

Minutes

RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:27 a.m. June 25, 2024

Board Members: Koomar (Chair), Welch (Vice Chair), Biasiotta, Lucas, McPherson, Mersmann, Pacetti, Sleasman

Not present: Love, Weiss

Staff: Bailey, Biggar, Birdsong Terry, Dangelo, Davidson, Fields, Flannery, Fleig, Ford-Marshall, Garofoli, Gautam, Gettings, Hlavacs, Jupina, Kirkland, Miller, Myers, Miranda, Rusnov, Schipper, So, Togher, Walker-Minor, Woodford

Public: Blake, Bresnahan, Cartwright, England, Ezell, Hagar, Loh, Porter, Rodriguez, Sopko, Wandruff

The meeting was called to order at 9:27 a.m. There were eight (8) Board members present.

It was advised that notice of this meeting had been posted more than twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting, that the usual notification had been given the news media and other interested persons, and that all requirements of the Ohio Revised Code and Rules and Bylaws of this Board regarding notice of meeting had been complied with.

Minutes

President Koomar stated that the minutes from the May 21, 2024 Board Meeting had been previously distributed and reviewed, and asked whether there were any additions and/or corrections. There were no corrections. It was moved and seconded. The minutes were approved.

Public Comments – Agenda Items

1. Adam Bresnahan – Adam is a member of Clevelanders for Public Transit. His comments were related to the General Fund Revenue Report. More ridership is needed to generate revenue. CPT demands significant improvements on all future BRT Lines, not just W. 25th. High quality BRT services are important to riders and increasing ridership and revenue. RTA identified 16 priority corridors for future improvements, but these are often watered down and don't result in improved services and improved ridership. They ask that RTA use the Institute for Transportation Development Policy (ITDP) scorecard to achieve a gold standard. RTA needs faster, frequent service.
2. Airric Stewart – The phone survey is not working correctly. It disconnects him before asking all the questions. Mayor Koomar said this is a randomized survey. There will be an update at the next committee meeting.

Committee Reports

Mr. Sleasman said the Ad Hoc Technology Committee met, June 17. It included updates on the history of the committee and current IT projects including Transit Police technology, vehicle tech, upgraded fare collection system, new validators for the mobile app and future use of SmartCards. By the end of the year, account-based ticketing, should be in place. Fare capping will be rolled out in the future. Elizabeth Crowe, Director of the Office Urban Analytics and Innovation, City of Cleveland

spoke on the open data platform they launched earlier this year. The next meeting will be in September.

Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

Ms. Ida Ford Marshall introduced the new employees, interns and promotions. There were over 100 new hires which included interns. There were 8 promotions. Their names are listed on the PowerPoint presentation.

Introduction of Resolutions

- A. 2024-42 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-072 with Vehicle Maintenance Program for the furnishing of remanufactured brake caliper assemblies, as specified and as required, for a period of two years in an amount not to exceed \$623,154.00 (General Fund, Fleet Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Sleasman, seconded by Ms. Pacetti and approved by unanimous vote.
- B. 2024-43 - Authorizing the General Manager, Chief Executive Officer to enter into an agreement with Medina County to exchange operating funds for Medina County's capital grant funds and to provide for Medina County to fund a portion of the cost of GCRTA's 251 Flyer Route, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Ms. Pacetti and approved by unanimous vote.
- C. 2024-44 - Authorizing the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority to enter into a joint development agreement with Miceli Dairy Products Co., an Ohio Corporation, followed by a purchase and sale agreement in the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000.00) for property known as a portion of Cuyahoga County Permanent Parcel Number 126-23-021 located along the Blue and Green Line Rapid Transit Corridor between East 90th Street and East 92nd Street in Cleveland, Ohio 44104, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mr. Sleasman. The roll was called. There were seven (7) ayes and one (1) abstention from Ms. Mersmann. It passed.
- D. 2024-45 - Removing Chapters 640 Introduction, 652 Computer Use, and 654 Subpoenas and Indemnification of Employees from the Codified Rules and Regulations of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the adoption of which was moved by Ms. McPherson, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta and approved by unanimous vote.
- E. 2024-46 - To amend the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Revenues and Appropriations, as adopted in Resolution No. 2023-103, to provide for an increase in the appropriation for the Law Enforcement Fund in the amount of \$25,000, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Ms. McPherson and approved by unanimous vote.
- F. 2024-47 - Appointment of two members to the Civilian Oversight Committee, the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Ms. McPherson and approved by unanimous vote.

Ms. Welch, Chair of the COC Selection Committee said the creation of this committee has been underway for some time. RTA is proactive about working with the Transit Police to hold them accountable and to be transparent to the community. The search

for the committee members has been extensive. Ms. Terry added that RTA is making good on the promise to be a trusted partner and keeping our promise to the community. She thanked Commander Hudson and Deputy Chief Gettings for their cooperation.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Rajan D. Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer gave the report. March 2024 inflation had risen to 3.5% and decreased to 3.4% in May 2024. The FOMC met June 11 and 12 and decided to retain the rates at 5.4%. They are scheduled to meet again July 30. May 2024 ridership was 8.6% higher compared to May 2023. YTD is 11.2% higher compared to the same period in 2023. May ridership was 10.2 million compared to pre COVID ridership of 13.3 million. We are lower by 3.1 million rides or 23%.

Passenger fares for May 2024 are 7.9% below April 2024. They remain 21% above budget. YTD fares are 25% higher compared to 2023 largely due to timing of certain receipts from student fare tickets and U-passes. Compared to pre COVID levels, we are lower by \$2.1 million or 13.4%. Sales tax for June 2024 (March 2024 activity) is 5.07% higher than June 2023. YTD sales tax is flat. YTD comparing 2024 to 2023, 15 of the 23 categories are positive. Online sales were 13.5% higher. Regular and statewide sales were 0.02% lower. Motor vehicles and watercraft were 1.12% higher.

Mr. Gautam highlighted certain data from the financial package provided to the Board:

Total Long-Term Debt – 12/31/2023	\$ 30.3 million
Average Investment Yield – YTD	4.48%
Cash and Investments	
Unrestricted (General Fund)	\$ 24.4 million
Restricted	\$ <u>357.0 million</u>
TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS	\$ 381.4 million

Mayor Koomar stated that ridership continues to make progress but is still down compared to COVID. Mr. Sleasman asked about the sales tax delay. Mr. Gautam said there is a 3-month delay in the sales tax reporting.

Mayor Biasiotta asked what the interest expense on the long-term debt versus deposited income is and what is being brought in from investments and dividend income from deposits. Mr. Gautam said the interest payments for June are \$740,000 and the same amount is estimated for December, totaling \$1.48 million. We're bringing in approximately \$6 million from investments and dividend income. RTA's debt currently stands at \$30.3 million, which is the lowest balance in notes payable. This goes back to the efforts of defeasance and prepaying the long-term debt. If this trend continues, the Authority will be debt free by 2030. In the notes payable and bonds payable, we offer some protection to our investors that we will not call to redeem the bonds prior to a certain number of years.

General Manager, CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, CEO gave the report. RTA received a \$16 million FTA All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP) award to improve eight light rail stations bringing them in compliance with the ADA. Ms. Terry was honored with several other women by the YWCA as a Woman of Achievement, May 30 at Severence Music Center. Ms. Terry moderated a discussion at the Urban League of Greater Cleveland CEO Convening Event at the City Club. Congresswoman Brown, Mayor Bibb, and County Executive Ronayne were among the panelists. The Urban League

will host their national conference in Cleveland in 2025. Ms. Terry serves as the Co-Chair for that conference.

Ms. Terry was presented the award for Economic Empowerment by the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. of Greater Cleveland. Several women at RTA attended the gala. RTA hosted the TSA's Transit Policing and Security Peer Advisory Group during the APTA Rail Conference, June 1-2. The Office of DBE cohosted with the City of Cleveland and Cleveland Hopkins Airport a U.S. Department of Transportation Wealth Creation Outreach Event, June 4 at Cleveland Public Auditorium. The event educated the participants on new rule changes and updates for the USDOT programs.

RTA participated in a Goodwill Local Transit Partnership Exploration Tour, June 5. This is a potential workforce partnership with RTA and Goodwill to bring in new talent and provide wrap around services. A similar partnership is ongoing in North Georgia & Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority's (MARTA). Two video highlights from the APTA Rail Conference were played. There were over 85 volunteers who worked at the conference. Attendance at the conference was record breaking around 1,600. Cleveland had not hosted this conference for several decades.

President's Report

Mayor Koomar congratulated the staff for the coordination of the APTA Rail Conference. Attendance at past conferences was in the 1,100 range. An Appreciation Lunch for the staff and volunteers is planned after this meeting.

Public Comments – public transit related items

1. Mary Ann Ezell – Mary takes Paratransit. She called to schedule two rides but asked that the 2nd trip be canceled. She left a message to confirm the cancellation. She received an education letter, May 2 about not cancelling. Her cancellation was not recorded by dispatch. Someone from Paratransit will speak with her after the meeting.
2. Fay Porter – Fay takes paratransit. When she stepped on a contractor's vehicle, it had a trench in the floor between the seats. There was not a handlebar for gripping or yellow caution line. She fell and hurt herself. The driver called her about the incident. She is not interested in suing the Authority. Someone from Paratransit will speak with her after the meeting.
3. Loh – Larry Rodriguez had to leave early and asked Loh to share his comments. Paratransit and fixed route noise levels are not good for people with disabilities such as autism. Loh is involved in improving the physical build of vehicles and more operator training.
4. Airric Stewart – Airric said businesses would be well served by the 15A if it was back in service. The 50 bus leaves 93rd in Chester at 4:23 pm. At 4:09 pm and 4:39 pm the 48 bus leaves Chester. These routes will share the same route up to Fairhill and MLK Blvd. The 48 could be put in place with an hourly 48A and the service won't change.

Mayor Koomar mentioned that staff has reviewed these proposals and has determined to stay with the current NextGen plan. He requested Airric be respectful when referring to staff.

5. Chris Stocking (webform) - Some suggestions for RTA when major reroutes occur: Have a lot of transit ambassadors with maps and information on the street talking to riders. Have clearly marked signage and temporary bus stops. Have bus and rail operators make announcements

of reroutes for connections (coming downtown for example). Have staff double check social media and Transit app that all reroute information is posted 24 hours in advance. Consider adjusting timetables to make transfers easier as reroutes can cause delays. Consider opt in text alerts for up to date reroutes by route.

I was concerned seeing riders waiting for a bus that was never going to show up due to the reroutes that started on June 20th for the movie filming. There was no signage on the eastbound bus shelters on Ontario just north of Prospect and many people were waiting. Also, there were no alerts for the 19 eastbound in the Transit app. I realize reroutes can be chaotic and involve communication with the city but reroutes lasting more than a week should not be a surprise to any rider.

Ms. Welch thanked the two Paratransit riders who came in today to share their comments and concerns.

Civilian Oversight Committee (COC) Swearing In

The two new Civilian Oversight Committee (COC) members Michael Blake and Jonathan England were sworn in by Anna Hlavacs, Senior Counsel, Contracts, Real Estate Administrative Law. They also signed a Code of Conduct.

Upcoming Meetings

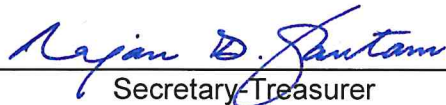
The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, July 30, 2024** in the Board Room of the Authority, Root-McBride Building, 1240 West Sixth Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. This meeting will be live streamed on RTA's Board page (www.RideRTA.com/board) by selecting the meeting date. The public is welcome to attend in person.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.



President

Attest:



Secretary-Treasurer

