



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
April 17, 2024

The Board of Directors of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met in open session on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace corporate headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois, pursuant to notice.

Director Marcucci announced that he is serving as the Acting Chairman while Chairman Kwasneski is in Springfield on Pace business regarding the fiscal cliff. Acting Chairman Marcucci led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

Roll Call

Directors physically present: Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, McLeod, Smith, Soto, and Acting Chairman Marcucci.

Director Soto moved and Director Guerin seconded a motion to allow Directors Hastings, Noak, and Schielke to attend via phone. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. Directors Hastings, Noak, and Schielke joined the meeting via phone immediately following the vote.

Directors absent: Wells and Chairman Kwasneski.

Acting Chairman Marcucci asked for moment of silence for former Pace Director Al Larson, who passed away last month.

SBD #24-19 – Resolution in memory of former Pace Director Al Larson.

Director McLeod moved, and Director Carr seconded a motion to approve the Resolution.

Acting Chairman Marcucci, Director McLeod, Director Schielke, and Melinda Metzger shared memories of Director Larson, his friendships and political battles, his advocacy for the Village of Schaumburg, how he inspired people to pursue careers in government, and his support of Pace.

Director Wells joined the meeting in-person at 9:35 a.m.

Director Noak joined the meeting in-person at 9:40 a.m.

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 motion passed with the following roll call vote: Directors Arfa, Canning, Carr, Guerin, Hastings, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Acting Chairman Marcucci. All directors voted aye.

SBD #24-20 – Resolution approving the open session meeting minutes of March 20, 2024.

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

Public Comment

None.

Chairman’s Report

Acting Chairman Marcucci expressed kind words about Director Larson, saying he will be missed.

Directors’ Reports

Director Canning praised the comprehensive and detailed reports presented at the Joint meeting of Pace’s Planning and Instructure Committees held in March and attended by Directors Soto, Smith, and Guerin. Erik Llewellyn, Chief Planning Officer, reported that Pace is proceeding ahead of schedule on Driving Innovation, Pace’s strategic long-range vision plan. Erik Llewellyn reported on ridership throughout the region over time, identifying areas of progress. Charlotte Obodzinski, Department Manager of PPMO, reported on Pace’s zero emissions bus (“ZEB”) facility plan and overall approach to procuring buses, to determining how big facilities need to be and what needs to be done to renovate them, and to determining how much power we need and working with ComEd to get that power. Condensed versions of the reports may be brought to the full board.

As Pace’s audit liaison, Director Carr reported on a routine meeting with Jason Coyle from Baker Tilly, Pace’s external auditor, to assess how the Board is kept apprised of Pace operations. The meeting was positive.

Director Guerin reported that Pace is holding a hiring event in River Grove today at Triton College, which serves 27 communities.

Director Schielke speculated on when the Illinois legislature could take action on the PART study. Melinda reported that a bill may be introduced to consolidate the service boards this session. He discussed how suburban officials are suspicious of who is driving the consolidation, who would serve on the consolidated board, and who would have the power to appoint trustees.

Director Smith congratulated the Pace leadership team for collaborating so effectively that we are ahead of schedule on ambitious and complex ZEB plans, saying it would be overwhelming for most companies. Acting Chairman Marcucci asked to observe meetings of Planning and Infrastructure committees, as he believes implementing and paying for zero emissions is the biggest issue facing Pace. If all the funding was there tomorrow, it still would not be easy.

Director Soto echoed the comments of Director Canning and Director Smith on the Joint Planning and Infrastructure meeting. She reported on ReVision workshops being held next week.

Director Noak reported that language to consolidate the transit agencies may be introduced in a bill within the next week or two. He encouraged Directors to keep an eye out for it.

Executive Director's Report

Melinda Metzger reported on Springfield. The first week of April, Melinda testified before the Illinois House Appropriations – Public Safety Committee. Last week, Chairman Kwasneski and Melinda met with legislators to continue conversations about the fiscal cliff. They highlighted Pace's post-pandemic initiatives to grow our family of services, Pace's collaborative work with Metra and CTA to enhance regional transportation, and the importance of investing both operating and capital dollars in public transportation, an essential service. Pace showcased how it has spent Rebuild Illinois capital grants, which is crucial to meet 2040 zero emissions goals.

Melinda reported on ReVision, Pace's systemwide restructuring initiative, which will reassess how service is provided and develop a proposed regional service network based on existing and projected markets. Travel patterns have changed significantly in the wake of Covid-19 as riders are no longer travelling downtown every day. Pace will hold two ReVision workshops with key stakeholders on April 22 and 23 to gather input on post-pandemic mobility needs of riders. ReVision will be the focus of the next Planning and Infrastructure Committees meeting in June.

Melinda reported that staff is making stakeholders and passengers aware of the benefits of the new Rideshare Access Program (RAP), an additional travel option for ADA-certified riders to use rideshare services like Uber and UZURV at a subsidized rate. Staff developed marketing materials for municipality and partner agency websites and newsletters. Since RAP launched on March 11, 5,000 people have enrolled.

Melinda presented a testimonial video about Pace VanGo, a flexible first mile/last mile service and innovative way to encourage people to use public transit without a daily commitment to use our programs. The video will be on municipal websites to promote that we have vehicles at certain Metra and CTA stations.

Melinda reported that as a provider of public transportation, which by design removes cars from the road, every day is Earth Day to Pace. Pace is operating its first battery electric bus along 95th Street and testing its first battery electric paratransit vehicle. Pace will add 12 electric buses to the North Division fleet and 10 more electric buses to different garages throughout the region by year's end. Pace will participate in Highland Park's Electric Vehicle Show on April 27th and

Alsip's Green Drives Conference on May 9th. In celebration of Earth Day, Pace will distribute wildflower seeds to Directors and staff.

Melinda reported on recruitment efforts as Pace recovers from the nationwide operator shortage. Pace continues subsidizing CDL training tuition at community colleges throughout the region in exchange for graduates then working for Pace. Currently, 78 candidates are in training and 34 are in the hiring process. Pace is down 130 drivers but needs even more to expand service. Pace holds weekly Hire-on-the-Spot events at headquarters and has started hosting weekly Hire-on-the-Spot events at Heritage, West, and River divisions every Wednesday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Melinda reported that the year-to-date February budget is favorable for both suburban and ADA service. Average weekday ridership for March 2024 increased 15.2% over March 2023.

Director Schielke left the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

Items removed from the Consent Agenda

None.

Approval of Consent Agenda

SBD #24-21 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to Paul Borg Construction Company for furniture lifting and carpet replacement at Pace Headquarters in an amount not to exceed \$622,668.00.

SBD #24-22 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to Trapeze Software Group, Inc. DBA Vontas for installation of 5Ghz radios on Pace buses and integration with existing Transit Signal Priority signals in an amount not to exceed \$3,369,897.00.

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

Director Schielke was not present during the roll call vote. All other directors voted aye.

Director Schielke returned to the meeting via phone at 10:08 a.m.

Action Items

SBD #24-23 – Ordinance adopting Pace's 2024 Internal Audit Plan.

Colette Thomas Gordon, Chief Internal Auditor, reviewed the sections of the plan, read the names of Internal Audit staff, and stated that all internal audit members are independent.

Director Smith 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, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Acting Chairman Marcucci.

All directors voted aye.

SBD #24-24 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to WEX Health, Inc. for third party administration of Pace employee health benefit plans in an amount not to exceed \$684,966.00.

Sandra Gonzalez, Senior Benefits Administrator, presented on the RFP process, the evaluation of two bids, and why the lowest bidder was not chosen. Director Smith praised the approach staff took in evaluating proposals given the complexity of benefits administration, which is prone to litigation and difficult for employees to figure out. She said selecting a provider with a proven record in the technical capabilities to support the enrollment process protects employees from making decisions that threaten health coverage. Director Canning praised the detailed memo.

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, Guerin, Hastings, McLeod, Noak, Schielke, Smith, Soto, Wells, and Acting Chairman Marcucci. All directors voted aye.

SBD #24-25 – Ordinance authorizing the award of a contract to MV Transportation, Inc. for fixed route bus service on Pace routes 711 and 715 in an amount not to exceed \$10,437,796.94.

Acting Chairman Marcucci asked why Pace cannot perform this work in-house. Lindsey Umek, Chief Operating Officer, and Melinda explained that Pace contracted out several fixed routes pre-pandemic due to the deadhead at the beginning of routes to our garages. Due to the deadhead associated with these routes and the ongoing operator shortage, Pace requires a contractor now and will reevaluate upon contract expiration.

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

Issues/Discussion/Reports

Acting Chairman Marcucci encouraged Directors to review the February 2024 budget reports and financial statements contained in their packets.

Adjournment

Acting Chairman Marcucci 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 Noak moved and Director Wells seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. All directors voted aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Reconvene

Acting Chairman Marcucci reconvened the open session of the Pace Board of Directors meeting at 10:28 a.m.

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

Directors telephonically present: Hastings and Schielke.

Directors absent: Chairman Kwasneski.

SBD #24-26 – Resolution approving the closed session meeting minutes of March 20, 2024.

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

Adjournment

There being no further business, Acting Chairman Marcucci asked for a motion and second to adjourn the Pace Board of Directors meeting. Director Noak moved and Director Soto seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous vote; all Directors voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Pace Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at Pace Corporate Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Elissa Ledvort
Board Secretary, Board of Directors