

Minutes

RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:09 a.m. March 19, 2024

Board Members: Lucas (Chair), Koomar (Vice Chair), Biasiotta, McPherson, Mersmann, Pacetti, Sleasman, Weiss, Welch

Not present: Love

Staff/Other: Basso, Bennett, Birdsong Terry, Burney, Caver, Cottrell, Davidson, Dykes, Fields, Fleig, Ford, Freilich, Garofoli, Gautam, Jenkins, Johnson, Jones, Jupina, Kirkland, Miller, Mothes, Schipper, Sutula, Togher, Young

Public: Hagar, Loh, Rodriquez

The meeting was called to order at 9:09 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

President Lucas stated that the minutes from the February 27, 2024 Board Meeting and March 5, 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 Items

1. Larry Rodriquez – Autistic people with audio sensitivity issues are overwhelmed by the bell that sounds when the ramp is deployed, the speaker boxes on the coach and when the operator uses the horn. Some of the paratransit buses are in bad shape. The paratransit phone line should be updated.
2. Airric Stewart – The owners of Public Square Cleveland Neighborhood Progress and Burten Bell Carr and RTA have a responsibility to the social well being of the public. Dr. Caver is on the CNP Board. These organizations want to improve the neighborhoods surrounding Shaker Square. The 48A as an hourly bus with the 48 will give a 30-minute service to Shaker Square. The 15A would give service to Shaker Square.

Committee Reports

The Civilian Oversight Committee will create the Ad Hoc Selection Committee to review applicants for appointment. There are two open appointments. The application process closed March 15.

Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

There were 29 new hires and 3 promotions. Their names are listed on the PowerPoint presentation.

Introduction of Resolutions

- A. 2024-19 - Authorizing an increase to Contract No. 2022-054 with Delta Railroad Construction, Inc. for Project 52X – Light Rail Track Rehabilitation Replacement of the East

75th Street Interlocking in the amount of \$141,968.60 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$3,789,476.44 and reinstating the General Manager, Chief Executive Officer's change order signing authority in its entirety (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta. Ms. Mersmann asked for a roll call. There were eight (8) ayes and one (1) abstention from Ms. Mersmann. It passed.

- B. 2024-20 - Authorizing an increase to Contract No. 2023-030 with Suburban Maintenance & Construction, Inc. for Project 62A – Rehabilitation of Track/Platform Bridges over W. 117th Street in the amount of \$765,000.00 for a total contract amount of \$8,352,660.93 and reinstating the General Manager, Chief Executive Officer's Change Order Signing Authority in its entirety (RTA Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. Welch. Ms. Mersmann asked for a roll call. There were eight (8) ayes and one (1) abstention from Ms. Mersmann. It passed.
- C. 2024-21 - Authorizing Contract No. 2023-156 with Quality Control Inspection, Inc. for Project 52N-CS – Tower City East Portal Rehabilitation Construction Inspection Services in an amount not to exceed \$499,649.00 (Development Fund, Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. McPherson. Ms. Mersmann asked for a roll call. There were eight (8) ayes and one (1) abstention from Ms. Mersmann. It passed.
- D. 2024-22 - Authorizing Contract No. 2023-188 with Pirc Company Landscaping & Snowplowing LLC to provide rail landscaping services in an amount not to exceed \$1,181,147.07 for a period of three years, and in amounts not to exceed \$401,616.12 and \$405,632.28 for each of two option years, respectively, for a total five-year contract amount not to exceed \$1,988,395.47 (General Fund, Service Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. Mersmann. Mr. Sleasman requested a roll call. There were eight (8) ayes and one (1) abstention from Mr. Sleasman. It passed.
- E. 2024-23 - Amending Section 222.04 Community Advisory Committee of the Codified Rules and Regulations of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Ms. Mersmann and approved by unanimous vote.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Rajan D. Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer gave the report. March sales tax is not in yet. Through the end of February, inflation increased to 3.4% from 3.1% in January. The FOMC is meeting today and tomorrow and will have some additional information that will be shared at a later date. February ridership was 8.9% higher compared to the same period for 2023. Most modes have seen an increase in ridership. YTD we are up 8.9% over last year. Passenger fares are 1.6% below January 2024. We remain 17.6% above budget. YTD passenger fares are 20.5% higher than the two-month period in 2023. YTD February sales tax we are down 0.5%. This remains the largest unrestricted source of our revenue. It has been strong over the last several years.

Mayor Weiss asked about the 2023 ridership. Mr. Gautam said the 3.4 million rides was a 36.7% increase over 2022 which was 2.5 million rides of 11.6%. There has been a slight increase in ridership over each year from 2021.

General Manager/CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, CEO gave the report. RTA had extra capacity on all rail lines during the St. Patrick's Day Parade this past Sunday. Staff and volunteers assisted riders on the system.

Transit Police and Transit Ambassadors patrolled the stations and bus stops. No major issues were reported. RTA will host a Women's History Month Conference, March 28 at the Cleveland Public Library downtown from 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. RTA's Elevating Women Together (EWT) Resource Group is the host organization under the leadership of Daveda Banks, Triskett Transportation Manager and Felicia Brooks Willams, Senior Manager, Office of Equal Opportunity.

RTA leadership visited FTA Region V in Chicago, IL, March 11 to discuss grant applications, financial forecasting and project updates. They toured the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Control Center to see rail and bus dispatch best practices, safety measures and technology innovations. CTA is building a new control center. FTA will also be on site when RTA hosts the APTA Rail Conference this June. RTA collaborated to bring Frontier Airlines to Cleveland as their hub. In February the Board approved the distribution of 400, 7-day transit passes, Commuter Advantage and Travel Training to Frontier Airlines.

Later today there will be a recognition ceremony for outgoing Board President Rev. Charles P. Lucas here at the Main Office from 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. to acknowledge his commitment to service.

Public Comments – public transit related items

1. Bryan Haggar – Bryan is a 27-year transit rider. Bryan did not agree with every statement made by Airric Stewart earlier today. Bryan rides the 50 every day. It could be more frequent service to improve cross-town connections. The 48 could be improved also. Route 9 evening service was an hour late at Severance Center.
2. Airric Stewart – Airric doesn't believe the NextGen changes improved service. The CAC should be reviewing the NextGen changes and his proposal for 15A and 48A.

Executive Session Requested

It was moved by Mayor Koomar, seconded by Ms. Welch to go into executive session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, compensation of a public employee or official. There were nine (9) ayes and none opposed.

It was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta to come out of executive session. There were nine (9) ayes and none opposed.

COC Ad Hoc Selection Committee

It was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Ms. Pacetti to reinstate Ad Hoc Selection Committee members Lauren Welch, Mayor Koomar and Mayor Weiss to review applicants for appointment to the COC.

Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 16, 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 10:15 a.m.



President

Attest: Rajan D. Jantam
Secretary-Treasurer

