

Minutes

RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:17 a.m. May 16, 2023

Board Members: Lucas (Chair), Moss (Vice Chair), Koomar, Mersmann, Sleasman, Weiss, Welch

Not present: Biasiotta, Joyce

Staff: Birdsong Terry, Burney, Cascarilla, Caver, Coffey, Dangelo, Davidson, Fields, Fleig, Freilich, Gautam, Harris, Jenkins, Kirkland, Miller, Mothes, Schipper, Walker-Minor, Woodford, Zimmerman

Public: Gibbons, Meissner, Welo

The meeting was called to order at 9:17 a.m. There were seven (7) 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 Lucas stated that the minutes from the April 18, 2023 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. Airric Stewart – The discontinued 15A route does not cost RTA more money to run. This route could share service with the 15. It would connect to the 48A, through Shaker Square, and MLK. It could share routes with the 50 and 11. This will improve service and stay in line with NextGen, creating efficiency and direct transfer to schools, hospitals and work.
2. Mr. Rowan – He rides the 22. He put his book on the 26 to support the Cleveland Reads Program. He was told he cannot put a radio flyer cart on the buses or store the cart on the front carriage.

Committee Reports

President Lucas stated that the Rail Car funding presentation event last week was nice.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

There was no report.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

There were no reports.

Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

New Hires:

1. Tenisha Smith, Operator
2. Henry Johnson, Operator
3. Patricia Hill, Benefits Specialist
4. Justin Albrecht, Equipment Servicer
5. Timothy Wetherbee, Equipment Servicer
6. Jordan Hulgin, Maintenance Planner
7. Kayla Freed, Engineering Co-Op
8. Jose Pancheco, Engineering Co-Op
9. Gennaro Garofoli, Engineering Co-Op
10. Tanya Gudger, Operator
11. Maxine Parish, Operator
12. Tanisha Rouse, Operator
13. Marilyn Irby, Operator

Promotions:

1. Philip Waldren, Heating/Air Conditioning Mechanic
2. Debra Ervin, Vehicle Servicer
3. Jonathan Ciesla, Project Resource Manager

Introduction of Resolutions:

- A. 2023-35 – Authorizing Contract No. 2023-025 with Terik Roofing, Inc. for Project 19.36 – Hayden Garage Roof Replacement, as specified, in an amount not to exceed \$5,688,162.00 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.
- B. 2023-36 – Authorizing Contract No. 2023-030 with Suburban Maintenance & Construction, Inc. for Project 62A – Rehabilitation of Track/Platform Bridges over W. 117th street, as specified, in an amount not to exceed \$7,563,549.00 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.

Ms. Moss asked since there was only one responsive bid if this is the best price and if it is within the budget. Ms. Dangelo said two bids were received but one was non-responsive because it was more than 10% over the estimate. The current bid was 1.9% less than the estimate so it was deemed fair and reasonable.
- C. 2023-37 – Authorizing Contract No. 2023-044 with Railworks Track Services LLC for Project 19.37 – Catenary Rehabilitation Phase 2, as specified, in an amount not to exceed \$3,799,835.00 (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Ms. Welch and approved by unanimous vote.
- D. 2023-38 – Authorizing Contract No. 2023-50 with Reladyne, LLC for the furnishing of engine oil, as specified and as required, for a period of one (1) year in an amount not to exceed \$293,250.40 (General Fund, Fleet Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Ms. Welch and approved by unanimous vote.

- E. 2023-39 – Authorizing Contract No. 2023-065 with Kronos Incorporated to provide Kronos annual subscription and support for a period of one year in an amount not to exceed \$143,805.82 (General Fund, Management Information Services Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Ms. Welch and approved by unanimous vote.
- F. 2023-40 – Appropriating the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's expenditures or outlays for the Fiscal Year ("FY") 2024 Capital Improvement Budget, the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Rajan D. Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer gave the report. The annual inflation rate in the U.S. increased from 2.5% in January 2020 to a high of 9.1% in June 2022. Since June 2022, the inflation rate has been falling. At the end of April 2023, inflation is down to 4.9%. It is expected to continue to fall in 2023 but remains higher than the long-term rate of 3.9%. The feds raised the interest rate again on May 3, 2023. Interest rates are now at 5.08% which is the highest level in 15 years. The Ohio Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) unemployment rate for April is not available yet.

YTD ridership through April 2023 is 22% higher than 2022. April 2023 ridership was 12.3% above April 2022. YTD passenger fares are down 1.7% due to timing issues of large U-pass payments and similar checks that come in later. April 2023 fare revenue is 3.3% below the April 2022 levels and 4.9% below budget. Passenger fares for 2020 were 43% below pre-pandemic 2019 levels. In 2021, they were just over 50% below 2019. RTA is better in this category compared to six peer agencies. Compared to larger transit systems, RTA's passenger fare recovery is better.

April 2023 sales tax receipts were 9.4% higher compared to April 2022. YTD sales tax is 7.2% higher. Nineteen of the twenty-three categories that make up the sales tax base were positive. The May sales tax number are expected later this week.

General Manager/CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, CEO gave the report. RTA was awarded \$130M to be leveraged with \$213M secured to date for the rail car replacement program. FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown and U.S. Congresswoman Shontel Brown, RTA Board members, dignitaries and staff were in attendance. She thanked the staff for their work on this event. ODOT awarded RTA \$12M for construction. The money will be used to support the Cuyahoga MetroHealth Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

Calley Mersmann and Jeffrey W. Slesman took their oath of office as new RTA Board members last week. Today is their first official day of business. Valarie J. McCall and Luz N. Pellet were acknowledged for their service on the Board during a Special Board Meeting on May 2. A presentation on the advertising standards will be presented during the June Committee meeting prior to a new advertising vendor recommendation this October. Ms. Welch thanked the staff for prioritizing this effort and listening to the community around RTA's reputation and brand. The RTA Awards Banquet is this Friday, May 19. The Board is invited to attend.

Public Comments – public transit related items

1. Paul Meissner – He is a member of Clevelanders for Public Transit (CPT) and an applicant for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). He commended the staff and Board on the rail car replacement project. This is a great project for the community to use a single rail car on light rail and heavy rail lines.

President Lucas asked if the operators assist with putting bikes on the racks/buses. Ms. Birdsong Terry said the Transit Ambassadors can assist.

2. Airric Stewart – Evidence was not provided that the 15A would be inefficient. Information has not been provided to the public on the benefit of the new CAC structure. There has been no explanation as to why meetings have been put on hold. He wants the public to have more time for public comments.
3. Rev. Pinkney Butts – She asked that the rail car funding be used for all communities. She asked if the Superior escalator is fixed yet and what the plans are for E. 79th Street Station. What are the plans for people with disabilities, Black people and poor. President Lucas said the E. 79th Street Station will be updated. She added that elevators are needed instead of ramps for those who do not have electric wheelchairs.
4. Dontez Taylor – He thanked RTA. Bathrooms are needed at the train stations. The #8 and circulators should be put back into service.
5. Hayes Rowan (webform):
 - A) Requesting review and change of Paratransit policy prohibiting ADA riders from using carriages (e.g., baby stroller,) to transport groceries and other items.
 - B) Minimize vehicle idling: Encouraging Operators, (fixed-route & para) to understand and comply with vehicle-idling best practices set out in the national campaign, Idling Gets You Nowhere, and well exemplified in Cleveland Police Admin Order, 06-155, which reads, essentially: “If it isn’t an emergency, [and won’t create hardship,] turn the engine off.” (We've only 1 set of lungs.)
 - C) Adopt a records request policy allowing requests to be fulfilled free of charge to indigent requestors; and a file-share app-platform whereby video can be transmitted via email, (City of Cleveland protocol,) and reviewed by requestor and district manager via distance technology. (many personal computers do not have CD ports.)

Executive Session Requested

President Lucas asked for a motion and second to go into executive session to consider the appointment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, compensation of a public employee or official. It was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Ms. Welch. There was seven (7) ayes and none opposed.

There may be additional comments from the Board after the executive session.

It was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Mayor Weiss to come out of the executive session. There were seven (7) ayes and none opposed.

RTA Board of Trustees

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President Lucas stated that the Board is considering renewing the employment contract for General Manager/CEO India Birdsong Terry. They anticipate having additional information to share at the June Board Meeting

Upcoming Meetings

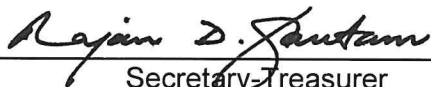
The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 27, 2023**, in the Board Room of the Authority, Root-McBride Building, 1240 West Sixth Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. This meeting will be live streamed on RTA's Board page (www.RideRTA.com/board) by selecting the meeting date. The public is welcome to attend in person.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 a.m.



President

Attest:



Secretary-Treasurer