

## Minutes

### RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:04 a.m. December 17, 2024

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

**Not present:** Lucas

**Staff:** Biggar, Birdsong Terry, Burney, Caver, Dangelo, Davidson, Feinn, Ferraro, Fields, Flannery, Fleig, Ford-Marshall, Freilich, Garofoli, Hill, Hudson, Jones, Jupina, Kirkland, Miller, Myers, Pierce, Schipper, Sulik, Sullivan, Sutula, Togher, Vukmanic, Weil, Young

**Public:** Gibbons, Hinkle, Loh, Sopko

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. There were nine (9) 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 November 19, 2024 Board Meeting and December 3, 2024 Special 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 and Non-Agenda Items

The public comment section has been consolidated to include agenda and non-agenda items.

1. Kevin Hinkle – Cleveland, OH – Kevin suggested RTA put a transit museum in Tower City and will donate items.
2. Airric Stewart – Airric is still having issues with the customer service line and being transferred to the survey. Most of his previous comments are not in the minutes. Airric asked for the responsibilities of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) but has not received any responses from the CAC.

Mayor Koomar added that the phone survey is random. Staff will take a look at his previous comments.

3. Isaac Shimsky-Agosto – Cleveland, OH (webform) – I would like to express my support for bus lanes on West 25th Street, in Ohio City. That stretch would greatly benefit from bus lanes. Buses are often slowed by the amount of traffic on that stretch. Additionally, given the amount of bus lines that use that stretch of West 25th, it would be some of the most valuable bus lanes that could be installed in the county. I hope that RTA will work with the city to install the maximum possible length of bus lanes in Ohio City.
4. Lisa Buffo – Cleveland, OH (webform) - I saw report that the Cleveland Clinic is looking to build a \$100M parking garage. I am a Cleveland resident who recently attended a local transit

advocacy meeting where a thorough proposal was put forth regarding adding 2 miles to the blue line from Shaker Square to the Clinic/University Circle. I am curious if this is something RTA has studied or would consider looking into and if there is any communication with the Clinic to contribute those dollars towards transit versus a garage.

5. Chris Martin – Cleveland, OH (webform) - I remain eager to hear from the Board of Trustees on the subject of what their plan is to close the operator shortage, expand service in compliance with their strategic plan, and avoid the agency's looming fiscal cliff.
6. Denise Clinton-Alex – Cleveland, OH (webform) - I would like to know when the next board meeting is for January 2025.

The 2025 schedule was emailed to Denise after the meeting.

7. Loh – Operator training needs to be strengthened to improve staffing. Wi-Fi is not working everywhere and resulting in real time information delays. NOBLE surveyed Paratransit customers and presented to the CAC. Loh suggested the results be shared with the Board.

#### Committee Reports

The Civilian Oversight Committee meets tonight at 5 p.m.

#### Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

Ms. Marshall introduced the new employees and promotions. There were 39 new hires and 6 promotions. The year ended with 534 total new hires. Eighty-four operators are currently in training. The current operator deficit is at 45. Up to 90 contingent job offers were made at a recent operator career fair. The deficit this time last year was 157.

#### Executive Session Requested

9:19 a.m. - It was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta to go into executive session to review the negotiations concerning the compensation/terms and conditions of employment for GCRTA's (union) employees. There were nine (9) ayes and none opposed.

9:41 a.m. - It was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mayor Weiss to come out of executive session. There were nine (9) ayes and none opposed.

#### Introduction of Resolutions

- A. 2024-94 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-100 with Burns Engineering, Inc. for Project 19.88 – Engineering Services for Light Rail Fiber Optic Design in an amount not to exceed \$1,026,609.82 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mr. Sleasman. A roll call was requested. There were eight (8) ayes and one (1) abstention from Mayor Weiss. It passed.
- B. 2024-95 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-104 with Computer Aid, Inc. for robotic process automation software in an amount not to exceed \$290,139.87. for a three-year period (General Fund, Management Information Services Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mr. Love and approved by unanimous vote.

- C. 2024-96 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-117 with Reworld Tron Corporation to provide hazardous and non-hazardous waste services in an amount not to exceed \$746,640.00 for a period of three years and in amounts not to exceed \$264,940.00 and \$279,920.00 for each option year, respectively, for a total five-year contract amount not to exceed \$1,291,500.00 (General Fund, Safety Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Sleasman, seconded by Ms. Elder and approved by unanimous vote.
- D. 2024-97 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-121 with WSP USA, Inc. to provide additional engineering services for Project 23V4 engineering services for the reconstruction of Shaker Junction and Shaker Square grade crossings in an amount not to exceed \$155,044.25 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. McPherson and approved by unanimous vote.
- E. 2024-98 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-151 with RGT Services LLC dba the Fowler Company for E. 55<sup>th</sup> (Substation 11) rectifier transformer replacement in an amount not to exceed \$697,320.00 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Ms. Pacetti and approved by unanimously vote.
- F. 2024-99 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-169 with Lytx, Inc. to provide driver behavior performance monitoring system services in an amount not to exceed \$184,352.00 per year for five years, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$921,760.00 (General Fund, Information Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.
- G. 2024-100 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-177 with Westward Sales, Inc. to purchase external 7-1 antennas with cable sets in an amount not to exceed \$76,435.80 for 60 units and an option to purchase up to 60 additional units at an amount not to exceed \$76,435.80, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$152,871.60 (RTA Development Fund, Information Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. Welch and approved by unanimous vote.
- H. 2024-101 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-178 with Huber + Suhner, Inc. to provide wi-fi antennas, access points, cabling, and a three-year support agreement in an amount not to exceed \$149,290.50 for 30 units, and an option to purchase up to 30 additional wi-fi antennas, access points, cabling, and a three-year support agreement at an amount not to exceed \$149,290.50, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$298,581.00 (RTA Development Fund, Information Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.
- I. 2024-102 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-181 with Malor & Company, Inc. to provide 8 port network switches in an amount not to exceed \$224,986.20 for 60 units, and an option to purchase up to 60 additional units at an amount not to exceed \$149,986.20, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$374,972.40 (RTA Development Fund, Information Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mr. Love and approved by unanimous votes.
- J. 2024-103 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-189 with Transpro Consulting to provide performance management services in an amount not to exceed \$81,930.00 for a period of one year and in an amount not to exceed \$51,449.00 for one option year, for

a total contract amount not to exceed \$133,379.00 (General Fund, Executive Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Ms. Pacetti and approved by unanimous vote.

Ms. Terry added that this will bolster the customer experience and performance management. This contract has reduced dramatically in cost compared to previous years due to regaining control over metrics and warehousing of information.

- K. 2024-104 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-190 with Freshworks, Inc. to provide freshservice enterprise service management solutions for a period of one year in an amount not to exceed \$115,980.00 (General Fund, Information Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. Elder and approved by unanimous vote.
- L. 2024-105 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-207 with Trapeze Software Group, Inc., dba Vontas for Computer Aided Dispatch and Automated Vehicle Locator ("CAD/AVL") equipment and services for railcar replacement owner furnished equipment in an amount not to exceed \$704,079.00 for the base thirty car sets, and in amounts not to exceed \$378,006.00 and \$252,004.00 for two options up to an additional eighteen car sets and twelve car sets, respectively, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,334,089.00 (RTA Development Fund, Information Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.
- M. 2024-106 - Authorizing Contract No. 2024-208 with Motorola Solutions, Inc. for mobile radio communications equipment for railcar owner furnished equipment and services in an amount not to exceed \$211,364.40 for the base thirty car sets, and in amounts not to exceed \$126,818.64 and \$111,527.64 for two options up to an additional eighteen car sets and twelve car sets, respectively, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$449,710.68 (RTA Development Fund, Information Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Ms. Welch and approved by unanimous vote.
- N. 2024-107 - Making appropriations for the current expenses and other expenditures for the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority during Fiscal Year 2025, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Ms. McPherson and approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Love asked for more information moving forward about providing sustainability around revenue stabilization.

- O. 2024-108 - Authorizing the purchase of property insurance from Liberty Mutual and Evanston Insurance Company, through Aon Risk Services Northeast, Inc., for a period of twelve (12) months for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,512,321.00 (General Fund, Risk Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. Elder and approved by unanimous vote.
- P. 2024-109 - First amendment to lease agreement for construction access to the track and platform bridges over West 117<sup>th</sup> Street in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00 (RTA Development Fund - Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Love, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta and approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Sleasman asked for a future update on discussions with Norfolk Southern about the delay in getting this project done and the additional dollars needed due to the delays.

- Q. 2024-110 - Approval of the Authority's 2025 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan ("PTASP"), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mr. Sleasman and approved by unanimous vote.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Kay Sutula, Director of Office of Management & Budget presented in the absence of Rajan D. Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer gave the report.

The annual inflation rate rose to a high of 9.1% in 2022. As of the end of November it is down to 2.7%. The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) has reduced interest rates to 4.75% in November. They meet today and tomorrow. Ridership through November is 22.9 million rides. That is 11.1% above 2023. Passenger fares YTD are \$30.6 million, or 22% above 2023. November fare revenue was 43.4% above 2023 mainly due to timing issues with the student fare cards and U-Pass.

December sales tax is not in yet. November 2024 receipts are from August 2024 due to the 3-month lag. In August we had the expanded sales tax holiday. Fourteen of the 23 categories were positive in November compared to November 2023. After the December 1, 2024 principle payment and interest payment, our outstanding debt went down from \$30.3 million at the beginning of the year to \$22.3 million.

Total Long-Term Debt – 12/01/2024	\$22.3 million
Average Investment Yield – YTD	4.46%
Cash and Investments	
Unrestricted (General Fund)	\$25.3 million
Restricted	333.1 million
TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS	358.4 million

General Manager, CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, CEO gave the report. The Quarterly Management Report for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter is usually presented in November. It is being presented today. The General Fund report for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is as follows:

Total Revenues are 2.9% higher than budget. Passenger Fares are 18.3% higher. Sales & Use Tax are 1.7% lower. Reimbursed Expenditures are 229.7% higher. We received refunds for Fuel, PM, Labor, and other miscellaneous receipts. For the Revenue Stabilization Fund, \$20.4 million was transferred and \$9.6 million will be transferred in December. Operating Expenses are 3.4% higher than budget. Total personnel costs are 4.6% higher than budget. Payroll taxes & fringes are 11.3% higher than budget. Essential positions and previously approved positions are being hired. Fuel hedging & utility contracts continue to help stabilize expenses. Purchased Transportation is 46.5% higher than budget. This number is higher due to the aging community.

Transfers to Other Funds/Reserve Fund include \$10 million in Rolling Stock Reserve with \$878,615 for the 27<sup>th</sup> Pay. There will be a reduction in the rolling stock reserve as the rail car project proceeds.

The Insurance Fund is \$2.5 million. Total Transfer to Capital includes the Bond Retirement Fund for \$6.2 million. Capital Improvement Fund transferred \$10.4 million. Remaining transfers will be completed by year-end. Capital Expenditures by category show \$12.9 million for the Rail Car Replacement Program. Facilities Improvements at \$4.7 million and \$2.9 million for Rail Projects.

The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) was signed by Ms. Terry and ATU Local 268 President Clarence King. A collaborative team meets monthly to discuss the document. Ms. Terry visited each district and the Main Office to provide a State of GCRTA and answered employee's questions. Nick Biggar was promoted to Senior Director of Customer Experience & Performance Management. He's been at RTA for 14 years. His last position was at Hayden District as their Director. He will report directly to Ms. Terry in this new position. Mr. Biggar added that his work will revolve around customer pain points and seeking improvements by listening to the customers. Two additional staffers will join his team.

RTA held a Media Day December 12 to update them on projects, initiatives and mission of Connecting the Community. Topics included the Railcar Replacement Program, MetroHealth BRT and E. 79<sup>th</sup> Street Station projects, workforce development, safety and security along with Q&A. A dozen media representatives were in attendance. Several media outlets posted stories on the event.

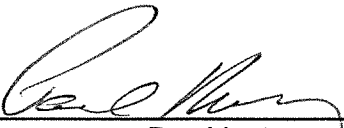
#### President's Report

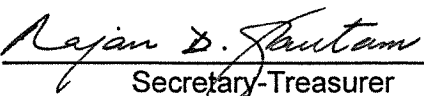
There will be some railcar items on the upcoming January 2025 schedule. Mayor Koomar asks Board members to block out 9 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. for meetings to have enough members to vote. Mayor Marie Gallo of Parma Heights was elected to the RTA Board. Her term begins in March 2025. She will replace Mayor Biasiotta who has been on the Board since March 2022. He will be missed. Mayor Koomar will work with Ms. Terry to review the 2025 Conference schedule in support of the budget.

#### Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 21, 2025** 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](http://www.RideRTA.com/board)) by selecting the meeting date. The public is welcome to attend in person.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

  
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President

Attest:   
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Secretary-Treasurer