

DRAFT
RTA CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD REPORT
TO THE RTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JULY 20, 2004

Normally, the RTA CAB chairperson would deliver this report to the Board of Trustees in person. But, CAB Chair George Zeller has received a summons to Jury Duty by the Cleveland Municipal Court on July 20. In order to comply with the law, he is not present at the RTA Board of Trustees meeting this morning. Normally, CAB Vice-Chair Andre White would fill in under these circumstances. But, there is a chance that his work obligations will not permit Andre to attend today's Board of Trustees meeting either. Therefore, the RTA Citizens Advisory Board presents its entire report here in writing this month, under these unusual circumstances.

The July meeting of the CAB was an extremely busy meeting, as were the committee meetings and ad hoc committee meetings of the CAB earlier in July. We summarize the most important of these activities here:

1. Family Fare Proposal. The CAB received a presentation on RTA's new proposal to simplify the family fare structure from RTA Marketing Director Steve Bitto, very similar to the presentation that the Board of Trustees received at its July committee meetings. In general, the proposal was well received by the CAB. In particular, the simplification of fares was an attractive idea to several CAB members. Additional input on this proposal is being solicited by both CAB members and the general public in Cuyahoga County. The CAB will be involved in this public input process. In July, the CAB decided to once again place this matter on the CAB agenda in August, with the intent of formulating a recommendation on this issue from the CAB to the RTA Board of Trustees.

2. Transit Waiting Environments Project. The CAB received a presentation from Rich Enty of RTA in July on the current status of the Transit Waiting Environments project. The Board of Trustees was scheduled to receive a similar presentation at its July Board committee meetings, but this presentation was postponed to August by decision of the RTA Board. The CAB has worked closely with RTA staff and others in the community on this project for many months, and in fact the CAB played an instrumental role in creating this project in the first place. A massive amount of work has been completed on this project, and a very detailed workbook of ideas and guidelines has been prepared. The workbook has worked its way through drafts, and it should actually be available to the Board of Trustees for examination very shortly. Neither RTA nor its CAB has rushed this project unnecessarily, and has instead concentrated on the creation of a quality project. RTA's customers and the general public have been surveyed about what they would like to see as amenities at transit stops, and there are significant findings from this survey about the priorities that Cuyahoga County residents have on this issue. RTA staff has provided a considerable amount of data on RTA's ridership by neighborhood, and several tiers of bus stops have been identified, stratified by the volume of passengers that use each stop in the RTA system. This detailed idea workbook is a quality product that will probably serve as a model for other public transit systems around the USA. But, it is only

the beginning of the Transit Waiting Environments project. Significant collaborations between RTA and both the public and private sectors will be needed to properly implement the concepts of this project. Thus, while much preliminary analytic work and strategic thinking has now been completed, an additional substantial amount of implementation work will have to be done in the future. That work will of course have to include consideration of fiscal implications. The CAB and RTA staff and management have indicated that they will be cooperating in this future work. All of this is promising. It is exciting to see this project move forward, but it is by no means finished yet.

3. Smart Commute Program. The initial stages of the RTA smart commute program were announced yesterday on July 19 by RTA at a Press Conference. This collaboration between RTA, Fannie Mae, ECO City Cleveland, the CAB, and others is designed to help finance housing purchases in the immediate vicinity of RTA transit stops. The CAB feels that this is a very significant initiative that should have very positive economic development contributions to Cuyahoga County municipalities, and that should also have very positive implications for RTA ridership. CAB member Ryan McKenzie deserves special mention in this paragraph, given his hard work in the design phases of this project.

4. RTA Events and Public Hearings. As usual, several CAB members participated with RTA staff at a variety of events in July. These included both marketing initiatives such as the Fourth of July fireworks marketing effort and the Cleveland Heights circulator birthday party, as well as Public Hearings on RTA route improvements.

5. ADA Issues. Steve Albro, chair of the CAB ADA Committee, reported in July that the CAB continues to be closely involved in both the implementation of the new paratransit application, as well as the issue of functional testing of paratransit applicants. A major outreach effort to explain these issues to RTA's disabled customers and to community organizations and stakeholders is already in early stages of implementation.

6. Moving Minds, Verse, Vision Project. In another collaborative project, RTA CAB chair Vince Reddy announced that the RTA CAB VAC committee has worked with local poets and artists on a program to provide exposure for poetry, art, and similar work by local artists. These materials will appear on signs/posters inside RTA vehicles at an extremely modest cost that is not much different from what RTA spends anyway to insert messages on its vehicles for viewing by its passengers. Although this project is not yet finished, findings from a selection process among submissions of artwork and poetry was announced on July 8. The VAC committee is also working closely with RTA Customer Service to ensure that RTA customers get good feedback from RTA after interaction with RTA Customer Service.

7. RTA Board Member Appointments to the CAB. As the Board of Trustees knows, the Board recently passed a resolution to appoint members of the "slate" individuals who serve on the RTA Citizens Advisory Board. Those "slate" appointments are made collectively by the entire RTA Board. In addition, one half of the CAB membership serves as a result of their appointment to the CAB by individual Board of Trustees

members to staggered three year terms. RTA Board CAB Liaison Shari Wier and RTA Board Chair George Dixon will be coordinating this process as usual, by which each individual Board of Trustees member makes one personal appointment and/or reappointment to the GCRTA Citizens Advisory Board. The current appointments that are due to be made, along with the current CAB incumbents are: Richard Ruhlman (appointed by Mayor Dennis Clough), Vince Reddy (appointed by Mayor Edward Kelley), George Zeller (appointed by Mark Ruzic), and Tom Starinsky (appointed by Paul Volpe). Continuing Board of Trustees members will need to decide what they want to do with these appointments. New Board of Trustees members, including Mr. Patton, and Ms. Weir, will also have to be integrated into this process. Other Board member appointments to the CAB will not be due for action until 2006. For the information of the Board, those appointments not coming due for additional action until 2006 currently include: Donna Prease (appointed by Jesse Anderson), Ryan McKenzie (appointed by Beverly Burtzloff), Thomas Fahey (appointed by Madeline Cain), Charles Bibb, Jr. (appointed by George Dixon), Carol Johnson (appointed by Alan Krulak), and Kenneth Adams (appointed by Francisco Molina). Mayor Hruby will also have to be integrated into this process in 2006. This paragraph of the CAB report simply serves as a reminder to the Board of Trustees about this annual process. RTA general manager Joe Calabrese suggested at the CAB meeting that this issue might be a small item for brief consideration at the RTA Board of Trustees retreat.

As you see here, the RTA Citizens Advisory Board is heavily involved in a variety of projects right now. Perhaps this written description will be as useful to the Board of Trustees as our more normal verbal reports are.

Respectfully submitted,

George Zeller
RTA CAB Chair
Potentially a Temporary Juror