



**NORTHERN INDIANA COMMUTER TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
November 17, 2017  
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District  
33 East U.S. Highway 12  
Chesterton, IN 46304-3514  
Public Session – 10:30 a.m. (CST)**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mark Yagelski  
Christine Cid  
Mark Catanzarite

Michael Repay  
David Prancus  
Jim Biggs

Mike Gonder  
Scott Lauerman  
Andrew Bozak

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Todd Bjornstad-CSS & SB RR  
Timothy Whalen-AECOM  
Lawrence Kirchnen-Transystems  
Tim Zorn-Post-Tribune  
Greg Price – Passenger  
Karie Koehneke-Patrick Engineering Inc.  
Brian Jones-INDOT  
Mike Yacullo-Ciorba Group  
Felicia Haberkamp-Group 7even

AJ Monroe-Holladay Properties  
Michael McGee-Rail Industry Specialist  
Steven Lyons-Rider  
Gerald Williamson – Passenger  
Paul F. Willer – Passenger  
Roy G. Benedict – Passenger  
Dan Herring- Lochner, Inc  
Fred Owens-HOH Group

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Michael Noland  
Chuck Lukmann, Esq.  
Anthony Siegmund  
Joe Crnkovich  
Bob Byrd  
Kelly Wenger  
Jodi Hellenga

John Parsons  
Christine Dearing  
Bill O’Dea  
Laura Harrington  
Steve Plesha  
Brianna Anderson  
Victor Babin

Nicole Barker  
Boris Matakovic  
Jessie Watts  
Amber Kettring  
Justice Anderson  
Stephanie Sullivan

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman, Mark Yagelski, called the meeting to order.

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Yagelski requested approval of the minutes from September 29, 2017. Ms. Cid motioned to accept the Public Session and Executive Session Board minutes for September 29, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mr. Biggs. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments.

## **PURCHASING (Purchasing Packet Attached)**

Tony Siegmund, NICTD's Purchasing Manager, stated that NICTD requires the Board to review five purchasing items. Mr. Siegmund provided a written summary of each project and also gave the Board a verbal summary. . The purchasing items were listed in the Recommendations that follow and the Board's vote is requested at the end of each Recommendation.

The first item was a competitive bid for 2018 Ties. Mr. Siegmund summarized the bid process, proposals received, and NICTD's staff recommendation. Ms. Cid made a motion to approve the staff recommendation and grant the President the authority to issue a Notice to Proceed at his discretion. Mr. Bozak seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The second item was a bid for Refurbished Ballast Cars. Mr. Siegmund summarized the bid process, proposals received and NICTD's staff recommendation. Mr. Noland expressed concern over the current condition of the existing Ballast Cars. Mr. Catanzarite made a motion to approve the staff recommendation. Mr. Gonder seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The third item was a bid for Gate Mechanisms. Mr. Siegmund summarized the bid process, the proposals received, and NICTD's staff recommendation. Mr. Siegmund asked the Board to approve the NICTD staff recommendation. Mr. Catanzarite made a motion to grant the President the authority to issue a Notice to Proceed at his discretion. Mr. Bozak seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The fourth item was a bid for Title and Closing Services. Mr. Siegmund summarized the bid process, the proposals receive and NICTD's staff recommendation. Chuck Lukmann, General Counsel, explained the services and requirements NICTD expects from Title and Closing Services for both the Double Track NWI and West Lake Corridor projects. Mr. Siegmund asked the Board to grant the President the authority to negotiate pricing with the three strongest proposers and award contracts for this Professional Service at his discretion. Ms. Cid motioned to approve the staff recommendation; Mr. Gonder seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The last item was a bid for Real Time Arrival Software. Mr. Siegmund explained that NICTD recently completed a test trial using ETA Transit's software. Boris Matakovic, NICTD Chief Information Officer, further explained how this real-time train tracking software works and how it will benefit riders who will be able to see at a glance on their smartphones or computers where a particular train is on a map and whether it is on time. Mr. Siegmund requested that the Board grant the President the authority to enter into a Contract up to five years for an amount of Two Hundred Ninety Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and 00/100 (\$292,500.00) with ETA Transit of Boca Raton, Florida for Real Time Arrival Software. Mr. Bozak made a motion to approve and grant the President the authority to issue a Notice to Proceed for the Real Time Arrival Software. Mr. Catanzarite seconded motion. Motion passed unanimously.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **Real Estate Policies and Procedure Manual.**

Chuck Lukmann, General Counsel, introduced NICTD's Real Estate Policies and Procedure Manual. Mr. Lukmann explained that development of this manual is required to comply with federal requirements for both Double Track and West Lake projects. Mr. Lukmann asked the Board to approve the Real Estate Policies and Procedures Manual. Mr. Catanzarite made a motion to adopt the Real Estate Policies and Procedures Manual as presented by Mr. Lukmann. Mr. Gonder seconded motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Double Track NWI and West Lake Corridor Project Update.**

Mr. Noland shared that NICTD submitted both West Lake and Double Track Projects to the Federal Transit Administration for a project rating on September 8, 2017. NICTD expects to hear whether the projects receive a favorable rating and are listed in the President's Fiscal Year 2019 budget by February of 2018. Mr. Noland stated the importance of this milestone, and shared that NICTD is done with preliminary engineering, and nearing completion of the environmental process required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Mr. Noland stated that NICTD expects to complete the NEPA process by mid to late December of 2017, for the Double Track Project at which time a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is anticipated. For West Lake, Mr. Noland stated that NICTD is close to finishing the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The FEIS/Record of Decision is expected to be finished in the first quarter of 2018.

**Metra Inspection Tour:** Mr. Yagelski complimented Mr. Noland on a recent important train ride with members from NICTD's Board and Metra's Board. Mr. Noland stated this was a great opportunity to share our operations, improvements, and what needs to be done.

### **South Bend Realignment Update.**

Mr. Noland advised the Board of the current status of the South Bend Realignment Project. The South Bend Realignment consists of moving NICTD's existing line to the west end of the

airport, permitting us to attain a 90-minute travel time goal. NICTD was asked to put the project on hold to allow South Bend to explore other alignment options that both South Bend and NICTD may benefit from. South Bend hired AECOM in order to perform these studies. The target completion date for this study is the end of January or early February of 2018, which will include an operational and economic analysis.

### **Metra Fare Increase.**

Mr. Noland notified the Board that Metra has an upcoming fare increase effective in February 2018 that will impact our Hegewisch riders. Mr. Noland added we are currently seeing a higher number of cars in our parking lots in Hammond and East Chicago. NICTD will report in January on how this affects NICTD as part of the 2018 Business Plan.

### **Recognition.**

Mr. Noland recognized the upcoming retirement of Transit Police Chief Bob Byrd and Vice President of Marketing and Planning John Parsons. Bob Byrd started working for NICTD in 1990 and is one of the most visible and respected Chiefs in the area. Mr. Noland announced and congratulated Officer Jessie Watts, Jr. on his promotion as Acting Chief of Police. Mr. Noland stated NICTD had the utmost confidence in Acting Chief Jessie Watts, Jr. Lastly, Mr. Noland recognized John Parsons for his dedication and ongoing support of the railroad for more than 25 years. Mr. Parsons addressed the Board and thanked them for the opportunity to work for the railroad over the last 25 years and observed that many exciting projects are on the horizon.

### **TICKET SALES, ADVERTISING, AND MARKETING REPORT**

Nicole Barker, Director of Capital Investment & Implementation, presented the Ridership and Performance Report. Compared to last year from January to October, average weekday ridership is down 1.6%, average off-peak is up 0.4%, and average weekend ridership is up 7.5%.

Ms. Barker drew attention to digital ticket sales increasing from 51% to 57% over the last year comprising of almost 60% of our revenue. Looking back to 2013 when NICTD only utilized Ticket Vending Machines for digital purchases, 34% of tickets were purchased digitally. The South Shore Line App developed in 2014 and usage is climbing steadily.

**Customer Service.** Ms. Barker explained that NICTD is trying to encourage riders to utilize the digital medium as much as possible to benefit both NICTD staff and riders. NICTD is trying to ensure passengers have the information needed in order to ride our service easily. Recently Amber Kettring, Customer Service Manager, was hired to intensively focus on customer service with several others including the PCO (Passenger Communications Office) and Justice Anderson. NICTD is currently tracking and analyzing the customer service complaints and compliments we receive to find more innovative ways to provide the best customer service.

Lastly, Ms. Barker notified the Board that NICTD's customer service team would be traveling downtown to meet with the RTA (Regional Transportation Authority) to ensure information is being communicated properly to our passengers via their telephone support system.

**Bank On.** Ms. Barker brought attention to the new Bank On posters that have been placed in the South Shore Line trains created by Group 7even to give more information to passengers.

**Events.** Ms. Barker summarized winter events and how we help connect passengers to Notre Dame and Chicago Bears home games, Magnificent Mile Lights parade November 18, Thanksgiving Day Parade, and Black Friday Shopper's Specials. She also explained the success of this year's Veterans Ride Free program.

**Advertising.** Ms. Barker concluded by sharing some of the images Group 7even had created for special events on social media.

Mr. Noland added that social media is a powerful tool that NICTD was not utilizing to the fullest extent previously. In 2014, NICTD had 70 Facebook followers; that number climbed to over 10,000 in the last month. Social media provides NICTD with a strong mechanism to communicate with our passengers and resolve matters that arise swiftly.

## **OPERATIONS REPORT**

Mr. O'Dea, Chief Operating Officer, commented on On-Time Performance, stating that it is increasing year over year. In 2016, On-Time Performance was at 81% and we are currently at 86%.

Previously, train 117 departed Millennium Station at 5:10pm in a time slot that we have occupied for many years. Due to Metra's schedule change, one of their trains was set to arrive at the very time our train was set to depart. Mr. O'Dea stated we changed our schedule to depart Millennium Station at 5:14 and it seems to be working fine.

**Bikes on Trains.** Mr. O'Dea reported on the strong 2017 Bikes on Train program. NICTD saw an increase in bicycle ridership primarily due to NICTD allowing bikes on 4 weekday trains. NICTD looks forward to the 2018 season starting on April 1, 2018.

**Winter Preparedness Plan.** Mr. O'Dea stated every year NICTD works hard to prepare for the challenges winter brings, including making sure our employees keep in mind our individual responsibility to create a safe work environment. We have two diesel locomotives, one in Michigan City, and one which we will deploy to Gary prior to Thanksgiving in case it is needed. Kristen Coslet and Ray Morehouse from NICTD's safety team have created an excellent plan with preparation of water and warming ponchos if needed in Hammond, East Chicago, and Michigan City.

## **TENTATIVE BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2018 BOARD MEETINGS**

The tentative list of board meetings for 2018 was distributed. Please note that the July 2018 Board Meeting date will be rescheduled.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Trustees Biggs, Catanzarite, and Cid noted what a good job NICTD has done with emphasis on the history of the Railroad, and expressed gratitude for John Parsons's and Bob Byrd's dedication and service, and enthusiasm for the new staff hires.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Biggs made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gonder. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mr. Repay', is written over the typed name.

Mr. Repay, Board Secretary



## MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

November 17, 2017

An Executive Session was held by the Board on November 17, 2017 at the NICTD offices at 33 East Highway 12, Chesterton, Indiana. The following Board members were present:

Mark Yagelski  
Christine Cid  
Mark Catanzarite

Michael Repay  
David Prankus  
Jim Biggs

Mike Gonder  
Scott Lauerman  
Andrew Bozak

Pursuant to the Notice of the Executive Session as posted and disclosed pursuant to Indiana law, the Board discussed the following:

- (1) Initiation of litigation, pending litigation, and litigation that has been threatened specifically in writing.
- (2) Collective bargaining.
- (3) Purchase of real property.

The governing body by approving these minutes certifies that no subject matter was discussed in the Executive Session other than the subject matter contained in the public notice and referred to above.

These Minutes dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Michael Repay, Secretary

APPROVED:

  
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Mark Yagelski, Chairman