



2817 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

## New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

### Meeting Minutes

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Tuesday, August 23, 2022

10:00 AM

RTA Boardroom, 2nd Floor

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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 Tuesday, August 23, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Please be advised that all meeting participants will be required to wear masks inside the boardroom due to the recent rise of COVID-19 cases in the City of New Orleans and at the RTA.

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](mailto: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

**Commissioner Present:** Chairman Raymond, Commissioner Bryan, Commissioner Coulon, Commissioner DeFranchise Commissioner Ewell, and Commissioner Neal

**Commissioner Absent:** Commissioner Walton

#### 3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

adjourned

[Board Meeting Minutes - July 26, 2022]

**22-131**

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to approve the Board Minutes of July 26, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.

[Special Board Meeting - August 5, 2022]

**22-133**

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to approved the Board Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of August 5, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### 4. Reports

##### A. RTA Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that he and Commissioner Coulon met with Jefferson Parish Council Member Bonano so the RTA can begin building a great relationship with Jefferson Parish.

##### B. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Neal stated that a great meeting was held to talk about the New App and the New Links Project.

##### C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that there was no quorum for the Finance Committee Meeting.

##### D. Jefferson Parish Report

Commissioner Ewell reported that Jefferson Parish Transit On-Time Performance for the month of July for fixed-route was 87% and On-Time Performance for MITS was 98%.

Commissioner Ewell reported that Jefferson Parish Transit was currently accepting bids for its new East Bank Bus and Maintenance Facility.

##### E. RTA General Counsel's Report

No Report

##### F. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

Alex Wiggins reported on the following:

Move Pilot Launch 8/21

RTA launched the FLEX on-demand pilot program for current Paratransit riders in New Orleans East.

The 12-month pilot allows book trips with the UBER app.

Pilot funded with a \$300K competitive FTA grant which included four new, modern Paratransit vans.

##### **LePass and New Routes**

Le Pass is now available to download in your phone's app store.

Le Pass replaces RTA's GoMobile app on **Monday, August 29**, with better features and more accurate bus and streetcar arrival information

##### **New Routes Starting September 25th**

With these changes to RTA's bus network, we are providing:

Shorter trips with shorter wait times

More late night and weekend service

Better access to jobs throughout greater New Orleans

Better access to destinations like grocery stores, hospitals, libraries, and NORD facilities

Robert Hickman presented the Commendation to the following:

### **Commendations**

#### **RTA Law Enforcement Team**

**Sergeant Kevin Jackson**

#### **Senior Police Officers:**

**Kelsey Lewis**

**Douglas McGowan**

Chief Ferguson stated that these officers shows dedication, bravery and professionalism in protecting all the citizens of New Orleans.

#### G. Chief of Staff Legislative Update

Alex Wiggins reported on the following:

Legislative Reception held at NOUPT

US Senator Cassidy staff tour/meeting at Carrollton Barn

Continued briefings for local elected officials on system redesign to launch 9/25

#### H. Operations Update

Gerard Guter reported that total Ridership for the month of June 2022 was 789K. On-Time Performance for bus was 77% and streetcar was 76%.

Gerard Guter reported that On-Time Performance for Paratransit was 85%.

Gerard Guter reported that Route 45-Lakeview had the highest On-Time Performance with 93% and the route with the lowest On-Time Performance was Route 86 Maurice-Arabi 48%.

Gerard Guter reported that 22 of the 34 service routes were affected by Temporary Detours which was 64.7% of the routes, 2 of the 5 streetcars service routes were affected by Temporary Detours which was 40% and 7 of the 38 bus and streetcar service routes were affected by Long Term Detours which was 18.4% of the routes.

Gerard Guter reported that for the month of June RTA delivered 95% of Bus Service and 96% of Streetcar Service.

#### I. 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 June 2022 (806K) shows a slight decrease of (64K) from the previous month of May 2022. Compared to the prior year, ridership in June 2021 was (685K) and (376K) in June 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. June's farebox recovery rate increased slightly from

10.13% in the prior month to 12.48%; a total increase of 2.35%. The farebox recovery rate for June 2019 (Pre-COVID) was 17.60%.

Gizelle Banks reported that Ferry - Farebox Recovery Rates 2022 vs 2019 (Pre-COVID) - The increase in farebox recovery to 11.97% in June from 9.34% in May is a result of increase in passenger revenue and a slight decrease in operating expenses from the prior month.

Gizelle Banks reported that Operating Revenues (Budget, Actual & Prior Year) - Overall, Operating Revenues display positive results \$9.5M for the month of June when compared to the prior year \$8.6M due to strong Sales Tax Revenues. Passenger Fares for June, fared favorably by \$107K or 13.5% when compared to the budget.

Gizelle Banks reported that Net Revenue (Before and After Government Assistance - Net Revenue (Before Government Assistance) is \$1.9M for the month of June. After applying the month's \$1.4M in Government Operating Assistance, Net Revenue ended at \$3.4M or 37% positive variance for the month of June (when compared to the budget \$1.4M).

Gizelle Banks reported that Operating Expenses - Operating Expenses for the month of June is roughly \$7.2M. Labor and Fringe Benefits, the largest expenditure at \$5.2M, comprised 71.8% of this month's actual expenses. In total, Operating Expenses for the month of June show a slight decrease from 8.3M in May or 13.3%.

Gizelle Banks reported that Operating Reserve - The strong positive variance that resulted from Net Revenue (After Government Assistance of approximately \$1.4M) added \$3.1M to Restricted Operating/Capital Reserve after the offset of \$291K in Debt Service.

In response to Commissioner Raymond, Gizelle Banks stated that the 1 day and 3-day passes are your higher selling passes.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Alex Wiggins reported that staff was looking at ways to generate fares during COVID and reducing the pass fares has increased ridership tremendously.

Commissioner DeFrancesch stated that people are having a hard time and any help that is given to the public was appreciated.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Gizelle Banks reported that the RTA did refinance bonds in September 2020 to help lower its debt.

[June 2022 Financials]

[22-128](#)

## **5. New Links Update: Communication Strategy**

Tiffany Bradley reported on the following:  
**New Routes Media Campaign Kickoff**

August 25, 2022 - New App, New Routes and Open House Event will take place at Duncan Plaza.

August 24-28 - LePass, New Routes and Media Interviews will take place.

### **Riders**

August 22, 2022 - Text Update Subscription RTA Updates to 41411

August 3, 2022 - LePass In-App Message

August 24, 2022 - In Vehicle (Clever)

August 22, 2022 - Email Communications

### **Riders Outreach**

August 9-September 30, 2022 - Stop Route Outreach

September 19 - September 25, 2022 - Staff Route Outreach

### **External**

September 19-25, 2022 - Press Releases (4Total)

September 25, 2022 - Media Interviews

August 29-September 25, 2022

Social Media Posting

Email Communications

Text Messages

LePass In-App Messaging

Website

Social Media Ads

### **Stakeholder and Partnership Outreach**

Completed

Identified African American, Hispanic/LatinX and East Asian American Advocate Organization and Media

Completed

Identified key additional stakeholder and community, business and organizational partnerships

Organization have agreed to include New Routes in newsletters and social media posts

Underway

Identified Neighborhood Associations

Presented to several key neighborhoods

Continue scheduling neighborhood presentation

### **Internal**

Internal Messages (Biweekly)

Internal Newsletter (Weekly)

Webinar

User Guide

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Alex Wiggins reported that staff will definitely want to track new ridership as the RTA implements the bus network redesign.

In response to Commissioner Raymond, Tiffaney Bradley reported that the most important thing that staff can do is educate people in advance and communicate with the riders.

In response to Commissioner Raymond, Tiffaney Bradley reported that people can give feedback in the app store and on social media.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Alex Wiggins reported that staff need to hire more Ambassadors and staff have also talked about bringing on a Brand Ambassador Firm. The primary task of the Ambassadors will be to answer questions and convey information to the riders regarding the changes to the different routes.

Commissioner Neal stated that at the September 7, 2022, RAC Meeting it will be a New Links Workshop and he is encouraging the riding public to attend the meeting.

In response to Commissioner Raymond, Tiffany Bradley reported that the User Guide was on the website, but its more for internal use but could be shared.

Commissioner Bryan stated that she would like a copy of the User Guide and this is something that the public should have.

In response to Commissioner Bryan, Tiffany Bradley reported that the website was norta.com\September 25.

## 6. Consent Agenda

### Strategic Mobility Plan

[22-122](#)

Alex Wiggins reported that the Strategic Monthly Plan needed to be updated to reflect changes in the ridership patterns and changes in the revenue structure and the RTA Capital Projects needed to be updated.

In response to Commissioner Raymond, Alex Wiggins reported that he will discuss with staff the capability of handling this in-house or the need to bid this task.

Commissioner Coulon moved and Commissioner Ewell seconded to adopt the Strategic Monthly Plan. Resolution No. 22-061 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 22-60

## 7. Procurement Items

### A. Authorizations

#### Security Vehicles

[22-116](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to adopt the Security Vehicles. Resolution No. 22-062 was adopted unanimously.  
approved

Enactment No: 22-062

#### Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project: Amendment Request to Infinity contract

[22-117](#)

In response to Commissioner Neal, Lona Hankins reported that the

project was on scheduled to be completed in December.

Commissioner Coulon moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project: Amendment Request to Infinity Contract. Resolution No. 22-063 was adopted unanimously.

approved

Enactment No: 22-063

Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project Amendment Request [22-118](#)  
to Royal Engineering contract

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project Amendment Request to Royal Engineering Contract. Resolution No. 22-064 was adopted unanimously.  
approved

Enactment No: 22-064

New Links Implementation Promotional Fare [22-124](#)

Commissioner Ewell stated that during this time he would like new ridership tracked and reported to the Board.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Alex Wiggins reported that he asked that the operators during the free fare period don't count the passes.

Sundiata Haley reported that the Board can move forward with the resolution but needs to go before the full City Council and the City Council Transportation Committee for approval.

Commissioner Coulon moved and Commissioner Ewell seconded to adopt the New Links Implementation Promotional Fare. Resolution No. 22-065 was adopted unanimously.  
approved

Enactment No: 22-065

FY2022 Passenger Ferry Grant Algiers Point Ferry [22-127](#)  
Terminal Enhancement and Lower Algiers Maintenance  
Facility State of Good Repair Projects

In response to Commissioner Neal, Lona Hankins, reported that there is currently a Federal Grant with a State Match that the City has applied for on behalf of the RTA.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Ewell seconded to adopt the FY2022 Passenger Ferry Grant Algiers Point Ferry Terminal Enhancement and Lower Algiers Maintenance Facility State of Good Repair Projects. Resolution No. 22-066 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 22-066

## B. Amendments

Extend August Building Maintenance (ABM) Janitorial Services Contract

[22-121](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Ewell seconded to adopt to Extend August Building Maintenance (ABM) Janitorial Services Contract. Resolution No. 22-067 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 22-067

## 8. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to add to the Agenda:  
Committee Assignment - Finance Committee

The motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman Raymond originally assigned Commissioner Bryan but she declined the offer.

Chairman Raymond appointed Commissioner Fred Neal to the Finance Committee.

## 9. Audience Questions and Comments

PLEASE NOTE: A speaker card must be completed by anyone intending to speak on an agenda item.

James Guilbeau reported that the RTA was doing well with the information regarding New Links.

James Guilbeau reported that the RTA need to give JET several large System Maps for the outdoor display-cases at the JET and RTA transfer points.

James Guilbeau reported that there is a Ticket Vending Machine in front of the RTA building and this should be moved to the St. Charles Streetcar "bump-out" stop on Carondelet Street at Canal Street.

James Guilbeau reported that there are 36 benches on Canal Blvd Streetcar Line and they should be moved to Carrollton, Broad, Galvez and Carondelet-outbound only.

Bailey Bullock reported that the Operators should help passengers with babies in strollers just like they help others with mobility aids.

Dustin Robertson reported that riders would like to know more information on the new Move Pilot Program and people are not being picked-up on time and what is being done to improve the service.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Alex Wiggins reported that staff would bring him an update at the Operations Committee Meeting regarding the safety of the operators.

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



None.

## **11. Adjournment**

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of August 23, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.  
adjourned