

Minutes

RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:57 a.m. August 27, 2024

Board Members: Koomar (Chair), Welch (Vice Chair), Biasiotta, Elder, Love, McPherson, Sleasman, Weiss

Not present: Lucas, Pacetti

Staff: Birdsong Terry, Burney, Caver, Cottrell, Dangelo, Davidson, Ferraro, Fesler, Fields, Flannery, Fleig, Ford-Marshall, Freilich, Garofoli, Hlavacs, Jones, Jupina, Kirkland, Miller, Myers, Prebish, Rusnov, Schipper, Sutula, Talley, Togher, Walker-Minor, Young

Public: Butler, Gibbons, Hinton, Lewis, Loh, Lumpkin, Rubin, Sopko, Taxwell, Thomas, White

The meeting was called to order at 9:57 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

The minutes from the July 30, 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. Sedgwick Q. Butler – Operators don't strap Sedgwick in if they don't have the proper constraints or don't know how to do it. This happens mostly with contractors. Complaints are not tracked or addressed, and RTA is not notified of the complaint. Sedgwick is made out to be confrontational for requesting restraints.

Ms. Terry said the Director of Paratransit will follow up.

2. Dontez Taylor (caller) – RTA needs more dispatchers and operators on Paratransit. Paratransit is late for pick-ups.
3. Rev. Pam Pinkney (caller) – The numbers in the resolutions are not adding up. There is disparity between the economic classes and racial classes in the resolutions. There are more opportunities on the westside than in the poor working class and middle class.

Committee Reports

Mr. Sleasman said the Ad Hoc Technology Committee will meet, September 16, 2024 at 4 p.m.

Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

Ms. Ford Marshall introduced the new employees and promotions. There were 32 new hires and seven promotions.

Introduction of Resolutions

- A. 2024-63 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-041 with Geismar North America, Inc. for the procurement of a rail line car in an amount not to exceed \$5,165,257.00 (RTA Development Fund, Fleet Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mr. Love and approved by unanimous vote.
- B. 2024-64 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-76 with Cintas Corporation to provide shop uniform rental and maintenance for three years in an amount not to exceed \$941,941.46 and in amounts not to exceed \$331,399.73 and \$342,335.92 for each of two option years, respectively, for a total five-year contract amount not to exceed \$1,615,677.11 (General Fund, Fleet Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Ms. McPherson and approved by unanimous vote.
- C. 2024-65 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-81 with IWI Incorporated for fall protection inspection and repair – Authority wide in an amount not to exceed \$86,427.00 for a base period of three years with two, one-year options in amounts not to exceed \$31,367.00 and \$32,646.00, respectively, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$150,440.00 for the five-year period. (General Fund, Service Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta and approved by unanimous vote.
- D. 2024-66 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-101 with Retrievox, Inc. dba Access to provide records storage, management & destruction services, as required, in an amount not to exceed \$425,000.00 for a period of five years (General Fund, Support Services Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Sleasman, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta and approved by unanimous vote.
- E. 2024-67 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-102 with Agile Network Builders, LLC for MARCS network connectivity maintenance services to provide wireless, digital communication services through the State of Ohio, Department of Administrative Services, Cooperative Purchasing Program, in an amount not to exceed \$148,800.00 for a five-year period (General Fund, Information Technology Application Services Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mr. Love and approved by unanimous vote.
- F. 2024-68 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-115 with Oracle America, Inc. to provide Oracle Infrastructure as A Service (IAAS) subscription services for a period of one year in an amount not to exceed \$305,830.00 (General Fund, Management Information Services Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Mr. Sleasman and approved by unanimous vote.
- G. 2024-69 - Authorizing the purchase of casualty insurance from various insurance underwriters through USI Insurance Services, LLC and Price Forbes & Partners Limited, or their successors, for a period of 12 months in a total amount not to exceed \$2,270,191.00 (Insurance and General Funds, Risk Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Sleasman, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Kay Sutula, Director of the Office of Management & Budget filled in for Rajan D. Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer.

The annual inflation rate in the U.S. has decreased from a high of 9.1% in June 2022 to 2.9% in July 2024. The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) will meet Sept. 17-18. Interest rates remain steady at 5.5% as the FOMC is monitoring economic conditions. In July 2024, ridership was 13.1% above 2023 levels. Through July all modes have seen an increase in ridership. The top three are light rail at 16.1%, Healthline at 15.7% and bus at 11.8%. July fare revenue is 12.3% above 2023 and 20.1% above June 2024 and 14.9% above budget. Currently we are 14.7% YTD above 2023.

August sales and use tax receipts (May activity) are 0.94% higher than August 2023. YTD sales tax is 1.3% higher than 2023. Fifteen of the 23 categories were positive in August. Online sales are 5.8% higher. Regular and statewide sales are 0.6% higher. Motor vehicles and watercraft are 2.2% higher.

Total Long-Term Debt – 12/31/2023	\$30.3 million
Average Investment Yield – YTD	4.47%
Cash and Investments	
Unrestricted (General Fund)	\$32.4 million
<u>Restricted</u>	<u>\$347.2 million</u>
TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS	\$379.6 million

General Manager, CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, CEO gave the report. Congresswoman Shontel Brown visited Hayden District on August 6 to present a \$10.6 million FTA grant award to RTA for an Electric Vehicle Pilot Program. RTA participated in the Cleveland Puerto Rican Day Parade, August 4th. RTA had a table at the County's Family Fun Day, August 6 on Public Square. RTA's Community Bus, Transit Ambassadors and Transit Police's Operation Community Watch were in attendance.

RTA hosted the National Traction Power Training Consortium, August 20-22. The Consortium develops introductory and advanced instruction-ready and interactive courses on traction power maintenance. RTA and ATU representatives attended the APTA Workforce Summit, August 21-23 in Washington, D.C. During the Summit, Ms. Terry was on a CEO Roundtable on leadership, recruitment, retention and reskilling. Staff shared information on RTA's operator mentoring program, Positive Impact. The Rail District hosted a skills competition also known as a Rodeo, on August 24. Several awards were presented for the best of the best.

President's Report

President Koomar and Vice President Welch are working with Ms. Terry on the agenda for the fall Board retreat. Staff will develop an executive summary for board members to reference when they are in the public and attending conferences.

Public Comments – public transit related items

1. James White – James is an RTA retiree and a disabled veteran. The paratransit CRT tracking system is flawed. James has been flagged a no-show and left in the hot weather for being in the wrong location in a vehicle loop. There is no follow-up for concerns.

2. Maxine Taxwell – Maxine thanked RTA staff for assisting with her notes from the last meeting. Provide-A-Ride has done some inappropriate things including not speaking appropriately to customers. There was other incidents Maxine has observed or heard about that was inappropriate behavior and should be investigated.

Ms. Terry recommended the paratransit customers follow up with staff related to their concerns.

3. Loh – Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE) did a paratransit survey based on customer concerns. Loh suggested these results be used in the TRACTION quarterly reports. The results of their focus group will be presented to the ADA subcommittee.
4. Rev. Pam Pinkney – Rev. Pinkney was offended by the slide where Rep. Shontel Brown was thanked for visiting RTA in person to present FTA grant funds. Rev's concerns have not been addressed. A community member's husband was injured on Paratransit.

Ms. Terry and President Koomar asked all commenters to remain respectful when sharing concerns.

5. Carlotta Santori – Carlotta came after the public comment section and left a letter with various concerns about the HealthLine operators, customer alerts for service disruptions, dirty stations, elevator and automatic door breakdowns. Operators don't let the ramp down for ADA customers.

Executive Session Requested

It was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Ms. Welch to go into executive session to enable the Board to conference with GCRTA attorneys for information gathering, fact-finding and to receive legal advice. There were eight (8) ayes and none opposed.

No action will be taken after the ES.

It was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta to come out of executive session. There were seven (7) ayes and none opposed. Mr. Love had to leave prior to the roll call.

Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 24, 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 11:44 a.m.



President

Attest: 

Secretary-Treasurer