



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 15, 2022

10:00 AM

RTA Boardroom, 2nd Floor

The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) hereby declares that, in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute §§ 42:17.1 (A)(2)(a)-(c), a meeting will be held in person on Tuesday, November 15, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Please be aware that wearing masks in the boardroom is encouraged.

Written comments on any matter included on the agenda will be accepted in the following ways: 1) Submission of a Speaker Card on meeting day; 2) Electronically by email sent to: rtaboard@rtaforward.org prior to the meeting; or 3) By U.S. Mail send to 2817 Canal Street, Attention: Office of Board Affairs, New Orleans, LA 70119.

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Coulon, Commissioner DeFrancesch, Commissioner LeBeouf, Commissioner Neal and Commissioner Walton

Commissioner Absent: Commissioner Ewell

3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

approved

[Board Meeting Minutes - October 25, 2022]

[22-168](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to approve the Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Reports

A. RTA Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that the RTA was still receiving feedback from the public on the New Routes that was implemented by New Links.

Commissioner Raymond stated that staff was still working on the 2023 Budget.

Commissioner Raymond stated that a Senior RTA Employee was put on Administrative Leave after it was reported that since April, she has been working as a full time employee for the RTA and the Hillsborough Transit System in Florida, and this was a violation of the RTA's policy and the RTA was unaware of this situation and the agency is investigating this matter and the appropriate action will be taken.

B. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Neal stated that the RTA's Operations Committee did not have a quorum. The Committee did listen to the reports from staff.

C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Walton stated that the 2023 Budget was presented to the Finance Committee and will be submitted to the public and the Board for approval.

D. Jefferson Parish Report

Commissioner Coulon stated that Jefferson Parish received bids to replace the facility on David Dr. and this would be a great improvement for Jefferson Parish.

E. RTA General Counsel's Report

Sundiata Haley stated that the Board will have an Executive Session and a Protest has been received regarding the Janitorial Services.

F. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

Alex Wiggins reported that COVID numbers were coming down at the RTA.

Alex Wiggins reported that on November 11, 2022, the RTA had an event to honor all Veteran's that work at the RTA.

Alex Wiggins reported that he attended the RIDE State of Transit, and a lot of youths were in attendance, and this would be the perfect opportunity for the RTA and Jefferson Parish to form a Youth Committee.

Alex Wiggins reported that the RTA Budget Priorities were as follows:

Expand Number of Bus Shelters

Design Permanent Downtown Transit Center

Monitor Changes of New Bus Design Network
Continue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Planning Efforts
Open New Canal Street Ferry Terminal

In response to Commissioner DeFrancesch, Alex Wiggins reported that he would have to do more research regarding the Bus Shelter in Jefferson Parish without a bench.

Commissioner DeFrancesch also wished all Veteran's a "Happy Veteran's Day".

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Alex Wiggins reported that the RTA's DBE Participation was set by the Board at 35% and the RTA is very committed to that goal.

In response to Commissioner Lebeouf, Alex Wiggins reported that the RTA's DBE Department does a lot of outreach to the community to make the DBE/SBE's aware of RTA's projects.

G. Chief of Staff Legislative Update

Katherine Felton reported that another round of outreach has begun on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) preferred routes.

H. Operations Update

Gerard Guter reported that total Ridership for the month of November 2022 was 737K.

Gerard Guter reported that On -Time Performance for bus was 78% during the month of September and 80% for streetcars.

Gerard Guter reported that On-Time Performance for Paratransit was 82%.

Gerard Guter reported that Route 86-Maurice-Arabi had the highest On-Time Performance with 91% and the route with the lowest On-Time Performance was Route 64 Lake Forest Express 62%.

Gerard Guter reported that 21 of the 34 service routes were affected by Temporary Detours which was 61% of the routes, 3 of the 4 streetcars service routes were affected by Temporary Detours which was 75% and 8 of the 38 bus and streetcar service routes were affected by Long Term Detours which was 21% of the routes.

Gerard Guter reported that for the month of September RTA delivered 97% of Bus Service and 96% of Streetcar Service.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Gerard Guter reported that some of the detours were associated with the infrastructure projects associated with the City. He stated that staff meets with the City monthly to coordinate projects that will affect the RTA's routes. The RTA post all detours on the RTA's website.

Commissioner Neal stated that the challenge to staff is that the dates for the detours

may change and does not always start on the scheduled dates.

Commissioner Raymond asked to add the ridership numbers on the slide that shows the highest and lowest On-Time Performance Routes.

Commissioner Neal asked for more detailed information on the detours for the January Operations Committee Meeting.

I. RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report

Gizelle Banks reported that Ridership - As COVID wanes, ridership gradually recovers while service levels remain steady. However, the number of public transit trips taken by riders in September 2022, (753K), shows a slight increase of 9K from the previous month of August 2022. Compared to the prior years, ridership was 278K in September 2021 and 424K in September 2020; this shows ridership continues to make a slow but steady recovery.

Gizelle Banks reported that Farebox Recovery Rates - 2022 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) - Fare revenue continues to offset a slightly higher percentage of operating expenses as ridership continues to rebound. September's farebox recovery rate decreased slightly from 8.28% in the prior month to 7.37%; a total decrease of less than 1%. The farebox recovery rate for September 2019 (Pre-COVID) was 12.69%.

Gizelle Banks reported that Ferry - Farebox Recovery Rates - 2022 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) - The decrease in farebox recovery to 7.92% in September from 9.78% in August is a result of increase in passenger revenue and an increase in operating expenses from the prior month.

Gizelle Banks reported that the Operating Revenues (Budget, Actual & Prior Year) - Overall, Operating Revenues display stable results \$8.7M for the month of September when compared to the prior year \$6.1M due to strong Sales Tax Revenues. Passenger Fares for September fared unfavorably by \$-268K or -30% when compared to the budget.

Gizelle Banks reported that the Net Revenue (Before and After Government Assistance) - Net Revenue (Before Government Assistance) is \$60K for the month of September. After applying \$1.4M in Government Operating Assistance, Net Revenue ended with a \$792K or 38% negative variance for the month of September (when compared to the budget of \$2.1M).

Gizelle Banks reported that the Operating Expenses - Operating Expenses for the month of September are roughly \$8.4M. Labor and Fringe Benefits, the largest expenditure at \$5.8M, comprised 69% of this month's actual expenses. In total, Operating Expenses for the month of September show a slight decrease of 11% from \$9.3M in August.

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J. Overview of 2023 Operating & Capital Budget Draft

Gizelle Banks reported on the following:

Strategic Mobility Plan Goals

Earn Trust
 Be Equitable
 Prioritize the Rider Experience
 Be Reliable
 Connect to Opportunities
 Support a Sustainable, Healthy Region

CY2022/2023 Goals and Capital Initiatives

Investing in the Customer Experience

Expand number of Bus Shelters
 Building Interim Downtown Transit Center
 Implementation of Prioritized New Links Recommendations
 Invest in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

RTA Proposed 2023 Budget Sources:

Operating Revenues	123,004,292
Government Operating Assistance	34,185,851
Non-Operating Federal Sources	29,548,334
Other Local Sources	2,266,743
FEMA Funded Project Worksheets	984,562
Total Sources	\$189,989,782

RTA Proposed 2023 Budget Uses:

Operating Expenses	125,288,327
TMSEL Legacy Costs	2,869,943
Maritime Expenses (unfunded)	6,661,542
Capital Expenditures	46,120,074
FEMA Funded Project Worksheets	984,562
Debt Service	8,065,334
Total Uses	\$189,989,782

Operating Expenditures

Total Operating Expenses- \$125 Million
 894 Full Time Equivalents in budget (occupied and vacant)
 Casualty and Liability insurance include claims reserves
 TMSEL Retirement costs- \$2.8 Million
 Projected ARPA funding for Operating- \$5 Million and additional \$13.9M in Maritime and Capital Expenditures for a total of \$18.9M in ARPA Funding

Capital and Maritime Expenditures

Capital Expenditures include projects that are on-going or anticipated to begin in 2023 at a percentage of revenue and expenditure and that align with the estimated project completion for the year

Most projects are partially funded (approx 80%) with federal and/or state government grants, but there is a local match required - \$14 million in CY23 (versus 9million in 2022).

Maritime Operations exceeds the level of State and federal funding allocated for CY22 by approximately \$6.6 Million. (\$8m in 2022)

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Government Assistance and Debt Service

Government Assistance for Preventative Maintenance \$15.2 million and ARPA funding of \$18.9 million, leaving net revenue of \$8M before debt service Debt Service \$8 million (cash); including expenditures of \$2.3 in CY23 RTA will evaluate operational and capital needs prior to spending additional allocated ARPA funding.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Gizelle Banks reported that the City of New Orleans projects that the 2023 Sales Tax Revenue was going to be \$261M and the RTA will collect \$86M for General Use Sales Tax.

Commissioner Coulon suggested that the Capital Budget be separated from the Operating Budget.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Gizelle Banks reported that the Maritime Operating Cost was \$11M which includes the State Subsidy for Chalmette.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Alex Wiggins reported that the Chalmette Ferry has the dedicated revenue funds.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Alex Wiggins reported that the Bus Operator was a hard job to fill. He stated that a mentor was brought on staff to help work with the younger operators.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Gizelle Banks reported that the RTA was awarded \$59.98M ARPA and \$18.9M will be used in the 2023 Budget.

5. Consent Agenda

adopted

Ferry Terminal Security Cameras

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt the Ferry Terminal Security Cameras. Resolution No. 22-090 was adopted unanimously.

Renewal of Excess Workers' Compensation Insurance for RTA Employees [2022-2023] [22-161](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt the Renewal of Excess Workers' Compensation Insurance for RTA Employees (2022-2023). Resolution No. 22-091 was adopted unanimously.
Enactment No: 22-091

Janitorial Services Contract [22-162](#)

Sundiata Haley reported that he received a protest for this agenda item. This item was not approved under the Consent Agenda.

Sundiata Haley reported that this current contract will continue month to month with the current vendor until the protest is resolved.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Sundiata Haley reported that the protest was just filed last night and historically once a protest is filed RTA will "Stay" the contract award rather than have the vendor go to court and file an injunction.

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to go month to month on the Janitorial Services Contract with the current vendor until the protest is resolved. The motion was approved unanimously.

Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project: Amendment Request to Woodward-APC's Contract [22-163](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt the Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project Amendment Request to Woodward-APC's Contract. Resolution No. 22-092 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 22-092

6. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

None.

7. Audience Questions and Comments

PLEASE NOTE: Persons wishing to submit public comments must either enter their full name in the chat sections of the Zoom meeting to provide comments during the meeting or email your comments to rtaboard@rtaforward.org to have your comments read aloud at the meeting.

Alan Drake stated that there is a need for more streetcars on the route because it is hurting ridership. He stated that riders are waiting for a streetcar more than 15 minutes.

August Green would like to see the new Bus Shelters Installed and would like to know the locations that the RTA are putting these new shelters. He also stated that there is no on-time communications to riders, some information has not been updated since October on the app and when buses are delayed riders are not being notified through the app.

Clarence Carter has been communicating to the RTA that on Franklin and Sage RTA should put a trash can at that bus stop. He also stated that the RTA should take into consideration that Seniors are not up to-date with technology.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Clarence Carter stated that there is no trash can at that bus stop. He stated that he put in a request for the trash can 4 months ago.

In response to Commissioner DeFrancesch. Alex Wiggins stated that he would have to check with the City to see who is in charge of the trash pick-up.

8. Executive Session (2/3RDS VOTE TO Consider)

Commissioner Coulon moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to go into Executive Session.

approved

9. Adjournment

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of November 15, 2022. The meeting was adjourned unanimously.