

## Minutes

### RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:02 a.m., July 28, 2020

**Present:** Clough (Chair), Lucas (Vice Chair), Bibb, Byrne, Joyce, McCall, Moss, Pellot, Serrano, Weiss

**Not present:** None

**Also Present:** Anderson, Bencs, Benford, Brooks-Williams, Catalusci, Caver, Dangelo, Davidson, Davis, Dietrich, Feke, Fields, Freilich, Garofoli, Gautam, Jaszczak, Kirkland, Pickett, Schipper, Sutula, Wiehe, Wilson

Mayor Clough called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. The secretary called the roll and reported that ten (10) board members were present. This meeting was conducted by teleconference for members of the Board in accordance with House Bill 197 of the 133rd General Assembly, signed by the Governor of the State of Ohio on March 27, 2020, the March 9, 2020 order of the Governor of the State of Ohio declaring a public health emergency and the April 30, 2020 order of the Director of the Ohio Department of Public Health prohibiting any gathering of ten (10) or more people. This meeting was live-streamed on RTA's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/rideRTA](http://www.facebook.com/rideRTA)) for staff and members of the public.

The Secretary advised that notice of this meeting has been posted more than twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting, that the usual notification has 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 have been complied with.

### Minutes

Mayor Clough stated that the minutes from the June 23, 2020 Board Meeting had been previously distributed and reviewed and asked whether there were any additions and/or corrections. There were no corrections. The minutes were approved.

### Public Comments – Agenda Items

1. Rep. David Greenspan – he spoke on behalf of Resolution 2020-56 related to the Tax Budget. Everyone is dealing with COVID-19. The economy is picking back up and people are returning to work. The unemployment rate in Ohio is in the mid 20%. At the height of the unemployment situation, we are just above the 10%-11%. It is moving us in a position where revenues are coming back. The fiscal year begin July 1. He anticipates the Governor will ask for budget cuts and that the \$2.7 billion Rainy Day fund will be used to stabilize the budget. The amount used will be offset by picking up in State revenue and controlling expenses. When he was the chair of the County Council Finance Committee, they tried to control expenses, but also be selective of what they choose, understanding the priorities when providing the residents of the county and now the state with assistance. The legislature will be engaged in providing assistance. The Governor cannot spend no more than the appropriated budget, but he can spend less. He chairs the finance subcommittee on transportation. He will watch the Governor's actions during this time and the role the legislature will play in managing the expenditures of the state.

They will go back today to discuss within the Republican Caucus the possibility of removing the Speaker from his speaker role. He is not aware of discussions of removing him from the legislature. There needs to be a formal vote in session to remove the speaker. Senator Dolan and he worked hard on the transportation budget. Terence O'Donnell was instrumental also in helping them double the previous administration's appropriation for public transit. Previously, they secured \$30 million for public transit. Governor Dewine put it at \$35 million. They got it to \$70 million a year. The challenge was GRF and not federal money, which means the money, has to be spent within the year. Beginning with the next operating budget, his advocacy issues like public transit and food bank funding will be a priority. RTA has an active lobbyist to ensure they continue to provide funding for public transit. Senator Dolan has been a tremendous ally.

Mayor Clough thanked him for his support and advocacy work for transit along with Senator Dolan. They have had conversations prior to the State providing funds to public transit over the last year and a half. He asked him to reach out if he needs assistance.

#### Committee Reports

There were no committee reports

#### Ad Hoc Committee Reports

Rev. Lucas reported that the Ad Hoc Paratransit Committee began with purchasing vans. The Paratransit department is in excellent shape. The call center gets to callers within 20-30 seconds. The subcontractor vans are clean and up to date. The operators are in uniform. RTA drivers were always uniformed. A resolution will be presented today to purchase ten new vans. One of the top criticisms of the former vans was the suspension. Two vehicles were brought in for Rev. Lucas and members of the ADA committee of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to take a test ride. They are going from a Ford E450, which is a heavier duty truck to the Ford E350, which is a lighter duty truck with a softer suspension.

Mr. Bibb reported that the Ad Hoc Tech Committee met last month on how to continue to expand the data sets available to the public. Dr. Caver gave an update on the WiFi implementation on the vehicles and RTA property. Pete Anderson gave an update on transferring data into the cloud and ensuring all employees have the right technology and tools to work remotely.

#### Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

##### New employees:

- |                    |                                            |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1. Samuel McGrew   | Quality Assurance/Warranty Electrical      |
| 2. Eric Maseth II  | Quality Assurance/Warranty Mechanical -CDL |
| 3. Bridget Elchert | Executive Secretary (Non-bargaining)       |
| 4. Sarah Bartlome  | MDP Business Analyst                       |
| 5. Chloe Tyznik    | MDP Business Analyst                       |
| 6. Kirk Dimmick    | Engineering Prj Mgr - Bridges              |

##### Promotions:

- |                             |                                 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. LaShanda Latrice Coleman | Senior ITS Specialist           |
| 2. Juliana C. Schultz       | Senior ITS Specialist           |
| 3. Brandon Monroe Agnew     | Business Development Specialist |
| 4. Tracy Hale               | HRIS Specialist                 |

Mayor Clough congratulated everyone and welcomed the new employees.

### Introduction of Resolutions

- A. 2020-49 – Expressing congratulations to the employees of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority who retired during the second quarter of 2020, the adoption of which was moved by Rev. Lucas, seconded by Mr. Serrano and approved by unanimous vote.

Mayor Clough congratulated the retirees and thanked them for their service.

- B. 2020-50 – Authorizing Contract No. 2020-022 with Myers Equipment Corp. for the purchase of up to 10 Eldorado National Aerotech paratransit coaches, as specified, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$827,010.00 (RTA Development Fund, Fleet Management Department budget, the adoption of which was moved by Rev. Lucas, seconded by Mr. Serrano and approved by unanimous vote.

- C. 2020-51 – Authorizing Contract No. 2020-036 with HWH Architects Engineers Planners Inc. for Project 18.51 – On-Call Architectural/Engineering Services in an amount not to exceed \$300,000.00 for a period of 24 months (RTA Capital and/or RTA Development Funds, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Joyce, seconded by Mr. Bibb and approved by unanimous vote.

Mayor Clough said that most of the resolutions have been reviewed in committee meetings.

- D. 2020-52 – Authorizing Contract No. 2020-070 with Zavarella Bros. Construction Co. for Project 14.97B – Rehabilitation of the Light Rail Trunk Line Guard Walls & Retaining Walls, as specified and as required, in an amount not to exceed \$1,689,900.00 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Serrano, seconded by Mr. Joyce and approved by unanimous vote.
- E. 2020-53 – Authorizing Contract No. 2020-076 with Apex Construction & Management Co., Inc. for Project 18.12 – Tower City Station – Red Line Suspended Ceiling Removal, as specified and as required, in an amount not to exceed \$259,850.00 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Chief McCall and approved by unanimous vote.

Dr. Caver added that this contract has a DBE as the prime contractor.

- F. 2020-54 – Authorizing Contract No. 2020-077 with Premier Window Cleaning LLC for Rapid Station and Building Washing and Cleaning Services at GCRTA facilities, as specified, for a period of three years, in an amount not to exceed \$395,700.00 (General Fund, Rail District Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Serrano, seconded by Mr. Bibb and approved by unanimous vote.
- G. 2020-55 – Authorizing the General Manager, Chief Executive Officer to appoint an underwriting syndicate and to execute contracts with members of the syndicate at a rate not to exceed \$3.25 per \$1,000.00 of debt issuance for a period of five years. (payable from the proceeds of the debt issue), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mr. Serrano. Mr. Bibb requested to abstain. There were nine (9) ayes and one (1) abstention. It passed.

- H. 2020-56 – Adopting the Tax Budget of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2021 and submitting the same to the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Byrne, seconded by Ms. Moss and approved by unanimous vote.
- I. 2020-57 – Authorizing the General Manager, Chief Executive Officer to enter into an agreement with Medina County to exchange operating funds for Medina county's grant funds and to provide for Medina county to fund a portion of the cost of the Authority's 251 flyer route, the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Mr. Joyce and approved by unanimous vote.

Dr. Caver added that this process is done annually. RTA can accept Medina County's capital grants and reimburse them for their operating budget. The FTA must always approve this action.

- J. 2020-58 – Authorizing a memorandum of understanding with The Centers for Families and Children for implementation of the Career Navigation Program, the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Mr. Serrano. Mayor Weiss requested to abstain due to his relationship as a previous Board member of the Centers for Families and Children. Chief McCall also said that she would like to abstain. There were eight (8) ayes and two (2) abstentions. It passed.

This program was developed through the Paradox Prize. Ms. Feke said this project is a way for foundations to look at getting people to work in far areas. It has been an issue for RTA. The Center through El Barrio has a job training. RTA will travel train the participants and give them passes to get from their training to work. The pilot program will provide data to better provide service in the future. RTA has worked with El Barrio and the Family Center for some time now. Mr. Bibb asked that after the pilot program if this can come back to the Board with the results.

- K. 2020-59 – Ratifying an increase to Contract No. 2017-030 with Occupational Health Center of Ohio, P.A. Co., DBA Concentra Medical Centers for Temperature Testing Services in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.00 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,047,943.75 (General Fund, Human Resources Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mr. Serrano, seconded by Ms. Moss. Ms. McCall asked to abstain. There were nine (9) ayes and one (1) abstention. It passed.

This is to pay for temperature taking services that will have taken the Authority through last Friday. The technology has changed to an iPad that will take temperatures. That will eliminate needing a person to administer the temperatures. Mayor Clough approves of the change and said it will make the process more efficient and safer.

#### Interim Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Dr. Caver gave the report. There is 1.5 million unemployment claims since COVID-19. Moreover, \$5.2 billion of unemployment payments have been made. This is helping the economy and sales tax. Although the State and U.S. unemployment rate is at 11%, the county is 15.2%, which is about 40% higher than the State and U.S. Ridership is 50% of its pre COVID days. Paratransit is 50%. Bus is 50%. Rail is 63% because there is a bus bridge for the light rail work. Passenger fares for June collected \$1.6 million or 51% below budget and YTD \$13.6 million or 27% below budget. Sales tax for July collected \$13.4 million or 20.6% below budget. Although it is below, it is better than expected.

July is the first full month of the April shutdown. The unemployment funds have helped to offset the loss of jobs. On the revenue side, RTA received \$111.9 million from the CARES Act. They have drawn down \$73.7 million so far. The rest will be drawn down before the end of the year.

#### Acting General Manager, Chief Executive Officer Report

Dr. Caver gave the report. The August 9 service change will increase frequency and increase mobility. They want to provide service that is a catalyst to economic and social recovery, provide service stability, implement the system redesign, fare equity improvements and re-capitalize the rail car fleet and infrastructure. A presentation on the system redesign will be made at the August committee meetings. We have a new marketing campaign called RTA is Ready to Connect. It is running on social media and TV and the visual will be posted on the vehicles and stations. The RTA mobile app provides contactless payment, which is being marketed to customers. Several videos were shown to demonstrate the marketing campaign, temperature taking iPad and E. 79<sup>th</sup> Street Red Line improvements. The temperature taking iPad will alert staff if a temperature is too high. The employee is instructed to go home and to contact their doctor. Ads and posters will inform customers that the buses and facilities are disinfected daily.

Opportunity zones have been created to assist in creating economic impact in communities that were previously economically depressed. The Red Line traverses six NEOhio Opportunity zones. This summer, RTA invested \$15 million into the Opportunity Corridor (OC) zone (\$8 million for E. 79<sup>th</sup> Street Red Line Station reconstruction and \$7 million for the light rail track construction). Information is on the website to explain the investment. The OC is a federally designated zone which provides tax benefits and where the State is investing \$330 million to create the corridor. And It's part of the Mayor's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative.

#### Affirmative Action Update

Elizabeth Jaszczak, director of employment and recruitment, made the presentation. This is a follow-up report requested by Board member Karen Moss. Her team works with Felicia Brooks-Williams, senior manager of the Office of Equal Opportunity. They administer the Affirmative Action (AA) plan for the Authority. This report will summarize the AA progress to date, including the impact of COVID-19 on progress towards meeting those goals, a numerical overview of goals and placements made during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2020 and an update on the Woman's Employee Resource Group.

The recruiting landscape has been affected by the Pandemic. The challenges of remote working and social distancing has caused disruptions in recruiting events and activities. They have adjusted the way they conduct interviews, testing and onboarding to ensure safety for everyone and to comply with the Governor's order to institute remote work to reduce the spread of the virus. The financial uncertainty caused by the decline in revenues has caused them delay in filling some positions, reducing a portion in making progress in meeting AA goals.

The goals have been set for 2020-2024. For this quarter, they did not make progress in any under-represented categories for males. However, they made progress for goals made for Black, White and Hispanic females. They have made additional placements since June 30 that will be reflected in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter summary. These include progress towards the goal set for males of two or more races, one placement and additional progress toward the goals of white females. They had one placement in each of the categories of Service Maintenance, Protective Services and Administrative Support.

The Steering Committee of the Women's Employee Resource Group has been working to organize its structure and objectives. At their meeting on July 8, the committee finalized the governing document, which defined their purpose and goals as well as established the 2020 priorities as they continue with

the organizational activities. They have defined the purpose of the Women's Employee Resource Group as "to help move RTA forward as an employer of choice that is inclusive, women-friendly and open to the voices and ideas of women employees for the future of RTA" India Birdsong has accepted their invitation to be the executive sponsor. They will meet with her on August 26 to present their progress and plans for communications and rollout. Their goals are to assist with employee recruitment; provide networking, mentoring and professional development opportunities; create a forum for sharing common interests/concerns and provide support around those concerns; serve as a resource for RTA's business needs; and to support the career advancement of women within RTA.

As a new initiative for GCRTA, the focus for 2020 to date has been primarily organizational. Their first two priorities were to engage an executive sponsor and finalize the governing document for the group. As they move forward, they will formalize their structure and format of meetings and communications as well as planning and executing a membership drive and an official kick-off event.

Mr. Bibb said they should be bold about the fair equity study implementation and whether or not there are some discounted measures that can be put in place to encourage more ridership as the economy comes back. Rev. Lucas asked if RTA is expected to receive anything from the second stimulus package. Mr. Schipper stated that when the House passed the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act or HEROES Act, there was a significant amount of money for public transit. One for the large agencies and a smaller piece for agencies like RTA that would be a competitive grant program. The Senate bill that was just introduced has nothing for transit. They have been working with the advocacy firm to advocate for some transit funds in the Senate bill and for some revisions to what the House passed in the HEROES Act. They hope that the other transit agencies had hope that instead of a competitive grant program, it would be more like the CARES Act, because the money flowed quickly and was drawn down quickly. The House will have one version and the Senate will have another version. Hopefully there will be something in between.

#### Public comments on non-agenda items

Comments were received via email and by dial in.

1. Dan McCarthy – Cleveland, OH – I would urge the board to implement the use of EZFare. I am a frequent RTA rider, who also occasionally uses Metro RTA in Akron. The EZFare app is a better experience than RTA's ticketing system. And it has immense benefits in that it is connected with the regions other mass transit systems. GCRTA cannot exist as an island. The authority's mission should focus on integrating the region's transportation system as much as possible. Further, having RTA routes come up in Uber will be a boon to ridership. I think a lot of Uber riders who see the cost of a bus ticket and the ease of which they can get from point A to point B will net increase ridership.

Lastly, I applaud the board for postponing the fare increase that was set to take place in August. I do believe the all-day fare must be reduced to \$5. This is very important. I would also like to see transfers back. Especially since routes were truncated so much, the system depends on you needing to transfer at this point. So it's a slap in the face not to be offered a transfer. And when so many people pay cash to board the bus, it's a slap in the face not to get a transfer when you have a five-dollar bill but not fifty cents, and you can't get an all-day pass.

Mr. Bibb asked what the barriers are to EZfare integration and integrating Uber. Dr. Caver said they have spoken to NEORide, which is working with the EZfare app. The current rate for RTA's mobile app is appreciably cheaper than with the EZfare. They are discussing if RTA was to join, what would change with the EZfare cost structure. The revenue from the RTA

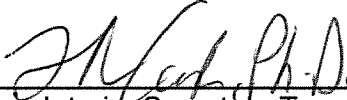
mobile app is more than the rest of the customers. It almost doubles the revenue being collected. These apps charge based on the transaction. The cost was \$200K of a difference and the fare is discounted to give the app developers the transaction fee. They haven't seen this to be advantageous in the current market, however the integration of the tool is terrific.


2. Chris Martin – Cleveland, OH – He had problems calling in earlier, but commends the new dial in system. He asked that the Transit Police be defunded and reallocate money back to service. RTA's highest priority should be transit not safety as Mayor Clough stated at a previous meeting. He asked if the Board would feel safe if all the passengers did not wear mask or the operator is not zipped in or wearing a mask. He asked the Board how often they use public transit. He asked about his month old records request for the SWAT budget. He is concerned that the Transit Police department is a hostile work environment.
3. Pluria Gardner – Cleveland, OH – A female transit police officer followed her and jumped on her back because she would not board the train. She was in Tower City around Noon, either July 19 or July 20 charging her phone. She said it was Sunday. She had an interview she was going to. Customer Service is not there. She feels people are not given respect on transit because it is assumed that it is a poverty issue. Mayor Clough said he would have staff follow up.

Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 25, 2020 in the Board Room of the Authority, Root-McBride Building, and 1240 West Sixth Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44113.

This meeting was adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Attest:   
Interim Secretary-Treasurer

  
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President