



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 3, 2023

9:00 AM

RTA Board Room

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

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The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) hereby declares that, in accordance with La. R.S. 42:17.1 (A)(2)(a)-(c), a meeting will be held in person on Friday, March 3, 2023, at 9:00 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@rtafoward.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 Walton, Commissioner Coulon, Commissioner DeFrancesch, Commissioner Ewell and Commissioner Neal

Commissioner Absent: Commissioner LeBeouf

3. Board Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond opened the meeting by offering heartfelt condolences to the Tucker family on the passing of Mr. Bob Tucker. He was a trusted leader and advisor that served on the RTA board for 8 years under the Morial administration. He will be dearly missed by us all. After a moment of silence, the meeting resumed.

4. Audience Questions & Comments

Barbara Major stated that she can feel the impact of the decision that the Board was about to make on the CEO Position.

Barbara Major stated that she can say stuff that other people can't say because of the retaliation that takes place in the City of New Orleans.

Barbara Major stated that she was here to represent the employees and the vendors especially minority and small businesses afraid of the decision that was going to be made.

Barbara Major stated that when she read the resumes of the candidates there should be no questions. The Board took an oath to serve the riding public and the people that work at the agency.

Barbara Major stated that when she look at the facts that the Board lowered the qualifications for the CEO position, you have to look at the history at the one that knows how to run a transportation system, and at the worst time at the RTA after Hurricane Katrina, Mark Major did not leave the facility until all employees were safe and when the RTA needed to get the system up and running Mark Major was there.

Barbara Major stated that she appreciates both of the remaining candidates and think that both are brilliant

Barbara Major stated that the resumes make her very suspect that the Board was still trying to figure out this decision and the riding public deserves a decision rooted in some type of ethics.

Barbara Major stated that she does not know if this has anything to do with politics, but the Board ethics will be clarified in their actions.

Barbara Major stated that this decision was about the most confident, qualified person that can rebuild the transportation system to ensure that the riding public get to their destinations.

Barbara Major stated that she does not care who was in political power, because they are only in a conditional position and if the Board is rooted in politics with this decision, history was going to determine whether you have the ethics to make the decision based on competency and the ability to move this system to where it needs to be.

Barbara Major stated that she was once the Chair of the RTA and she has worked with amazing people and the most amazing people are the ones that drive the buses and the streetcars. The Board sets policy but the everyday workers are the operators, maintenance, and administrative employees. The Board should take some insight and directions from those employees. She stated that she understands the retaliation that could take place.

Barbara Major stated that she talks to staff and asked who was most qualified and staff stated Mark Major, she knew something was not right and was questionable about this process. This process has taken too long and the Board lowered the qualifications. This Board can be the problem or the situation.

Barbara Major stated that she has received calls from minority vendors that stated they were having problems with the RTA.

Barbara Major stated that she loves both of the candidates, and that Lona Hankins was very qualified but not for the position of CEO of the RTA.

Commissioner Coulon told Barbara Major that he appreciates her taking time out of her schedule to come here today.

Korey Dupree, President ATU 1560 stated that today was National Employee Day, and he did a survey with his Union Members asking them; do they feel safe, do you like your job and do you like management. These operators transport people safely every day, and they look at me for guidance, because they are a lot of confusion in this business.

Korey Dupree challenged whoever was going to be the next CEO to put the operators and riding public first.

Korey Dupree stated that this person has to be the CEO for the whole agency, and he hope that the Board make the right decision.

Commissioner Ewell stated that he will recognize National Employee Day, with his employees.

Commissioner DeFrancesch stated that she was glad there was a second round to hear the interviews. She stated that she has a total empty mind going into this process and she hopes to make the correct decision.

Commissioner Raymond stated that today is National Employee Day, and the Board appreciates all the employees.

Commissioner Raymond stated that the Board has done this process in the public, to hear from as many people as possible during this process. Both candidates are highly qualified and has served as Deputy CEOs at the RTA for 3 years or longer.

5. Executive Session

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to go into Executive Session regarding:

Personnel Matters: Discussion of the character and fitness of applicants for the CEO position.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Coulon moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to come out of Executive session. The motion was approved unanimously.

go into Executive Session

Personnel Matters: Discussion of the character and fitness of applicants for the CEO

come out of Executive Session

6. Consideration of Resolution to select a new CEO

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to appoint Lona Hanks as the CEO for the Regional Transit Authority.

Commissioner Raymond stated that he appreciates Mark Major's talent and will continue to use his talent in the capacity that he currently serves.

Commissioner DeFrancesch stated that she appreciated hearing both candidates and thanked them for the work they have done.

A Roll Call Vote was taken as followings

Chairman Raymond	Yea
Vice-Chairman Walton	Yea
Commissioner Neal	Yea
Commissioner DeFrancesch	Yea
Commissioner Coulon	Nay
Commissioner Ewell	Nay

The motion was adopted by 4 Yeas and 2 Nays.

Commissioner Walton stated that he wanted to thank both candidates and commended the people that spoke during this process, and this was a thoughtful deliberate discussion and these decisions were not taken lightly and he hope Mark Major will continue to participate with the RTA with his 40 years of experience.

approved

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adjourn the Special Board Meeting of March 3, 2023. The motion adjourned unanimously.