

**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 20, 2021**

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met in public session on Wednesday, October 20, 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, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Directors virtually or telephonically present: Arfa, Hastings, Smith, Soto, and Wells.

Directors absent: None.

Chairman Kwasneski called for a motion and a second to amend the agenda by removing:

11. Closed Session

- A. Closed Session Minutes (Section 2-C-21)
- B. Pending Litigation (Section 2-C-11)

12. Reconvene

- A. Approval of September 15, 2021 Closed Session minutes.

Director Marcucci inquired about the reason for the changes, and Chairman Kwasneski said we no longer need to address pending litigation at this point and are deferring to the next meeting. Director Schielke moved and Director McLeod seconded a motion to amend the agenda. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

SBD #21-60 – Resolution approving the open session meeting minutes of September 15, 2021.

Director Claar moved, and Director Schielke 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 Erin Smith Linda Soto Terry R. Wells

Board of Directors

Rocky Donahue, *Executive Director*

Public Comment

John Kavalunas of Lakewood was pleased Pace committed to a zero emissions fleet by 2040 but is still concerned about the expansion of CNG funding in Pace's 2022 budget. He said as we learn about methane leaks from extraction, it is clear CNG is no longer a climate friendly option.

Bruce Mainzer, a former employee of RTA and IDOT and a member of the Climate Reality Project Chicago Metro Chapter, appreciated Pace's responsiveness to public comment but is troubled by the 128 CNG bus purchases outlined in the FY22 five year capital plan. He said CNG is not a bridge fuel, it is a bridge away from meeting the challenge of climate change.

Kim Stone, a Highland Park resident and co-chair of the Climate Reality Project Chicago Metro Chapter's task force on transit electrification, thanked Pace for committing to an electric fleet but asked Pace to reconsider the proposed CNG Wheeling garage and bus purchases. She said the VW settlement fund and other sources can reduce up-front costs of electric fleet transition.

Director Wells joined the meeting in-person at 9:44 a.m.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Kwasneski thanked all employees for their efforts as Pace moves forward and continues to provide service to riders. He noted that many Directors will participate in budget presentations to county boards in November. He and Rocky will meet with legislators during veto session next week to communicate Pace requests for funding and to provide updates on projects. Since the last board meeting, he and Rocky met with stakeholders on zero emission buses, recovery ratio, and federal rescue funding. Chairman Kwasneski said he will continue to meet with stakeholders and partners for direction on making Pace a better agency.

Directors' Reports

Director Canning said he saw signs of Pace recovery this morning. Route 422 on Lake Ave. was standing room only, something he had not seen since March 2020.

Director Smith said her meeting with the McHenry County Department of Transportation and Mary Donner on September 29th was really positive, particularly in advance of budget hearings.

Director Soto reported on her meeting with Rocky, Lake County Chairwoman Sandra Hart, County Administrator Gary Gibson, and head of the Lake County DOT Shane Schneider to provide an overview of Pace's 2022 budget. They were thrilled by the historic investments in Lake County including the electric bus pilot in the North garage, conversion of that entire fleet to electric buses in the next five years, and a commitment to zero emissions by 2040. A lot of voices on electric conversion came from residents and organizations in Lake County; Director Soto thanked Chairman Kwasneski, Rocky, the Board, and the entire Pace staff for listening to residents' comments and for putting forth an outstanding budget. She said she was proud to present it to the Lake County Board on November 5th.

Executive Director's Report

Rocky thanked the dedicated men and women of Pace who ensure the region moves. He said due to staff limiting expenses, the budget variance through August is positive by \$24 million for suburban services and \$6.6 million for ADA. Sales tax has outperformed by nearly \$16 million.

Rocky shared statistics from the September ridership report, showing a 15% growth in fixed route from a year ago, 30% growth in dial-a-ride and Vanpool, and 27% growth in ADA. Pace is now serving 65% of pre-pandemic riders and is averaging almost 48,000 daily trips on fixed route. Two days in September Pace carried over 50,000 trips for the first time since March 2020.

Rocky provided updates on service reinstatement and capital projects. Soldier Field Express service has resumed for the first three home games, carrying over 1,200 riders. Pace anticipates operating service out of the new transit center in Joliet this December, with completion and a dedication this spring. The Plainfield garage is anticipated to open in May 2022.

Rocky thanked staff for their hard work improving ADA service for riders. He discussed the following changes made this year and how they helped Pace cope with manpower shortages:

- **Taxi Access Program**– Pace moved over 1,000 daily trips from the ADA system to TAP in the City of Chicago. TAP ridership is up nearly 150% from pre-pandemic levels.
- **Trapeze upgrades**– Work is scheduled to complete in early 2022. Version 19 will handle a higher volume of activities and enhance customer experience and operations.
- **Ventra for ADA Paratransit trips**– Ventra card usage has increased from 232 trips to 18,620 trips in the ten months since cards were first accepted on ADA Paratransit trips.
- **Text and email notifications**– Riders can now receive itinerary by text and/or email.
- **Automatic calls**– Riders can now receive calls announcing the arrival of their vehicle.
- **TripCheck/Where's My Ride**– Improvements were made to tools for tracking trips.

To commemorate the 10th year anniversary of I-55 Bus on Shoulder, Rocky announced a small ceremony planned for November 15th at the Plainfield Park-n-Ride. Prior to the pandemic, this program was the fastest growing service in the region. Rocky shared statistics on its success.

During the veto session, Rocky plans to update the state legislature on Pace's Rebuild Illinois capital projects and Rocky provided a list of talking points for the Directors' review. Rocky will advocate with peer agencies for legislation exempting the regional farebox recovery ratio for 2021–2023.

Rocky said APTA's Annual Conference next month will be a great opportunity for staff to further educate themselves on zero emissions technology. Rocky mentioned a brief conversation with representatives of Rivian in Normal, Illinois about their manufacture of electric vans.

Finally, Rocky announced his retirement from Pace at the end of this year. He thanked the Board individually and collectively for the support and confidence they placed in him. He said he will always be grateful, honored, and humbled for having the opportunity to lead Pace.

The Directors offered kind words of appreciation and praise for Rocky.

Chairman Kwasneski wished Rocky well. He said Rocky worked his way through the ranks during his 40 years at Pace and got the agency to where it's at today.

Director Claar said Rocky has always been the face of Pace and was thrilled Rocky had the opportunity to serve as its leader.

Director McLeod said Rocky was a driving force in building Pace, which is a dramatically different organization than it was 40 years ago due to his efforts.

Director Schielke said Pace was fortunate to have had Rocky in the trenches because he understood the unique political makeup of the region and knew how to advocate for its people.

Director Wells congratulated Rocky. He said Rocky led Pace through the most difficult time in the agency, set us up for the future, and leaves behind a strong legacy.

Director Soto said Rocky taught her so much about how government impacts transit. She said Pace as an organization is highly respected in Springfield because of Rocky, who has accomplished so much in his short time as Director, put riders first, and led well.

Director Smith thanked Rocky for his service, his commitment to Pace, his selfless leadership, and his ability to credit staff. She said he made an impact in the lives of the people Pace serves.

Director Marcucci said Rocky is integral to Pace but surrounded himself with competent staff who will carry on. He said Rocky has been exceptional at managing the complex interplay of organizations within the state and region, and that he will miss Rocky.

Director Arfa said this was a loss for our region and she has an immense amount of respect for his legacy. She said Rocky always made himself available to the people we serve.

Director Carr said it was a pleasure to work with Rocky and that he will miss him. He said Rocky has proven himself to be a good leader but also a really good person.

Items removed from the Consent Agenda

None.

Approval of Consent Agenda

SBD #21-61 – Ordinance authorizing a change order to contract no. 230822 with Holabird & Root, LLC for additional architectural and engineering services for the River Division expansion and improvements. This action increases the contract total from \$1,929,086.83 to \$2,964,089.77, an increase of \$1,035,002.94.

SBD #21-62 – Ordinance authorizing a change order to contract no. 229569 with Jacobs

Engineering Group, Inc. for implementation of Transit Signal Priority (TSP) integration and design services. This action extends the contract term for thirteen and one-half months and increases the contract total from \$1,523,052.40 to \$1,735,077.16, an increase of \$212,024.76.

SBD #21-63 – Ordinance authorizing a change order to contract no. 227853 with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois for HMO and PPO Health Plan Medical Benefit Program services. This action extends the contract term for one (1) year and increases the contract total from \$89,887,600.00 to \$100,365,186.00, an increase of \$10,477,586.00.

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

Action Items

SBD #21-64 – Ordinance authorizing the release of the proposed 2022 Operating Budget and Two-Year Financial Plan for Suburban Service and Regional ADA Paratransit Service, and the 2022-2026 Five-Year Capital Program for public hearings.

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

Director Hastings left the meeting at 10:14 a.m.

SBD #21-65 – Ordinance establishing the 2022 Board Meeting Schedule.

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

Director Hastings rejoined the meeting at 10:16 a.m.

SBD #21-66 – Ordinance authorizing a change order to Contract No. 231656 with STV Construction, Inc. for Project Management Oversight (PMO) Services. This action amends the contract to increase the Maximum Fee Basis amount from \$1,632,025.35 to \$7,000,000.00, an increase of \$5,367,974.65.

Charlotte Obodzinski explained how raising the Maximum Fee Basis amount allows for greater flexibility and efficiency within the task order contract as capital project needs fluctuate over time.

Chairman Kwasneski added that the PMO functions to expedite construction and capital projects, giving Pace the opportunity to request more funds in the future with a track record of completing projects on time and within budget. He offered praise for the e-Builder software proposed by STV.

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

SBD #21-67 – Resolution honoring Joseph J. Stevens for providing legal counsel to Pace from 1984-2021.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Melinda Metzger said Joseph was an exceptional legal mind and Pace historian, who worked on many labor contracts and mentored many Pace staff members. She read the Resolution aloud.

Director Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance.

Issues/Discussion/Reports

Chairman Kwasneski encouraged Directors to review the August 2021 budget reports and financial statements contained in their packets, and to reach out to staff with questions.

Adjournment

Chairman Kwasneski asked for a motion to adjourn into closed session for the purposes of discussing employment matters (2-C-1). Director Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Arfa, Canning, Carr, Claar, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. All Directors voted Aye.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Reconvene

Chairman Kwasneski reconvened the Open Session of the Pace Board of Directors meeting at 11:08 a.m.

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

Directors virtually or telephonically present: Arfa, Hastings, Smith, and Soto.

Directors absent: None.

Adjournment

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

Director Claar 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 11:10 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace Corporate Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.



Elissa Ledvort
Secretary, Board of Directors