

Minutes

RTA External & Stakeholder Relations & Advocacy Committee

9:24 a.m. November 28, 2023

Committee Members: Koomar (Vice), Biasiotta, McPherson, Welch

Other Board Members: Love, Lucas, Sleasman, Weiss

Not present: Mersmann

Staff/Other: Birdsong Terry, Burney, Caver, Dangelo, Davidson, Feke, Fesler, Fleig, Freilich, Garofoli, Gautam, Harris, Johnson, Jones, Jupina, Kirkland, Marquit Renwald, Miller, Rusnov, Schipper, Smith, Stover, Sutula, Talley, Togher, Walker Minor, Woodford, Wright, Young, Zimmerman

Public: Brewington, Gibbons, Johnson, Loh, Meissner, Rubin, Sopko, Ware

The meeting was called to order at 9:24 a.m. Four (4) committee members were present.

Community Advisory Committee

Natoya Walker Minor, Deputy General Manager, Administration & External Affairs and Albert Johnson, Supervisor, Customer Engagement, gave the presentation. Today's presentation will be to present candidates for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

Purpose

- Make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on fare changes, Long-Range Plan updates, and major or new projects.
- Provide comments on service changes.
- Review, monitor, and recommend service and program improvements or expansion projects to RTA.
- Strengthen relations within the transit communities through the development and implementation of public relations campaigns, programs, and events.

Member Qualifications

- 18 years old or older
- Resident of Cuyahoga County
- A CAC member must be familiar with public transportation and, preferably, use it occasionally, if not frequently
- Active interest in public transportation
- CAC members must be able to communicate knowledgeably about the Authority and public transit in general
- Reflect GCRTA's customer base
- Willingness to make a substantial time commitment

Committee Selection

- Written Application
- Ad Hoc Screening Committee
- Board of Trustees makes final appointment from External & Stakeholder Relations & Advocacy Committee recommended candidates

Committee Composition

- Eleven to fifteen individuals from diverse communities within Cuyahoga County
- Selected by application to the CAC by the Board of Trustees
- Terms for CAC members shall be two years (staggered)
 - Eight initial appointments for two years
 - Three initial appointments for one year
 - Four remaining vacancies to be filled next year (2024) alongside the one-year appointments

The eleven recommended members include:

2-year terms

- **Burmeister, Brooklyn:** Brooklyn presently works as an Architectural Designer for the DLR Group. Brooklyn is a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and AIA Cleveland. Brooklyn utilizes fixed-route services daily.
- **Gibbons, Brian:** Brian has years of experience representing labor forces, senior management of public media, non-profit, and government agencies. Brian is currently a member of Clevelanders for Public Transit and Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation. Brian utilizes fixed-route services 4-5 times a week.
- **Kennick, Charles:** Charles presently works as a Neighborhood Development Coordinator for the Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation ("CDC"). Charles is a member of the Old Brooklyn CDC and the Franklin Clinton Block Club. Charles utilizes fixed-route and rail service 2-3 times a week.
- **Howerton, Alicia:** Alicia presently works as the Strategic Partnership Manager for the Cleveland Sight Center. Alicia serves on the Cuyahoga County Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities (CCACPD) and is Co-Chair of the CCACPD Subcommittee for Transportation. Alicia is a frequent Paratransit rider.
- **Loh:** Loh is a member of various community organizations including Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation, ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County Action Committee, and Clevelanders for Public Transit. Loh utilizes fixed-route and rail services daily.
- **Meissner, Paul:** Paul presently works as a Financial Controller for the Realife Real Estate Group/ HSK Management. Paul is a member of Clevelanders for Public Transit and is the Precinct Election Officer for the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. Paul utilizes fixed-route and rail services 2-3 times a week.
- **Sieck, Jonathan:** Jonathan's profession is in managing the mobile field workforce with the responsibility of route planning, capacity requirements, communication, and efficiency. Jonathan currently serves on the board of directors for Neighborhood Family Practice and is a member of the South of Lorain Block Club. Jonathan utilizes fixed-route and rail services daily.
- **Ware, Cole:** Cole serves as an Associate for Results for America. Cole is a member of the Cleveland Heights Transportation and Environmental Sustainability Committee and Co-Founder of the Coventry Neighborhood Group. Cole utilizes fixed-route and rail services 3-5 times a month.

1 year term

- **Brewington, Johnny:** Johnny is a retired Chief of Fire for the Village of Woodmere. Johnny has previously served on the Community Advisory Committee and is currently a board member of the Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center. Johnny utilizes fixed-route and rail services 2-3 times a week.
- **Laird, Nichole:** Nichole presently works as a Planner for the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission. Nichole is a member of the American Planning Association and a Civic Vision Advisor at Look Up to Cleveland. Nichole utilizes fixed-route service daily.

- **Sopko, Dr. Joseph:** Dr. Sopko is a retired physician who worked at St. Vincent Charity Hospital for 40 years. Dr. Sopko has previously served on GCRTA's Community Advisory Committee and is currently president of The Board of Les Delices. Dr. Sopko utilizes fixed-route and rail services 2-3 times a week.


Recommendation

Staff requests the External & Stakeholder Relations & Advocacy Committee, recommend to the Board of Trustees the appointment of the eleven candidates as members of the Community Advisory Committee.

Ms. McPherson asked if the CAC members are compensated. They are not compensated, but they will receive riding privileges with their RTA ID badges. Ms. Terry thanked the candidates for their service. Mayor Koomar added that the group is very diverse. President Lucas and Ms. McPherson congratulated the candidates. Ms. McPherson will be the Board Liaison for the CAC. The candidates will take their oath of office after the Board vote this afternoon.

It was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mayor Koomar and approved to move the candidates to the full Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.



Rajan D. Gautam
Secretary/Treasurer



Theresa A. Burrage
Executive Assistant

