



**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
May 19, 2021**

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met in public session on Wednesday May 19, 2021 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, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, Smith, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Directors virtually present: Arfa and Soto.

Director absent: Wells.

SBD #21-21 – Resolution approving the minutes of the Open Session meeting of April 21, 2021.

Director Guerin moved, and Director Schielke seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Open Session meeting of April 21, 2021. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Public Comment

Garland Armstrong commented he is looking forward to the opening of the new Wheeling garage.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman Kwasneski thanked all Pace employees for their hard work as the pandemic continues. He stated that masks are required while on board buses and all other Pace vehicles.

Chairman Kwasneski reported he has been appointed to the board of the American Public Transit Association (“APTA”). Jeff Nelson, the CEO of Rock Island Transit is the Chairman of the

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 Erin Smith Linda Soto Terry R. Wells

Board of Directors

Rocky Donahue, *Executive Director*

Board of APTA, and there are about 100 APTA Board members. Chairman Kwasneski looks forward to representing Pace and working with agencies across the country to advocate for public transit. Chairman Kwasneski stated he and Rocky are meeting with Chairman Nelson at the end of the month.

Chairman Kwasneski and Rocky virtually attended an APTA conference earlier this week where Secretary Buttigieg spoke about the future of infrastructure and funding.

Chairman Kwasneski stated he is looking forward to doing some outreach with all of our state legislative leaders and congressional delegation over the summer.

Directors' Reports

Director Marcucci reported he received a call from the DuPage Health Department regarding assistance from PACE in using busses as COVID-19 vaccination sites. Melinda and her staff are working on this effort; however, it is a very complex issue.

Director Schielke stated Kane County's old Sam's Club location administers thousands of vaccines per day and thanked Pace in helping transport so many people to the site.

Executive Director's Report

Rocky Donahue thanked our employees for their hard work and rising to the many challenges this past year has presented.

Rocky stated the Illinois General Assembly is scheduled for May 31 and we will be watching the budget negotiation and the 10% cut to our state funding and public transportation fund.

Rocky gave a recap of the Suburban Services and ADA budgets. While we originally anticipated a \$60 million deficit for 2021, it will only be approximately \$30 million, which is largely due to sales tax outperforming our estimates and we have achieved savings on the expense side of the house. A big contributor was our recent realignment of the administrative staff which has eliminated potential duplication and inefficiencies. We have been able to preserve employment and benefits for our 1,800 employees. Our Cares and CRRSAA funding should take us well into 2022. We have not yet received the American Rescue Plan Funding which will provide public transit in our region an additional \$1.5 billion. We will be negotiating the split of those funds with RTA and the other service boards during the 2022 budget negotiations which will start in earnest in June. Rocky anticipates Pace's share will be well north of \$100 million which should allow us to have stability through 2024 as well as build service back better. We are working on a marketing campaign, virtual job fairs, and social media to recruit employees.

We are currently carrying approximately 55,000 daily trips on our system. This is about 55% of pre-Covid levels. Last year at this time ridership was averaging 30,000 daily trips. Metra is carrying approximately 35,000 daily trips or about 15% of pre Covid ridership and CTA is carrying approximately 540,000 daily trips or about 50% of pre Covid ridership.

We continue plans on building back better including looking at increasing frequency on our top 20 routes—50% of our ridership is on our top 20 routes and the other 50% is on the remaining 100+ routes. We are also looking at subsidized TNC (Uber, Lyft) rides and planning for the return of school tripper service in the fall.

Pace is facing a shortage of drivers and maintenance employees which is a problem occurring nationally. We are aggressively hiring drivers, mechanics, servicers, and maintenance. Prior to the pandemic we would receive approximately 1,500 employment applications each month and today we are only receiving 100 applications each month. Our HR department is working with our marketing department on a campaign, we are doing virtual job fairs, and we are using social media to try to recruit.

Rocky stated that two long-time Pace employees are retiring at the end of this month. Rocky thanked Dominick Cuomo our Chief Financial Officer, and Renaldo Dixon our Budget Manager, for their service and contributions to our agency—nearly 80 years of combined knowledge. We will honor both at our June meeting.

Chairman Kwasneski commented that Rocky and Melinda Metzger are looking at underperforming routes and working towards a better way to provide service in the outlying counties.

Rocky stated that from a capital infrastructure perspective, we are building more projects than we ever have in the history of this agency. The Rebuild Illinois funds are integral in keeping those projects moving. The Infrastructure Committee is meeting following this Board meeting and they will provide more information to the full Board at the next Board meeting.

Rocky stated that we are focusing on school service as they anticipate returning to in-person learning. We are applying and partnering for the first time on grants for alternative fuel buses—electric buses. Internally, we realigned the administrative network.

Melinda Metzger commented that we are working with junior colleges to initiate a program for students to be trained as mechanics and for CDL licensing. We are aggressively looking at ways to hire and retain drivers and mechanics. Driver training is done in house. We also run a mechanic's training program where some people will start out as servicers; i.e. bus cleaners, and work their way up to mechanic. Before the pandemic, we conducted classes of 20 students, now we have approximately six.

Action Items

SBD #21-22 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to Telcom Innovations Group LLC for the purchase of on-premises solution phone system upgrade and support in an amount not to exceed \$998,974.39.

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, Claar,

Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

SBD #21-23 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a GSA cooperative purchase contract to e-Builder, Inc. for e-Builder Enterprise Software as a Service (Saas) in an amount not to exceed \$476,977.76.

Director McLeod moved, and Director Smith 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, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

SBD #21-24 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to Landmark Contractors, Inc. for construction of Dempster Street Pulse stations in an amount not to exceed \$5,126,047.25.

Director Claar moved, and Director McLeod 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, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

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 Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded a motion to adjourn the Pace Board of Directors meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace Corporate Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.



Karen Kase
Secretary, Board of Directors