

Minutes

RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

10:53 a.m. November 15, 2022

Board Members: Lucas (Chair), Biasiotta, Joyce, Koomar, Pellot, Weiss, Welch

Not present: McCall, Moss

Staff: Biggar, Birdsong Terry, Bowles, Burney, Caver, Crawshaw, Dangelo, Davidson, Dietrich, Fields, Fleig, Freilich, Garlock, Garofoli, Gautam, Ghanem, Hudson, Jones, Keshtkaran, Kirkland, Miller, Mothes, O'Donnell, Schipper, Scott, Sutula, Talley, Walker-Minor, Woodford, Zimmerman

Public: Cobhan, Fowler, Gibbons, Loh, Pinkney-Butts, Sampson, Tarter

The meeting was called to order at 10:53 a.m. There were seven (7) board members present.

It was advised that notice of this meeting have 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

President Lucas stated that the minutes from the October 25, 2022 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. Rev. Pamela Pinkney-Butts – She believes only white males are making decisions for the RTA. She doesn't see black people making decisions. She has issues with agenda Items A, B, C, D, and F. AT&T has hidden fees. She asks that we ensure they are not overcharging the Authority. She asked what a Call Out Policy is in the Code Book. She asked who the COC members are.
2. No Name Mentioned - He is having issues with the operators leaving customers and speeding. He is disabled.
3. Chistina Gamble – She is a paratransit rider. Her ride picks her up late and gets her to work late. She has called in several times to complain.
4. Mary Cobham – (webform) I am curious as a representative of a small business engineering firm here in the Cleveland area about the RTA's allowance and efforts towards incorporating SBEs, MBEs, and businesses under the DBE category in RFPs and procurement with the Greater Cleveland RTA. We have had issues in the past being able to provide our services to the RTA in order to aid in Transportation and Utility related projects in the Greater Cleveland area.

Committee Reports

There were no reports.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

There was no report from the CAC.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

The Ad Hoc Tech Committee meets Thursday, December 8 at 5 p.m.

Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

New Hires:

1. Felicia Howard – Paratransit Operator
2. Oina Friedman – Janitor
3. Jheryl Jones – Laborer
4. Evelyn Lee – Bus Operator
5. Lareka Lee – Bud Operator
6. Jose Rosado – Equipment Servicer
7. Peter Comings – Communications Specialist
8. Damon Hawkins – Office Manager
9. Ida Ford – Talent Acquisition Manager

Promotions:

1. Dinnissa Blackman – Transit Ambassador
2. Avery Rogers – Service Quality Supervisor
3. Latha Dwarakanath – Manager, Applications
4. Michael So – Manager of General Accounting
5. Paul Mague – Maintenance Technician
6. Keith Ganther – Sr. Counsel, Litigation

Mr. Ganther was promoted to Oct. 30. He has been with RTA since 2006. He graduated from Cleveland Marshall College of Law in 1982. He has 39 years of legal experience in the public and private sector at several law firms. He served as Assistant Ohio Attorney General. He will be responsible for supervising, managing, and coordinating legal representation of the Authority in personal injury, employment, workers compensation and contract.

Ms. Dwarakanath was acting in her role. She is a long-term employee who oversees key software. Mr. So has been with RTA for 7-8 years. Their promotions come at times where there is a lot of activity with new technology and the auditors.

Introduction of Resolutions:

- A. 2022-98 – Authorizing a change order to exercise an option under Contract No. 2020-071 with Gillig, LLC for the purchase and delivery of up to 20, 40-ft. low floor CNG coaches, as specified, at a unit price of \$652,031.56, for an amount not to exceed \$13,040,631.20 (RTA Development Fund, Fleet Management Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Ms. Pellot and approved by unanimous vote.
- B. 2022-99 – Authorizing Contract No. 2022-111 with Independence Excavating, Inc. for Project 27Y(A) – Cuyahoga Viaduct Phase 1A Bulkhead Repair, as specified and as required, in an amount not to exceed \$869,500.00 (RTA Development Fund,

- Engineering & Project Development Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Mayor Weiss and approved by unanimous vote.
- C. 2022-100 – Authorizing Contract No. 2022-068 with Workwear Outfitters, LLC for the furnishing of Operator and Supervisor Uniform Services for a period of three years, in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.00, with two, one-year options in an amount not to exceed \$500,000.00 per year, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$2,500,000.00 for a period of five years (General Fund, various department budgets), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Ms. Welch and approved by unanimous vote.
 - D. 2022-101 – Authorizing a ratification and time extension to Contract No. 2014-054 with AT&T Corporation for Telecommunications Services, in an amount not to exceed \$352,627.00, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$2,695,157.00 (General Fund, Innovation & Technology Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Ms. Welch and approved by unanimous vote.
 - E. 2022-102 – To amend the fiscal year 2022 revenues and appropriations, as adopted in Resolution Nos. 2021-112, 2022-068, and 2022-083, to provide for an increase in the appropriation in the Insurance Fund in the amount of \$500,000, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mayor Koomar and approved by unanimous vote.
 - F. 2022-103 – Authorizing the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority to enter into a purchase and sale agreement with XAPC, Co. for the purchase of 15583 Brookpark Road, Brook Park, Ohio, Cuyahoga County Permanent Parcel Number 343-11-004, for the sum of \$1,500,000.00, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Ms. Pellot and approved by unanimous vote.
 - G. 2022-104 – Removing Sections 644.01 Work Week and Hours, 644.02 Compensation, 644.03 Payroll Checks, 644.04 Payroll Deductions, 644.05 Overtime and 644.06 Call-out Policy for exempt employees from the Codified Rules and Regulations of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority as duplicative of Personnel Policies 400.01, 400.02, 400.03, 400.04, 400.05 and 400.06, respectively, and amending those Personnel Policies, the adoption of which was moved by Mayor Biasiotta, seconded by Ms. Pellot and approved by unanimous vote.
 - H. 2022-105 – Amending Section 222.05(e) of the Codified Rules and Regulations of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority to increase the compensation for members of the Civilian Oversight Committee from \$1,200 to \$1,800 per year (Board of Trustees Department budget), the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Ms. Pellot and approved by unanimous vote.
 - I. 2022-106 – Adopting the Operating Procedures of the Civilian Oversight Committee, the adoption of which was moved by Ms. Welch, seconded by Ms. Pellot and approved by unanimous vote.

President Lucas thanked the staff and Ms. Welch for their hard work on the COC committee.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Rajan Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer, gave the report. Inflation is one of the most important economic indicators identifying the change in the price level for goods and services. The annual inflation rate in the U.S. has increased from 2.5% in January 2022 before COVID, to 8.2% in September 2022. The purchasing power of the U.S. dollar has weakened in recent years. The purchasing power is the extent to which a person or company has available funds to make purchases. Typically, inflation is defined as too many dollars chasing too few goods. This however is the flip side of the equation where most of the inflationary pressure they are seeing is a result of the supply side. Supply chain constraints and rising gas prices were the key drivers of the inflation. As companies continue to right size their inventory levels and transportation bottlenecks ease, global logistics are showing signs of recovery. The height of the inflation occurred in June at 9.1%. That metric has decreased to 8.2%. Continued signs of recovery seem to be evident as mentioned by Ms. Sutula in the budget presentation where the estimates for inflation for 2023 are significantly below the current levels.

The U.S. labor market remains resilient. The unemployment rate for the U.S. for September was 3.5% which was down from 3.7% in August. Ohio's unemployment remained steady at 4%. The County unemployment rate is not seasonally adjusted, which causes the increase in the unemployment rate as reported. The county's estimated rate was 4.9% in September down from 5% in August. In reviewing the five largest metropolitan statistical areas in Ohio. Over the past three years, the height of the labor force was February 2020. After the Pandemic, we are now back to pre-COVID unemployment levels. For September, unemployment MSA rates for Cleveland were 5.1% down from 5.2% in August. Cincinnati is steady at 3.5%. Columbus is 3.5% up from 3.4%. Dayton has remained steady at 3.9%. Toledo is up from 4% to 4.1%.

October ridership was up 16.6% compared to October 2021. YTD ridership is 18.4% above 2021. Passenger Fares is directly related to the increase in ridership. We received a payment from CMSD for the 2022-2023 school year that is reflected in the uptick in passenger fares for October. They make a lump sum payment for the entire year. The net result through October is a 226.9% increase. YTD it is 39.3% above 2021 levels. Sales Tax has remained strong. Typically, sales tax comes in around the 15-20th of the month, so these are not November numbers. October receipts, which have a three-month lag, was 4.7% higher compared to last year, 2.7% higher than budget and YTD it is 6.6% higher than 2021. The sales tax base is made of 23 categories. Seventeen of the twenty-three categories were positive. Motor vehicles and watercraft continues to show signs of weakness at 0.2% lower compared to the prior month. Online sales were 17%. Regular and statewide sales were 4.1% higher.

General Manager/CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, CEO gave the report. On November 2, RTA attended the City of Cleveland Transportation & Mobility Committee to give the "State of Transportation". They presented on several topics including the new mission and vision, strategic plan, rail car replacement, capital projects, TOD, workforce and hiring and technology advancements and customer impact. Two bus wrap ads are on display showing our partnership with the Cleveland Public Library and City of Cleveland with the Cleveland Reads Program and our partnership with the Cuyahoga County Department of Health and Ohio Equity Institute for Baby on Board.

On October 20, RTA hosted a Meet & Greet with Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) National Board Chair Tonya Adams. The local COMTO chapter is looking to bolster our output to industry leaders in the minority communities. Ms. Adams met with several local business and city leaders in the Cleveland area. In December, she will have several Town Hall visits around

the Authority to provide a state of RTA and answer questions. On November 2, senior leadership and several Board members attended the Cuyahoga County Mayors & City Managers Association 13th Annual Award Ceremony & Fundraiser. Current County Executive Armond Budish and Senator Matt Dolan received the George V. Voinovich Municipal Service Award. She extended a thank you to all veterans for their service on Veteran's Day and all year around.

New Business

- The Board was presented the proposed 2023 Board and Committee Meeting schedule for their review. The schedule was approved.

Public Comments – public transit related items

1. Rev. Pamela M. Pinkney Butts – Operators told her they need an a.m. and p.m. board.
2. Loh – She requested the TRACTION surveys reflect the rider's point of view and not just the administrations point of view. She asked that the NOBLE survey be considered. The training for new operators needs to be improved with the new buses.
3. Christina Gamble - She called back to express her concerns with paratransit picking her up late and making her late for work. She didn't realize there was a two-minute limit for public comments.
4. Robert Winn - He asked for clarification on the Net Promotor score for on-time performance in the TRACTION survey. He asked for the difference between on-time actual and on-time perception. He asked how does it affect the on-time metric if a bus doesn't come due to shortages or breakdowns, and a connection is missed.

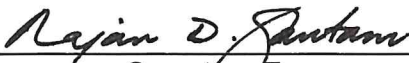
Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 20, 2022**, 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 11:41 a.m.



President

Attest: 

Secretary-Treasurer

