

Action Items

SBD #20-88 – Ordinance releasing the proposed 2021 Operating and Capital programs, 2021-2023 Financial Business Plan for Operations, and the 2021-2025 Capital Business Plan for the Suburban Service Budget and Regional ADA Paratransit Budget for public hearings.

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.

Rocky gave a brief presentation on the 2021 budget stating the following highlights:

- No proposed fare increase.
- Ridership is projected to increase 14% from today's level but will still be down 35% of pre-COVID levels.
- Budget is balanced by utilizing nearly \$54 million of CARES funding.
- Service suspended temporarily last spring remains suspended until we have a better idea of fiscal reality.
- The 2021 budget includes an additional \$1.75 million of operating expenses for PPE - masks, gloves, sanitizer for our employees and passengers. This is an additional expense that will now be part of our everyday way of doing business. We budgeted \$7.2 million of capital funds for various COVID-related improvements to employees and passengers including sanitizer dispensers on buses; plexiglass shields; various improvements throughout our facilities; laptops and other equipment in order for employees to telecommute.
- Anticipate monthly budget updates and most likely quarterly budget amendments based on what is actually happening.
- \$54 million of CARES funding will get us through 2021. If things remain the same, we face a \$60 million deficit as early as 2022.
- Anticipate providing various budget balancing actions to the Board throughout 2021 including reductions in our Administrative/non-bargained for workforce; further potential service reductions; and possible fare increases.
- The ADA budget is fully funded.

SBD #20-89 – Ordinance authorizing a change order to Contract No. 223274 with Globetrotters Engineering Company for architectural and engineering services.

Director Wells moved, and Director Guerin 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.

Item 9.C. was removed from the agenda.

Issues/Discussions/Reports

No reports were given.

Adjournment

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

Director Wells moved, and Director Claar seconded a motion to adjourn the Pace Board of Directors meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace Corporate Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.



Karen Kase
Secretary, Board of Directors