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COLTS names new director

Viewmont Mall GM to take over county agency next month

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The longtime general manager of the Viewmont Mall will head the County of Lakeranna Transit System.

The COLTS board of directors unanimously voted Wednesday to hire Tim McGrath, 57, of Dunmore, to be its next executive director.



McGRATH

McGrath replaces Robert Fiume, who left COLTS last week to become the executive director of the Luzerne County Transportation Authority. McGrath will assume his new position Nov. 8, earning

\$115,000 annually — a \$6,600 pay increase over Fiume's salary at COLTS.

Board Chairman Larry Wynn said they increased the pay after researching other comparable executive director salaries. He noted that Fiume is also making \$115,000 in Luzerne County. Fiume's announcement in August that

he would resign, COLTS received 38 resumes from people across the country after advertising the position internally, locally and nationally, according to the transit system. The personnel committee narrowed the list to 12 candidates before reducing it to four, and McGrath was unanimously viewed as the top choice.

“He’s a proven manager with good organizational skills,” Wynn said. “We just thought he’d be a good fit to lead our transportation company in the right direction.” Under McGrath, they hope to increase ridership and avoid funding cuts, Wynn said.

Although McGrath does not have prior experience in the transportation industry, Wynn noted his two-plus decades of general manager experience. Public transit experience was a plus in the interview process, but Wynn also described a preference to hire locally. COLTS’ administrative employees, who are all experienced in the transportation industry, will help McGrath adjust to the role, Wynn said.

“He’s a proven leader in the community,” Wynn said.

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In addition to spending more than 20 years at the Viewmont Mall, McGrath serves on the boards of directors for the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce and Goodwill Industries. McGrath said he has more than 30 years of experience in the private, public and nonprofit sectors.

At the Viewmont Mall, McGrath said he oversaw day-to-day operations, including all aspects of security, maintenance and housekeeping, as well as dealing with leasing, tenants and customers. He also oversaw capital expenditure projects such as

parking and paving, he said. "I like to say that it's crisis management at its best most of the time," McGrath said.

He drew parallels between issues facing COLTS and the retail industry. Retail has to compete with e-commerce, and COLTS competes with services such as Lyft and Uber, he said.

Both roles also require addressing nationwide workforce shortages, he said.

Early relationships with the late Gov. Robert P. Casey and the late, former U.S. Sen. Harris Wofford instilled a belief in public service, McGrath said, explaining why he applied for the position. Working with the cham-

ber of commerce, McGrath said he looked at ways to assist and enhance the business community, and public transportation plays a vital role. He aims to make sure COLTS is properly serving county residents as well as well as ensuring financial stability.

He wants to build on COLTS' successes and said he looks forward to working with the team in place as he takes over as executive director.

"I'm up to the challenge, and I'm actually excited about it," McGrath said.

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