MEETING MINUTES

GCRTA Board of Trustees Meeting

August 18, 2026

Board Members:	Mayor Koomar (President), Ms. Pacetti (Vice President) Ms. Elder, Mayor Gallo, Ms. Harper, Mr. Love, Ms. McPherson, Mr. Sleasman, Mayor Weiss, Ms. Smith Whigham
Present:	Mayor Koomar, Ms. Pacetti, Ms. Elder, Ms. Harper, Mr. Love, Ms. McPherson, Ms. Whigham, Mr. Sleasman, Mayor Weiss.
Staff/Other:	India Terry, Shawn Becker, Nick Biggar, Nick Davidson, George Fields, Bob Fleig, Ida Ford-Marshall, Anthony Garofoli, Fiona Gibbons, , Carl Kirkland, Nicholas Miller, Sheila Miller, Holly Mothes, Joe Shaffer, Kay Sutula, John Togher, Carolyn Young
Public:	Carren M. Woods, Kevin Hinke, Ryan Murray, Roland Robinson, Loh, Beth Bartz, Jenna Thomas, Tanmay Shah Tameka Dumas,

I. Call to Order

Mayor Koomar called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m.

II. Roll Call

A quorum was present.

III. Certification regarding Notice of Meeting

It was advised that the notice of this meeting had been posted more than twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting, that the usual notification had been given to 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.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Pacetti requested that the approval of the minutes for July 21, 2026, Board Meeting be moved to the following month

V. Public Comments – Agenda and Non-Agenda Items

Members of the public addressed the Board regarding both agenda and non-agenda items. Public comments submitted through the webform will appear in their original form and have not been edited for grammar or content. GCRTA reserves the right not to publish any explicit language, derogatory remarks, or personal attacks against individuals.

A. Ryan Murray (in-person)

Expressed concerns about an incident on Paratransit last Thursday. He was never contacted and was listed as a no show.

B. Mary Magree (in-person)

Expressed that if Paratransit is picking up and waiting for over 5 minutes it is considered a no show. Paratransit was 2.5 hours late in picking her up and the Deacon at her church had to wait to ensure she was picked up.

C. Roland Robinson (in-person)

Expressed concerns that he sees young people putting their phones against the scanner on the bus the wrong way and beating the system and not paying their fare.

D. Carren Woods (in-person)

Thanked the staff for their service and encouraged everyone to be kind every day.

E. Jenna Thomas (in-person)

Attended the Clevelanders for Public Transit meeting. Expressed support for the 0.5% sales tax levy. Transit agencies in cities that have passed levies include Nashville, Columbus, Cincinnati. All showed flexibility. Need a more rigorous public engagement process. The City of Cleveland Mayor's Office used to have a position in support of transit, this is not filled and should be.

F. Tanmay Shah (in-person):

Council Member for Ward 12. Expressed support of the 0.5% tax levy. Promotes transit riders helping to support campaign.

G. Loh (in-person)

Expressed support of public hearings for service reductions held at different times although not attended well. Expressed concern about notifications not being received from riders through social media. Stated text messages were received better. Continue using traditional methods of notifications, such as text messages. Expressed support that big businesses in Cleveland should be contributors toward tax levy and public transit.

H. Airric Stewart (phone):

Asked Nick Biggar if ETC customer surveys were talking to the same people more than once.

I. Name not recorded (phone):

Expressed concern that Route 35 is discontinued.

J. Robert Winn (webform) - non-agenda

I encourage the Authority to evaluate trip-level ridership data, wheelchair boardings, transfer impacts, and whether a change produces real vehicle or operator savings and not route-level averages alone. before making wholesale changes to routes like the 41 and 15.

More importantly, the Authority should pursue a .5% countywide sales-tax levy which would provide stable funding to protect service, retain operators, improve reliability, maintain vehicles and infrastructure, and plan for the long term, instead of repeatedly cutting and rebuilding service.

A 0.5% levy could support 10-minute frequency on priority corridors which would enable more Clevelanders to use GCRTA for more trips. Staff has projected that this level of frequent service could place 301,000 residents and 273,000 jobs within a half-mile of a 10-minute route. Service every 10 minutes means less waiting, more reliable transfers, shorter overall trips, and a system that works better for work, medical care, school, shopping, and everyday errands. A frequent, accessible bus preserves an option for riders, including a paratransit-eligible riders who may use fixed route buses instead of relying on paratransit to make costly point-to-point trips.

K. Michael MC (webform) - non-agenda

Before the board thinks about asking for a sales tax level in May 2027, the strategy needs to be fully fleshed out, meaning that even without the increase in the sales tax levy the governance of the RTA needs to be reviewed to find operational efficiencies. One goodwill gesture that MUST be implemented is the elimination of the board stipend; this item was identified in the 2020 strategic plan that was unanimously adopted by the board. Providing the board members with a $400/mo. stipend is not a good look when cutting routes, especially when the board members do not seem to actually ride the system. The board of the New York MTA is NOT compensated for their participation on the board, they are able to get reimbursement for fares incurred as part of their activities on the board, which I would support the RTA to follow. A second goodwill gesture would be to look at rightsizing executive and managerial pay and potentially use these savings to retain good drivers. Looking at executive pay solely for a second, looking at compensation packages for other transit systems the current pay package for the RTA seems fair, however most of these systems are much larger, actively expanding, or are in high cost of living areas; the RTA should look at rightsizing executive and managerial pay to reflect the local cost of living.

The RTA needs to identify ways to bring operational costs in line with other agencies and show that the RTA will be responsible with any new tax levy.

L. Joseph Rider (webform) - Non-Agenda

I am confused why you have so many issues when you charge more for seniors and disabled then every other large city except New York. Many cities don't even charge seniors disabled or veterans which I am all 3. I go to Los Angeles, and I am capped at 5 bucks a week. Non rush hr 35 cents each way. Denver i can ride free Las Vegas free. During Covid Los Angeles didn't charge anyone. Why does Cleveland have so many issues. I am 65 have only owned cars about 3 hrs of my life. I have rode public transit all over this country from coast to coast. Service here is horrible once a hr service to main areas 2 buses to get to half the places I just don't understand what you guys are doing wrong

M. Joe Schwarten (webform) - Agenda

Just wanted to get it out there that I think y'all should go for the .5% levy and make sure you really sell it for all the benefits it will bring to the people of Cuyahoga County. I think the .25% will be a harder sell because it doesn't seem like it really will change the game too much and keep thing roughly the same as they are prior to the service cuts with some small benefits. People do hunger

for transit but it has to be good. Also maybe look into some rail expansion, even if its small, folks will love that.

N. Adam Rossi (webform) - Non-Agenda

Good morning President Koomar and members of the board. Thank you for your time this morning. I am excited and energized by the plan RTA has laid out for the use of funding generated by a 0.5% sales tax. The increased frequency of train service, the modernized train signage at stations, the expansion of the 15-minute bus network, the creation of the 10-minute bus network, and updated bus stop signage and status updates are all wonderful upgrades that would make Cleveland a much easier city to navigate. I also would rather vote for an increase once and know that RTA won't be back to the ballot box for another 50 years, instead of having to face this same scenario again in another 10 years. Therefore, I strongly support a 0.5% sales tax levy increase. Thank you.

O. Larry Rodriguez (webform) - Non-Agenda

I would like to propose that you consider putting me to speak on behalf of public transit funding. People with disabilities play a huge role in public transit funding, and there is a long history of disability advocates advocating for public transit such as Judy Human. I live by her legacy, and she pushed for accessible and clean public transit and helped with the ADA in 1991. I appreciate the service, it presents value to me as a rider. I have an important story to share and grew up using this system. I could help explain how important transit funding is to people like me who have a disability. I would gladly support you. Please watch Crip Camp, a documentary on disability advocacy, it is on YouTube.

VI. Board Governance Committee Report

No committee report

VII. Operational Planning & Infrastructure Committee Report

No committee report

VIII. Organizational, Services & Performance Monitoring Committee Report

No committee report.

IX. Audit, Safety Compliance and Real Estate Committee Report

Mayor Weiss updated the Board about the Audit, Safety Compliance, and Real Estate Committee meeting

X. External and Stakeholder Relations and Advocacy Committee Report

No committee report

XI. Committee of the Whole

No committee report.

XII. Civilian Oversight Committee (COC) Report

No committee report.

XIII. Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

No committee report.

XIV. Compensation Committee

No committee report.

XV. Ad-Hoc Nominating Committee

No committee report.

XVI. Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

Ida Marshall, Senior Manager of Talent Acquisition, provided an update on new hires and promotions, emphasizing the essential nature of these additions, particularly in operations.

XVII. Introduction of Resolutions

A. 2026-53 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-019 WITH KIMLEY-HORN AND ASSOCIATES, INC. FOR PROJECT 70B – LORAIN ROAD CORRIDOR TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $688,774.88 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, ENGINEERING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DPARTMENT BUDGET). Mr. Sleasman motioned; Ms. Whigham seconded. Motion carried

B. 2026-54 – AUTOIRIZING CONTRACT NO 2026-074 WITH DLZ OHIO, INC. FOR PROJECT 20.76 – ON-CALL ARCHITECT/ENGINEER SERVICES – 2026 IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $500,000 FOR A PERIOD OF TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS (RTA CAPITAL AND/OR RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, ENGINEERING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGT). Ms. Harper motioned; Mr. Love seconded. Motion carried

C. 2026-55 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO 2025-119 WITH GILLIG LLC FOR THE MANUFACTURE AND DELIVERY OF FOURTY (40) 40-FT CNG COACHES, SPARE PARTS, TOOLING, AND TRAINING IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $34,751,159 WITH OPTIONS TO PROCURE UP TO ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120) ADDITIONAL COACHES, SPRE PARTS, TOOLING, AND TRAINING TO BE DELIVERED OVER THE FIVE (5) YEAR TERM OF THE CONTRACT (DEVELOPMENT FUND, FLEET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGET). Ms. Pacetti motioned; Mr. Sleasman seconded. Motion carried

D. 2026-56 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-045 WITH MNJ TECHNOLOGIES DIRECT, INC. TO PROVIDE LAPTOPS AND DESKTOP COMPUTERS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $660,000 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT BUDGET). Ms. Pacetti motioned; Ms. McPherson seconded. Motion carried

E. 2026-56 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-045 WITH MNJ TECHNOLOGIES DIRECT, INC. TO PROVIDE LAPTOPS AND DESKTOP COMPUTERS IN AN AMOUNT

NOT TO EXCEED $660,000 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT BUDGET). Ms. Pacetti motioned; Ms. McPherson seconded. Motion carried

F. 2026-57 – AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF CASUALTY INSURANCE FROM VARIOUS INSURANCE UNDERWRITERS THORUGH USI INSURANCE SERVICES, LLC AND PRICE FORBES & PARTNERS IMITED, OR THEIR SUCCESSORS, FOR A PERIOD OF 12 MONTHS, IN A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $2,272,574 (INSURANCE AND GENERAL FUNDS, RISK MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGET). Mayor Koomar motioned; Mayor Weiss seconded. Motion carried

G. 2026-58 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-099 WITH ORACLE AMERICA, INC. TO PROVIDE ORACLE INFRASTRUCTURE AS A SERVICE (IAAS) SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $305,830 (GENERAL FUND, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET). Ms. Pacetti motioned; Mr. Sleasman seconded. Motion carried

XVIII. Interim Secretary-Treasurer's Report

John J Togher, Director - Accounting and Interim Secretary-Treasurer, presented the Secretary-Treasurer's report. He provided an update on the following:

a. Economic conditions,
b. Ridership
c. Passenger fares
d. Sales tax revenue
e. Selected financial package information.

XIX. General Manager, CEO Report

India L. Terry, General Manager and CEO, provided updates on the following:

a. Updates provided on NAACP Cleveland Branch 114th Annual Freedom Fund, Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO)
b. 55th Annual National Meeting & Training Conference, American Public Transportation Foundation (APTF) Annual Scholarship Selection Meeting,
c. Siemens Mobility Inc. visit,
d. Public Hearings on proposed Service Reductions,
e. Summer Rail Shutdown,
f. Tribute to Reverend Dr. Charles P. Lucas, Jr. Plaque Dedication at Shaker Square
g. Retirement of Rajan D. Gautam – Deputy General Manager – Finance / Secretary-Treasurer.

XX. President's Report

No items.

XXI. Old Business

No items.

XXII. New Business

No items.

XXIII. Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22, 2026.

XXIV. Adjournment

Mayor Koomar motioned to adjourn the Board Meeting, Ms. Whigham seconded. Motion carried

John J. Togher
Interim Secretary/Treasurer

Kenneth Green
Interim Board Administrator