

Minutes

RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:04 a.m. October 31, 2023

Board Members: Lucas (Chair), Biasiotta, Love, McPherson, Mersmann, Sleasman, Weiss

Not present: Koomar (Vice Chair), Welch

Staff/Other: Birdsong Terry, Caver, Clifford, Dangelo, Davidson, Draper, Dykes, Fields, Fleig, Ford, Freilich, Garofoli, Gautam, Hlavacs, Houston, Hutchins, Jupina, Kirkland, Krehel, Liou, Lozada, Macko, Marquit Renwald, Miller, Mothes, Palagyi, Rudolph, Schipper, Sherburn, Smith, Walker, Walker Minor, Woodford

Public: Butler, Gibbons, Levy, Loh, Rodriguez

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. There were six (6) Board members present. Mayor Biasiotta arrived after the roll call.

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 September 26, 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. Larry Rodriguez – The Red Line trains are not clean. He wants to work with RTA to promote the system. The Paratransit service needs to improve.
2. Airric Stewart (phone) – The survey line keeps cutting him off. He emailed Sharon Jenkins about the RTA ads. He explained that the 15A and 48A better serve the current service. The CAC has been inactive for at least six months. He isn't aware of anyone that has been interviewed to serve on the committee. It wasn't running effectively when it was active.
3. Joyce Levy – She rides paratransit. The GPS continues to divert her trip to Fairhill Partners to the wrong address. She is marked as a no show on her return trip due to this error. The service is constantly late making her late for appointments with the VA. A friend of hers has paid for Lyft when paratransit is a no show.

Committee Reports

There were no reports.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Ms. Terry added that background checks are being done on the CAC applicants. A slate of potential candidates will be brought to the Board in November.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

There were no reports.

Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

There were 29 new hires and 6 promotions. They are listed on the presentation slides. Ms. Terry thanked the HR team for their efforts in hiring operators. Scott Clifford, Scheduling Analyst and James Smith, Paratransit Operator were celebrated for their 45 years of service.

Introduction of Resolutions:

- A. 2023-81 – Expressing appreciation to Terence P. Joyce for his service as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority and extending best wishes for many years to come, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta and approved by unanimous vote.

President Lucas expressed his appreciation for Mr. Joyce's service on the Board. Mr. Joyce expressed his appreciation for serving on the Board.

- B. 2023-82 – Expressing congratulations to the employees of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority who retired during the third quarter of 2023, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.

Eleven employees retired this quarter. Sharon Rudolph, Samuel Hutchins and James Walker, Jr. was present. They expressed their appreciation for working with the RTA.

- C. 2023-83 – Authorizing Contract No. 2023-101 with Key Bank, N.A. to provide Banking Services and to serve as depository for the Authority's active funds for a term of up to five (5) years, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mayor Biasiotta and approved by unanimous vote.

- D. 2023-84 – Amending budget appropriations for the Fiscal Year ("FY") 2023 Capital Improvement Budget to provide for an increase of \$32,000,000, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mr. Sleasman 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 hit a high of 9.1% in June 2022. It has declined steadily since then. At the end of September 2023 inflation remained at 3.7% unchanged from August 2023. The Federal Reserve raised interest rates in July to 5.5%. They are scheduled to meet today and tomorrow to determine the next round of increases, if any. That information will be available tomorrow. Interest rates are at the highest level in 22 years.

In 2019 YTD ridership was 21.18 million. In 2023 we are at 14.16% or 33% lower than pre pandemic levels. September 2023 ridership was 11.4% higher compared to September 2022. Passenger fares are 29% lower than 2019 levels. For September 2022, fares were 3.2% below. For September 2023 it was 3.2% below September 2022 levels. YTD passenger fares were 8.2% higher than 2023 levels. Sales tax for October 2023 (based on July 2023 activity) was 4.8% lower than October 2022. YTD we are 3.1% higher compared to last year. Eleven of the 23 categories that make up the sales tax base were positive in October. Online sales were 10.6% higher. Regular and statewide sales were 1.3% lower. Motor vehicles and watercraft were 23.7% lower.

General Manager/CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, CEO gave the report. New board members Deidre McPherson and Stephen M. Love took their oath of office this month. She thanked outgoing board member Terry Joyce for his service. In April of this year, the Board approved the contract with Siemens Mobility Inc. to purchase up to 60 rail cars. Today the Board approved a \$32 million increase in the CIP budget for purchasing 6 additional rail cars. Another resolution will be presented in November to exercise the 1st option to purchase 6 additional rail cars and spare parts.

RTA sent staff members to the APTA Conference and Expo in Orlando, FL, Oct. 9-11. Ms. Terry and staff held a talk at the TransPro booth during the Expo. Board member Jeff Sleasman also attended the conference. A business Open House with the ConnectWorks Program for the Aerozone Alliance Region microtransit program will be held November 30, 2023. This is the second microtransit program with Share Mobility. RTA worked with Graffiti HeArt to install a mural on the Irishtown Bend. The mural artist is Vic Savage. It is located on the RTA Viaduct in the Flats.

New Business

It was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mr. Love and approved by the Board to adopt the proposed 2024 Board and Committee Meeting schedule.

Public Comments – public transit related items

1. Joyce Levy – She asked for a call back when customers call the complaint line.
2. Loh – Loh said the paratransit service has improved. None of the new stations have public restrooms and some don't have elevators. The stations don't smell good.
3. Airric Stewart – he asked for the survey line to be fixed. He asked why RTA promises to provide service when it is short on operators. He asked what questions are asked on the background check for the CAC applicants. He asked why the RTA ads stopped after he shared with Ms. Jenkins how the ads align with the 15A, 48A and 50. He asked if the two new board members would address his concerns and why the secretary treasurer only provides percentages instead of numbers.

Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 28, 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 10:07 a.m.



President

Attest: *Rajan D. Pantam*
Secretary-Treasurer