

**Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Northern Illinois Transit Authority
(f/k/a the Regional Transportation Authority)
550 West Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, Illinois
Minutes of the Open Session Meeting of the Pace Board of Directors
August 19, 2026**

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Northern Illinois Transit Authority (f/k/a Regional Transportation Authority) (“Pace”), met in open session on Wednesday, August 19, 2026 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 9:33 a.m.

Roll Call

Directors physically present: Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Directors absent: None.

SBD #26-56 – Resolution approving the open session meeting minutes of July 15, 2026.

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

Public Comment

Stephen Hiatt-Leonard thanked the Pace Board of Directors, particularly Director Arfa, and Executive Director Melinda Metzger, for their years of service to Pace and to the community.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman Kwasneski reported that today’s board meeting is unique; it is the last board meeting for all but three board members, including himself. He reported that in his 24 years of service to

Richard A. Kwasneski, *Chairman*

Rachel Arfa Christopher S. Canning Terrance M. Carr David B. Guerin Kyle R. Hastings Thomas D. Marcucci
William D. McLeod John D. Noak Jeffery D. Schielke Erin Smith Linda Soto Terry R. Wells

Board of Directors

Melinda J. Metzger, *Executive Director*

the agency, including 20 years as the Chairman of the Board, it has been a pleasure to work with the other Directors, many of whom he has worked with for decades. Everyone worked on behalf of the region, not just the counties they represented, which says a lot about their character and their dedication to the agency. He worked with three different Pace Executive Directors: T.J. Ross, Rocky Donahue, and Melinda, who all had the best interests of Pace in mind in performing their duties. He commended garage staff who serve Pace customers on the frontlines, and office staff who work hard to make positive impacts on customer experiences. He appreciated the support of the Board while making decisions that affected the agency and will miss the camaraderie. There were tough conversations the last two years in Springfield and a lot of unknowns. He believes the agency will survive and there are a lot of good things to come. The most important thing is that there is funding for Pace, CTA, and Metra service, which will help our riders. He wished the three Directors who were reappointed, (Directors Noak, Smith, and Wells), the new Pace Board, and the NITA board the best moving forward.

Directors' Reports

Director Arfa reported on attending a ribbon-cutting for the CTA Austin Green Line stop with Melinda and Director Wells, which connects to three Pace routes, demonstrating how the transit boards coordinate and work together. The station is now accessible with an elevator installed.

Director Arfa reported that serving on the Pace Board of Directors has been one of the greatest honors of her professional career, as her term is expiring. She realized how much she had to learn about transit when she started her role but learned what questions to ask over time. She was honored to work with her colleagues on the Board, who were fierce advocates for each community and for making public transit available and accessible. She thanked Melinda for her contributions to Pace over the past 50 years in a field where not many women are represented, saying that her innovation makes Pace and public transit work better for the entire region. She thanked paratransit bus operators who help people with disabilities get to school, work, medical appointments, or even fun outings, which build connections to our communities and help people access all that life has to offer. She thanked her seat-neighbor Director Canning for his mentorship in transportation.

Director Arfa gave a couple pieces of advice to the new incoming board members. First, understand and learn why service operates. There was a lot of work and advocacy behind the current service model; she cautioned against making changes immediately because they work for many people. Second, stay connected to the riders who use Pace, traditional ADA paratransit, and the RAP and TAP programs. The region's disability community relies on Pace service. Look at everything through a disability lens, because when you center disability, it makes the system accessible for everyone. Director Arfa reported that she will continue to be engaged in transit issues and will always be here to support the entire public transit system.

Director Canning reported that he is grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Pace Board of Directors with his fellow Directors for the last 13 years. He recognized:

- **Fellow Directors**, saying that the Resolutions honoring outgoing board members are like statistics on the back of a baseball card that cover the highlights but do not capture all the effort of board members when they are not at board meetings, and the time spent evaluating and making the right decisions, and working with staff and each other.
- **Executive Directors**. Director Canning reported serving under three different Pace Executive Directors, who were all laser-focused on doing the right thing for riders and making sure that public dollars were spent responsibly.
- **Staff**. Director Canning reported that when he first joined the Board, he was concerned about succession planning and up-and-coming leaders at Pace; over 13 years, the agency has built up with staff who produce great work that has helped Directors better serve the public.
- **Garages**. Director Canning said that everything starts at the garages. He is grateful to the employees who get up in the morning and make sure buses run regardless of whether it is snowing, raining, or hot. We do not have riders if we do not have buses, and we do not have buses if we do not have people working in garages. He commended the many employees who dedicate their lives with decades of service to Pace.
- **Million Milers**. Director Canning recognized Pace's program honoring bus operators who have driven one million miles without a preventable accident, which requires you to be a safe driver, as well as having many years of service. He hopes that Pace will continue to recognize million miler employees, and that the million milers impart their wisdom to the many new employees that Pace has hired over the past couple years.
- **Planning & Infrastructure Committee**. Director Canning recognized his colleagues on the Pace Board Planning & Infrastructure Committee: Directors Guerin, Smith, Soto, and Wells, and their work advising the development of the ReVision network revitalization and systemwide restructuring initiative, and the Driving Innovation strategic plan. They worked well as a collaborative group on how different services work together to benefit riders, not just to benefit their areas but to decide what was best for the Pace system and the region. He hopes the new Board will continue the Planning & Infrastructure Committee to address these important issues that impact Pace and the region.
- **ADA Paratransit and the TAP and RAP Programs**. Director Canning thanked Director Arfa for helping him and the whole Board better understand the critical role that TAP and RAP play in the lives of the disability community, allowing them to do things that they could not do before the programs existed. He hopes the new Board gets up to speed quickly about the importance of ADA and finds a way to reinstate the levels of TAP and RAP that existed in the past.
- **Chairman Kwasneski**. Director Canning said that the Chairman is the epitome of what a leader should be and thanked him for being gracious with his time, always willing to provide historical context, but not set in his ways. Chairman Kwasneski was continually open to innovation over 20 years, and innovation is what Pace does better than any transit agency. Chairman Kwasneski was a listener who made sure that all board members worked together in the best interest of Pace.

Lastly, Director Canning shared that 49 years ago, he began riding public transit as a student on Wilmette Wilbus, which became Nortran, and later Pace. Director Canning hopes that there is a student boarding a Pace bus today who will get involved in transit someday, like he did.

Director Carr reported that it has been a privilege to play a part in the Pace organization as a board member, as his term is expiring. He is proud of the changes that he witnessed during his 12 years of service. He has confidence that the new board members taking the places of the ones leaving will do a fantastic job and hopes that staff stays on to teach them and lead the way.

Director Guerin reported that it has been a great honor to serve on the Pace Board of Directors, as his term is expiring. He recognized Melinda as a first-class operator and Executive Director and complimented the great staff including the garages, the operators, and administration. He wished the remaining board members the best of luck, imparting his confidence that they will continue to fight for suburban transportation. He also recognized Chairman Kwasneski.

Director Hastings reported that it has been an honor to serve on the Pace Board of Directors, as his term is expiring, saying that Pace will be a lasting great memory because of the people. Citing his experience as the longest serving Mayor of Orland Hills and the longest serving Native American Mayor in the State of Illinois, working with staff at the state and federal levels, he complimented the quality of Pace staff and recognized Melinda, T.J. Ross, Rocky Donahue, Elissa Ledvort, Linda Swedlund, and Sandra Gonzalez.

Director Marcucci reported that it has been fun, and he enjoyed the work serving on the Pace Board of Directors, as his term is expiring. As the former RTA Act required that Pace Board Directors be current or former mayors, he reported serving for 28 years with former mayors from all over the region who had experience building up their communities. He enjoyed working with his colleagues and appreciated how the work was apolitical and always focused on making the right decision for riders. He complimented Melinda and her predecessors for their competency, many years of service, and their efforts learning the industry. He thanked the dedicated mechanics and operators who get buses out on the street every day and stated his awe and appreciation for Pace's million milers. He recognized Chris Rose, Community Relations Representative for DuPage County, for her exemplary work over the years attending meetings, keeping him informed on neighborhoods and constituencies, and for helping him prepare for his annual presentation to the DuPage County Board. He reminisced about his first Pace board meeting where a protest on ADA paratransit service took place, compared to the last decade where community members consistently thank Pace for their dedication to improving the quality of ADA service. He recalled how twenty years ago, Pace took over the operation of ADA paratransit service for the entire region. Director Marcucci also complimented Chairman Kwasneski's leadership.

Director Marcucci raised a couple concerns as he departs from the Pace Board of Directors. First, the changeover at Pace, CTA, Metra, and NITA is enormous, with ten Pace board members departing along with their institutional memory. Three Pace board members will remain, but he predicted the next couple years will be onerous for them as their colleagues ask questions and learn about the industry. Second, he is concerned about the cost of electrifying Pace's bus fleet over the next decade and the state mandate that public transit buses purchased after July 1, 2026 be zero emissions. He supports electrification but has concerns about how to pay for it with Pace's budget without significant state and federal support.

Director McLeod reported that it has been a great honor and privilege to serve the public as a member of the Pace Board of Directors, as his term is expiring. He takes great pride in the progress made in ADA services with the well-received TAP and RAP programs. He praised Melinda, Chairman Kwasneski, and staff for an outstanding job serving the public. He congratulated Directors Noak, Smith, and Wells for continuing to serve Pace and asked them to provide leadership to Pace's new board members. He is confident that Pace's best days are ahead.

Director Noak reported that he will continue to serve the Pace Board and is Pace's only current board member who will also serve on the NITA Board. He thanked his colleagues for their congratulations and friendship. He admired how this Board has worked so well together, putting the well-being of the entire region forward first. He said it would be foolish not to ask those who have served in the past for their insight, guidance, and knowledge base as the agency moves forward; he asked outgoing board members to remain available for questions about institutional knowledge. Director Noak looks forward to hitting the ground running with a great new Board of Directors, who will continue Pace's momentum as the region integrates and looks at new ways to provide service. He said that Pace's strength comes from its employees, and the Board will be committed to listening to valuable insight from all employees about how to make services better.

Director Schielke reported that he appreciates the opportunity to participate as a Pace board member with an outstanding group of counterparts, as his term is expiring. He said that the Board has great gratitude for the three phenomenal Pace Executive Directors he served with during his 24 years on the Board, through many changes. Just in the past four years, the City of Batavia, of which he is the Mayor, has added six new senior living communities and 1,000 new residents, and recently approved an annex at Moose Lodge for 830 additional senior living units; those developments have resulted in an increased demand for Pace's Ride in Kane dial-a-ride service. Director Schielke is very proud that Pace has served a real need in the community, as seniors regularly compliment Ride in Kane service and cite it as one of the reasons they chose to move to the area. He added that he is watching the NITA transition with great interest and appreciates that a few current Pace board members will remain on the Board. He fears that the transit agencies will become more politically influenced and hopes that is not the case. He plans to continue to be involved in transit advocacy in Kane County. Overall, Director Schielke is proud that Pace has made a very good transit system for people in the Chicago area to utilize.

Director Smith observed that it is fitting that "honor" and "privilege" were often used in the outgoing comments, because the Pace Board of Directors is one of the most honorable groups of people she has had the privilege of working with. She reported that, being recently appointed to the Pace Board six years ago, she has had to learn a lot from her colleagues and has even more to learn from staff, leadership, and the new board members. She thanked Director Canning of the Board Planning & Infrastructure Committee and Chairman Kwasneski of the Pace Board for their leadership. As one of the Pace board members who will continue to serve, she hopes that she will take everything she learned from the outgoing board members and continue to learn, to make everyone who has more experience proud.

Director Soto reported that she leaves Pace with great pride having served on the Board with her colleagues, who worked so well as a team. She reported that she pursued this position because of the respect she had for the former Pace representative from Lake County, Dick Welton, Mayor of Gurnee. When Director Soto was first elected as a young female Mayor of Hainesville in 1997, Mayor Welton was very supportive and encouraging. He introduced Director Soto to his staff and invited her to ask them any questions or for guidance at any time. When Director Welton unexpectedly passed away, Director Soto applied to finish his term on the Pace Board. Director Soto encouraged everybody to remember how Director Welton believed that it is important to listen to everybody no matter who they are or where they are from, and that it is important to help people to be as successful as possible no matter who they are or where they are from. She feels that spirit lives strongly at Pace, on this Board and in the mission of staff.

Director Soto reflected on growing up in Chicago using mass transit and living as an adult in suburban Cook County and Lake County, where she observed the difference in mass transit through those areas. She encourages everybody she meets to apply for a job at Pace, because the organization has the highest concentration of highly talented and motivated people that she has ever encountered in an organization. She complimented Melinda for leading Pace through Covid and legislative changes. She pointed out that when others call in sick or cancel their plans due to bad weather, that is when bus operators and garage staff are needed most; they are motivated, ready, and on the frontlines to help essential employees like hospital workers get to their essential jobs. Director Soto leaves the Pace Board with pride in all the Board has accomplished.

Director Wells thanked President Preckwinkle and the Cook County Board for reappointing him to the Pace Board of Directors; he appreciates the faith and confidence they have placed in him. It is bittersweet because it has been an honor serving with his colleagues for 20 years, and Pace is losing about 150 years of experience, which is very difficult to replace. He recognized Chairman Kwasneski's 20-year tenure and all his efforts in Springfield, Chicago, and at countless ribbon cutting across the region; he set the tone for the entire organization and Pace runs smoothly because of his efforts. Any great leader wants to leave an organization better than how he found it, which is what the Chairman has done.

Director Wells reported on interviews with Cook County board members regarding the expectations they have of Pace and the NITA board, and highlighted Pace's ongoing collaborative efforts with CTA and Metra. Cook County board members stressed the need for collaboration between the three agencies, the need for electric buses, and the need for more service. Director Wells reported to them that Pace is ahead of the curve, already planning what service Pace could implement with a significant financial investment, through the ReVision network restructuring initiative. He discussed the collaboration taking place at the NITA Ad Hoc Committee meetings and connecting with board members of the other service boards. He reported on the ribbon-cutting for the accessible CTA Austin Green Line stop, attended by the Governor, Mayor Johnson, and Congressman Davis, which is served by three Pace bus routes and connects Chicago, Oak Park, and surrounding towns to Midway airport. He reported his enthusiasm for the upcoming Harvey Multimodal Transportation Center in collaboration with

Metra, which will be great for the region and the City of Harvey. This \$70 million investment was made possible with a \$20 million federal RAISE grant recently secured by Chairman Kwasneski through his work in Washington, D.C. He invited outgoing board members to return to attend the ribbon-cutting when the Harvey facility is complete.

Director Wells concluded by thanking Melinda for providing a CNG cooling bus for a Thornton Township picnic on a recent Saturday afternoon so seniors could enjoy the event in comfort. The bus operator of the CNG cooling bus was very nice, and is an example of the great work done at Pace.

Executive Director's Report

Melinda acknowledged the significance of today's meeting. As the NITA transition continues, Pace is losing ten current board members. The RTA legislation created in 1984 was expected to last five years before it needed revision; four decades later, Pace stands as a strong and stable organization because of the leadership and financial stewardship of this Board. Having local elected mayors at the table has ensured that the needs of the region's diverse suburban communities remained central to Pace's mission. The Board brought firsthand knowledge of their communities and their understanding of public service, which resulted in safe and reliable transportation for the people who depend on it.

Through the work of the Board, Pace has strengthened mobility across the suburbs by advancing major service improvements, investing in new facilities and technologies, and expanding innovative services like On Demand, VanGo, Pulse, bus on shoulder, and I-90 flex lane service, which made public transit more responsive to riders' needs. Those achievements reflect the collective leadership of the Board, which understood the essential role that transit plays in connecting people to work, school, medical appointments, and opportunity. Pace is ready for the next chapter because of the strong leadership provided by the Board and the foundation it built. The work of this Board will continue to benefit the future of public transit in Illinois. Each board member has helped shape Pace in a meaningful way and Pace is grateful for their service.

Melinda reported that last month, Pace's Chicago ADA Advisory Committee, Suburban ADA Advisory Committee, and Citizens Advisory Board held their final meetings. For many years, these committees provided valuable perspective and guidance, helping Pace better understand the needs and experiences of riders with disabilities and the communities it serves. Their input helped shape important accomplishments, including service enhancements, the growth of TAP and RAP, and technology and information improvements for riders. The committees listened to the same presentations as the Board, such as ReVision, and made valuable comments about building a more effective and accessible transit network for the future that is easier for riders to use. Going forward, NITA will establish new advisory groups overseen by the NITA, as well as an Office of Disability Planning and Policy tasked with developing a regional transit accessibility plan. Pace thanks each outgoing committee member for their service, time, and contributions to improving accessible transportation across the region.

Melinda recognized 180 members of Pace's Quarter Century Club, which is comprised of employees who have dedicated at least 25 years of service to Pace. Their experience, professionalism, and commitment are important parts of the organization's strength. The Quarter Century Club represents 10% of Pace's total employees and mostly work at Pace garages.

Melinda reported that more than a dozen members of the Pace team participated in Chicago's 2026 Disability Pride Parade, marching alongside supporters, advocates, and riders with disabilities. Pace is thankful for opportunities to celebrate its riders in community parades.

Melinda thanked Director Schielke for leading a ribbon cutting for VanGo service at the Geneva Metra station. Geneva Mayor Burns, Congressman Foster, State Representative Ugaste, State Representative Hanson, and Kane County Board Member Leslie Juby attended. Geneva is Pace's ninth VanGo zone and follows recent launches of VanGo in Crystal Lake and University Park.

Melinda reported on a great opportunity to promote Pace service. Pace, Metra, CTA, and NITA will be featured in an upcoming episode of the Transit Unplugged video podcast, which highlights the transit system, food, and culture of different cities. Pace highlighted its ADA Paratransit Office downtown, bus on shoulder service, a new hybrid electric bus, and Pulse service, with stops at iconic business like the Taffy Apple factory store in Niles, Superdawg Drive-In in Chicago, and the historic Des Plaines Theatre. Superdawg poignantly revealed that during the pandemic when the world was shut down, they witnessed Pace Pulse service drive by every 15 minutes, which helped them believe that the world would go on and survive. Melinda thanked the Pace communications and operating staff for their work on this endeavor.

Melinda reported on the ribbon cutting for the newly accessible CTA Austin Green Line stop, which is served by three Pace routes and shows how much the transit agencies work together to serve riders. She added that on one of those connecting routes, 315, Pace recently extended service to the Midway Orange Line stop, and ridership has grown 52% since then.

Melinda reported that NITA has established an Ad Hoc Committee, and she appreciates the engagement from reappointed Directors Noak, Smith, and Wells during the NITA transition.

Melinda reported that the region's transit systems have worked together to provide free rides to K through 12 students on August 24th to mark the beginning of the new school year. Furthermore, NITA has provided funding to standardize student fares on CTA and Pace, from one dollar to 75 cents per ride. To encourage students to ride transit other than for school, student fares will be applied all day with no transfer fee between Pace and CTA within two hours of riding. Melinda debuted Pace's "kids ride free" goat marketing campaign video to poke fun at a recent incident on Seattle's TriMet system and to promote the NITA region fare change. Melinda thanked Pace staff Doug Sullivan, Maggie Skogsbakken, and Charles Aikerson for their work on the video.

Melinda reported that in July, the region experienced several severe storms which impacted ridership, yet Pace still carried over 2 million riders according to farebox data. Pace realizes that

it is not capturing all ridership using farebox data alone, so as in previous months, Pace looked to obtain certification from the FTA to use Automatic Passenger Counter (“APC”) data as part of its ridership analysis. Based on the adjustment to ridership figures using APC data, the Pace system carried approximately 88% of 2019 farebox levels in July 2026.

Melinda introduced Luis Montgomery who was appointed to the NITA board and the Pace Board representing North Suburban Cook County.

Chairman Kwasneski left the meeting at 10:46 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 10:48 a.m.
Director Arfa left the meeting at 10:51 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Citizens Advisory Board Reports

Lucille Zuccherro, co-chair of the Pace Citizens Advisory Board (“CAB”) and current Village Clerk of Addison, highlighted CAB’s recent work in representing riders and stakeholders. The CAB was composed of people who ride the system, current or former elected officials, community members, and social service organizations. The CAB provided Pace leadership with a community perspective on service design, technology, equity, and regional policy. Lucille Zuccherro reported that it is striking how many new and innovative programs Pace has rolled out over the last few years that CAB advised on; she stressed that the development of innovative, nontraditional programs needs to continue. Finally, CAB consistently advocated for fare policy integration and regional transit affordability. One of CAB’s most prominent areas of focus was a fare reform effort which led to the reduced CTA-Pace pass prices, the elimination of the Ventra transfer fees for regional Pace routes, and new joint Pace-CTA passes.

Adam Kerman, co-chair of CAB as well as a lifelong transit rider and avid advocate for suburban service, acknowledged the incredible stability and institutional knowledge of the outgoing Pace board members, saying that their tremendous dedication to public service has greatly served taxpayers. He said it is clear that the Board reads their packets and does their homework, which has resulted in a fiscally responsible agency that puts out a great deal of transit service relative to the limited funding provided by the state legislature over the years. He reflected on how the original RTA in 1984 was well-funded, but the legislature revised the funding a couple years later which resulted in the RTA fiscal crisis. The RTA then split into three divisions, including Pace. As we transition into the NITA era, the three service boards have more institutional knowledge than NITA, which has been given a lot of responsibilities. He believes that Melinda and her predecessors have put together a top-notch executive team, which should serve well going into the future.

Adam Kerman believes that we need to emphasize the true function and tremendous benefit of public transportation, which is making land accessible. Public transit reduces traffic congestion, transporting groups of people who are not driving individual cars, and are not using parking spaces at their origins and destinations. Landowners receive the benefit that public transportation provides, but do not want to financially contribute to the public transportation system; he believes that is the reason why public transit has not been funded enough over the years. There is more money available for public transit now through the new NITA legislation and more responsibilities. He looks forward to the increase in bus service that NITA offers and hopes it

works going into the future. This is a period of optimism, new service opportunities, and more development in the suburbs of Chicago.

Chairman Kwasneski thanked Lucille Zucchero and Adam Kerman for their efforts, stating that the Pace Board has always appreciated feedback from riders.

ADA Advisory Committee Reports

Francine Bell, chairwoman of the Pace Chicago ADA Advisory Committee (“CAC”), reported that she will miss the CAC, as it will be replaced by a single ADA Riders Council reporting to NITA. She is proud that the Pace Suburban ADA Advisory Committee (“SAC”) and CAC were vocal proponents of new funding to solve the transit fiscal cliff, and that the new funding was secured. She highlighted the importance of the RAP program, which gives people with disabilities the opportunity to travel independently, and the policy change that allows people certified for paratransit to ride free on CTA, Metra, and Pace mainline service, which is a blessing for those with fixed incomes. She reported on appearing in a video for Pace to introduce the new QSTRAINT wheelchair securement system on Pace’s newest buses, improving the experience of wheelchair users on fixed route buses.

Francine Bell was pleased that Pace recognized the 20th anniversary of the unification of regional paratransit operations under Pace. She attested that Pace has played a big role in improving mobility and quality of life since the passage of ADA law in 1990 and modernizing paratransit operations. She is grateful for Pace because she remembers what life was like before ADA legislation, climbing the bus with braces as a polio survivor until paratransit was introduced in 1978. She looks forward to continuing to advocate for paratransit improvements under NITA.

Michael Brynda, chairman of the SAC and Administrator at Achieving Independence and Mobility Center, reported that the CAC and SAC met jointly for the final time in July. The CAC and SAC visited the new Paratransit Transfer Facility at Pace’s Northwest Transportation Center and are very grateful to the state for the funding to make that project happen. The CAC and SAC helped advise Pace on the need for a better transfer facility in south Cook County and a Calumet City ADA Transfer Facility is now being constructed. The CAC and SAC’s interest in environmental suitability led to Pace securing its first electric paratransit vehicle, which is in use in the western suburbs and will build upon Pace’s Project Zero commitment. He reported that TAP and RAP were very successful programs that were frequent topics of discussion at CAC and SAC meetings.

Chairman Kwasneski commented that Pace’s relationship with the ADA community has drastically improved since taking over paratransit for the region 20 years ago, because the advisory committees served as a way for Pace to provide information and communicate with riders. It is important that Pace keeps lines of communication open despite NITA restructuring.

Items removed from the Consent Agenda

None.

Approval of Consent Agenda

SBD #26-57 – Resolution honoring Andre Boykin, Superintendent of Maintenance at West Division, upon his retirement from Pace after 45 years of dedicated service.

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

Director Hastings left the meeting at 11:03 a.m. and was not present for this vote. He returned to the meeting at 11:34 a.m. All other directors voted aye.

Resolutions Honoring Pace’s Board of Directors

SBD #26-58 – Resolution honoring Director Rachel Arfa for six years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-59 – Resolution honoring Director Christopher S. Canning for 13 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-60 – Resolution honoring Director Terrance M. Carr for 12 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-61 – Resolution honoring Director David B. Guerin for eight years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-62 – Resolution honoring Director Kyle R. Hastings for 20 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-63 – Resolution honoring Director Thomas D. Marcucci for 28 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-64 – Resolution honoring Director William D. McLeod for six years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-65 – Resolution honoring Director Jeffery D. Schielke for 24 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-66 – Resolution honoring Director Linda Soto for 11 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus.

SBD #26-67 – Resolution honoring Chairman Richard A. Kwasneski for 24 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Pace Suburban Bus, including a twenty-year tenure as Chairman. He is the longest-serving Chairman in Pace history.

Director Noak moved, and Director Canning seconded a motion, to approve the Resolutions.

A video from garage division staff thanking the corresponding Director who represents them was played. Honorees were presented with custom bus stop signs.

Director Noak left the meeting at 11:27 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

Director Schielke left the meeting at 11:37 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 11:39 a.m.

Action Items

SBD #26-68 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to Gatesman, Inc. for marketing and advertising services in an amount not to exceed \$20,000,000.00 for the base contract term.

Doug Sullivan, Manager of External Relations, presented on how the current contract is expiring. A new contract is needed to support critical efforts such as the recruitment of bus drivers and mechanics and ridership growth, and includes media buying, creative development, and social media communications. Pace is fully prepared to modify this contract cooperatively with NITA and the service boards for joint marketing activities, or to stop the contract for convenience.

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

SBD #26-69 – Ordinance adopting amended Bylaws of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Northern Illinois Transit Authority.

Andrew Mueller, General Counsel, presented.

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

SBD #26-70 – Ordinance selecting a lead Director of the Pace Board of Directors effective September 1, 2026.

Andrew Mueller, General Counsel, presented.

Director Noak moved, and Director Canning seconded a motion, to approve the Ordinance. Director Noak motioned to nominate Director Smith as Pace's lead Director, and Director McLeod seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski. Director Wells abstained. All other directors voted aye.

Director Arfa left the meeting at 11:48 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Issues/Discussion/Reports

Erik Llewellyn, Chief Planning Officer, presented pilot service changes on Routes 806 and 808 in McHenry County to operate all day instead of pausing service midday. The routes serve travel markets between Woodstock and Crystal Lake in McHenry County. Currently, riders have limited all-day fixed route options and must rely on alternative services such as MCRide, the Connect program, Pace Vanpool, or VanGo to travel within the county. Adding midday service would expand travel options, improve connections to Pace Route 550 and Metra, and support future growth. Because Routes 806 and 808 will provide midday service under this pilot, they will no longer be classified as commuter routes. As a result, Pace will therefore provide complementary ADA paratransit service during the same hours that both routes operate. Erik Llewellyn and Melinda thanked Director Smith for meeting with McHenry County staff, who were thrilled for the increase in service to begin. Erik thanked the Board Planning & Infrastructure Committee for all the service changes they have supported over the years.

Adjournment

Chairman Kwasneski asked for a motion to adjourn into closed session for the purposes of discussing closed session minutes (2-C-21) and pending litigation (2-C-11). Director Schielke moved, and Director McLeod seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. All directors voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Reconvene

Chairman Kwasneski reconvened the open session of the Pace Board of Directors meeting at 12:04 p.m.

Directors physically present: Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, Marcucci, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Chairman Kwasneski.

Directors absent: None.

SBD #26-71 – Resolution approving the closed session meeting minutes of July 15, 2026.

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

SBD #25-72 – Ordinance approving action on Lloyd Johnson v. Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Northern Illinois Transit Authority and Otho Markham; 2025 L 007855.

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

All directors voted aye.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Kwasneski asked for a motion and second to adjourn the meeting. Director Marcucci moved, and Director Soto seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote; all Directors voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, September 16, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace corporate headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Elissa Ledvort
Board Secretary, Board of Directors