



MEETING MINUTES

Organizational, Services & Performance Monitoring Committee

May 19, 2026

Committee Members: Ms. Pacetti (Chair), Mayor Gallo, Ms. Harper, Mr. Sleasman

Also Present: Mayor Koomar, Ms. Elder, Mr. Love, Ms. McPherson, Mayor Weiss, Ms. Whigham

Staff/Other: Shawn Becker, Nick Biggar, India Birdsong Terry, Janet Burney, Floun'say Caver, Brent Charnigo, Nick Davidson, Shashelia Degraffinried, Traci Ext, George Fields, Bob Fleig, Anthony Garofoli, Rajan Gautam, Chief Deidre Jones, Lawrence Jupina, Carl Kirkland, Ida Marshall, Sheila Miller, Josh Miranda, Charles Morgan, Holly Mothes, Jim Rusnov, Mike Schipper, Kay Sutula, Wendy Talley, John Togher, Carolyn Young

Public: 3

I. Roll Call

Ms. Pacetti called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m. with roll call. A quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes – May 5, 2026

Mayor Gallo moved, and Mr. Sleasman seconded to approve the minutes; the motion carried.

III. TRACTION Results Reporting – Presentation of 1st Quarter 2026 scoreboards and customer experience surveys

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager & CEO, introduced the first quarter 2026 TRACTION performance review. She highlighted that the Authority's data compilation is now 100% in-house, moving away from third-party support. For the first quarter, GCRTA earned an overall grade of a B-minus, achieving 82.9 out of 100 goal points. This grade reflects transparent reporting and a set of adjusted KPIs designed to challenge the organization to hustle further across its four primary success outcomes.

Moving to customer experience, GCRTA earned 33.9 out of 35 points. The Authority achieved 15 out of 20 points for community impact, leaving room for improvement. This category can fluctuate because perception is a large component.

The first quarter's score for employee investment was 12.1 compared to the goal of 20. This category was expected to dip due to increased financial awareness and the pool of potential candidates for various programs may be shrinking due to a hiring freeze. Financial decisions have been made to continue service with no adverse impact on the community.

Moving to financial health, the score was 21.9 compared to the goal of 25.

Nick Biggar, Senior Director, CX & Performance Management, discussed the organizational scorecard and first quarter performance. GCRTA utilizes a balanced scorecard approach to monitor and measure performance. The four success outcomes are customer experience, community impact, employee investment and financial health.

Mr. Biggar stated that GCRTA's Net Promoter Score -- which asks customers how likely they are to recommend GCRTA to a friend or family member -- was 37 compared to a goal of 35.5.

GCRTA achieved 33.9 compared to a goal of 35 points in terms of customer experience.

Moving to Community Impact, Mr. Biggar stated that the agency achieved 15 out of 20 points. Public perception of community value hit 88% against an 89% goal. The agency conducts customer experience site visits to identify things in need of remedy from a customer's perspective. 100% of identified tactical field issues were resolved within a 4- to 5-day window. Additionally, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) projects tracked at a 67% completion rate within a rolling two-year window.

Mr. Biggar advised that GCRTA has an annual goal of engaging with community partners. 85% of such activities through the first quarter have been completed and looking at the community impact score was 15 out of a possible 20 points.

Switching into employee investment, this outcome yielded 12.1 out of 20 points. Retention rates for mission-critical roles such as operators, mechanics and transit police was 65% against an 80% goal. The agency met its internal talent pipeline target with a 36% promotion rate. Professional development hours for non-bargaining staff reached 52.6% of the target. Approximately 40% to 50% of employees participate in the wellness incentive which offers a modest financial incentive to proactively get an annual physical and dental exam.

Moving to financial health, Mr. Biggar stated that the score was 21.9 out of 25 points. GCRTA successfully brought in over \$17 million of its \$35 million competitive grant goal and drew no money from the Revenue Stabilization Fund during the quarter. Furthermore, agency-wide expense reductions hit a 4.2% savings rate, outperforming the established 3% reduction goal.

Mr. Biggar explained that GCRTA partners with ETC, which is an industry leader in terms of surveying, to conduct the customer experience survey. Starting in the first quarter of 2025 through the first quarter of 2026, there has been a gradual increase in overall customer satisfaction.

Overall customer satisfaction reached just under 80%, exceeding the 76% goal. Targets for customer perceptions of safety (64% vs. 70% goal), on-time performance (75% vs. 76% goal), and vehicle cleanliness (54% vs. 60% goal) were close to the established goals. Internal tracking showed actual fixed-route on-time performance reached 82.6%, just under the 83% organization-wide goal. These three attributes consistently are the most important to customers.

Bus and rail customers say the most important attribute of service is on-time performance, followed by vehicle cleanliness, the cost of a ride and safety. Paratransit customers value safety followed by on-time performance.

The Community Value Survey was conducted among people who live within GCRTA service area, but do not necessarily utilize GCRTA services. The results showed that 88% indicated GCRTA provides value to the region and 62% find value in GCRTA personally. 23% of the survey respondents ride GCRTA. The top item community members indicated is that they want GCRTA to provide access to employment, affordable transportation and mobility to low-income families and individuals with special mobility needs.

Ms. Pacetti thanked staff for continuing to provide rich data. She appreciated that staff takes the time to survey hundreds of users on a regular basis to get real data about what riders care about.

Ms. Pacetti noticed that cleanliness is important to riders and questioned the status of the transition from cloth to vinyl seats. Mr. Biggar advised that the Red Line is completed but the Blue and Green lines are still being worked on. Seat composition makes a significant difference in terms of the perception of cleanliness and the ability to clean them.

Ms. Pacetti requested a follow-up regarding the timeline of the seat transition.

CEO Terry stated that it is important to survey active riders and people who are potential riders. Cleveland is at an inflection point in terms of battling history and anecdotes from past generations. New and returning riders would see the positive changes and innovations to the system -- the majority of which are capital improvements and operational items that enhance the ridership experience.

Aaron Hekele, Vice President of Transportation Research at ETC Institute, explained that random onboard intercepts, controlled QR codes, and digital hybrid strategies are utilized to maintain representative, FTA benchmarked data samples across all demographics and transit modes. Across fixed-route bus, bus rapid transit, and rail modes, customers consistently identified on-time performance and vehicle cleanliness as their highest priorities. Paratransit riders prioritized operator safety and safe boarding over timing metrics.

Ms. Whigham stated that some survey questions can be technical and she wanted to make sure that the demographics of those GCRTA serves meets them where they are. Mr. Hekele stated that his group works with GCRTA to ensure the questions can be benchmarked and helps develop scores. Additionally, ETC conducts its own focus groups internally to ensure the questions are relatable.

Mr. Sleasman renewed his request to omit the survey question of whether a person's ridership was dependent versus choice.

IV. Quarterly Management Report – Review of 1st Quarter 2026 Results

CEO Birdsong Terry concluded the presentations with the First Quarter Management Report, noting that total operating revenues reached approximately \$7.5 million. Passenger fares and ridership experienced subtle year-over-year declines, partially due to invoicing timelines for student fares. However, paratransit ridership has increased.

Operating expenses were positively managed, highlighted by healthcare expenditures coming in nearly 20% lower year-over-year alongside limits placed on employee overtime. Paratransit ridership numbers continued to climb, though payment timing caused temporary anomalies on the financial ledger.

There were no first quarter transfers for revenue stabilization.

Capital fund allocations heavily favored bus improvements at nearly \$14 million, followed closely by railcar replacements and critical facility upgrades to escalators, elevators, and transit stations.

Concluding the report, CEO Terry noted added components of the report, including a quarterly ridership report, external marketing lists for the Commuter Advantage program, and an updated Small Business Enterprise (SBE) activity sheet reflecting recent interim final rules set by the Federal Department of Transportation.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business to bring before this Committee, Ms. Pacetti moved to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Mr. Sleasman. The meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m.



Rajan D. Gautam
Secretary/Treasurer



Brent Charnigo
Board Administrator