



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

10:00 AM

Virtual

The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority's Board of Commissioners hereby certifies that it will convene a meeting on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 electronically via Zoom in accordance with the provisions of La. R.S. 42:17.1(A)(2)(a)-(c).

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

[Board Minutes - September 28, 2021]

[21-170](#)

Commissioner Tillery moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to approve the Minutes of the Board Meeting on September 28, 2021. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tillery, seconded by Commissioner Neal and adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Tillery, Commissioner Bryan, and Commissioner Wegner

Absent:

4. Reports

A. RTA Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that the Board of Commissioners was going to hold a Board Retreat on December 11, 2021. This meeting was going to be an in-person meeting and the location had not been determined and one of the items on the agenda at the retreat up for discussion was returning to in-person public meetings.

B. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Neal stated that the Operations and Administration Committee Meeting

was held on October 14, 2021 and items discussed at that meeting was a plan for recovery after Hurricane Ida, On-Time Performance. Also a report was given on the BRT and an update on the Downtown Transfer Center.

C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that the Finance Committee Meeting was held on October 14, 2021. The Committee received an update on the Capital Projects, August Financial Statements, the Cash Reserve Policy Outline was reviewed by the Committee and the full presentation will take place at the December Finance Committee Meeting and staff was currently working on the 2022 Budget.

D. Jefferson Parish Report

Commissioner Wegner reported that Jefferson Parish was in the process of scheduling virtual public hearings on New Links recommendations and the implementation timeline will be decided after the Public Hearings are completed in December 2021.

Commissioner Wegner reported that Jefferson Parish would not implement any changes recommended by New Links on routes E1, E2, it will run as normal. E3 and E8 will also run as normal but the route will be renamed.

Commissioner Wegner reported that on route E6 Jefferson Parish was implementing the New Links recommendations with a few minor changes due to unsafe turns.

Commissioner Wegner reported that routes W1, W2, W3, W4, W8 and W10 Jefferson Parish was implementing the New Links recommendations and W6 will continue to operate the Gretna Local.

Commissioner Wegner reported that Jefferson Parish was going to implement an On Demand Program in February 2022 this program will provide access to public transit for parts of the Jefferson Parish Community that was located greater than a half a mile away from an active bus stop.

Commissioner Wegner reported that Jefferson Parish has changed its Logo and its JeT name to JP Transit.

Commissioner Wegner reported that Jefferson Parish bus shelters will have solar power and the bus shelters will have the new JP Transit logo.

E. RTA General Counsel's Report

Sundiata Haley reported that his report will be discussed in Executive Session.

F. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

Alex Wiggins reported that at the December Meeting, staff will present the New Fare Structure Recommendations for implementation in 2022.

Alex Wiggins reported that the APTA Expo is taking place in November.

Alex Wiggins reported that staff was still working on the supply chain limitations and these limitations has caused minor service interruptions.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Alex Wiggins reported that staff was going to give an update on the current Fare Policy at the December Committee Meetings.

Alex Wiggins reported that FTA has a program to support President Biden's Sustainable Transit for a Healthy Planet Challenge and staff has a resolution for the Board's approval.

G. DBE Report

[DBE Presentation]

21-177

Adonis Expose' reported that the contracts awarded in September was \$14,149,790 and \$6,863,880 of that amount was awarded to DBE Firms and \$78,902 was awarded to SBE Prime Contractors. Total DBE Participation was 48%.

Adonis Expose' reported that the Transit Ferry Services Contract had a 10% goal that goal has been achieved at 100%.

Adonis Expose' reported that currently they are 7 solicitations being advertised and five has SBE/DBE Goals.

Adonis Expose' reported that DBE held a webinar on Thursday, October 21, 2021 at noon and on November 3, 2021 DBE was going to partner with the Procurement Department and have a DBE Opportunity Meeting regarding the Renovations of the Historic Napoleon Avenue Facility.

5. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Wegner moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adopt the Consent Agenda. Resolution No. 21-077 was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wegner, seconded by Commissioner Tillery and adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Tillery, Commissioner Bryan, and Commissioner Wegner

Absent:

CDW-East New Orleans Facility Exterior Envelope Repair

[21-147](#)

Commissioner Wegner moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adopt the CDW-East New Orleans Facility Exterior Envelope Repair. Resolution No. 21-078 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 21-078

FY 2021 Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Application

[21-150](#)

Commissioner Wegner moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adopt the FY2021 Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Application. Resolution No. 21-079 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 21-079

6. Financial Statements

[Financial Presentation]

21-178

Gizelle Banks reported that Ridership - August's ridership of 557k fell short of the budget by 14% or 91k passengers. This is largely due to the suspension of service (eff. Saturday, August 28) because of Hurricane Ida. It represents a 16% decline when compared to July's ridership. Year-to-date comparisons to August actuals show improved but mixed results across the spectrum - when compared to the budget (-6.8%), 2020 actuals (+6.8%) and 2019 pre-COVID actuals (-55.2%).

Gizelle Banks reported that - Operating Cost per Unlinked Passenger Trip 2021 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) for the first time since May, there was a drop in the cost per passenger trip for the month of August, down by \$1.32 from the prior month.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Ferry - Operating Cost per Unlinked Passenger Trip 2021 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) -Ferry cost per passenger trip climbed by \$2.16 in August, making it second the largest increase, which occurred last month

Gizelle Banks reported that - Farebox Recovery Rates 2021 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) -Fare revenue continues to offset a significantly lower percentage of operating expenses. August's farebox recovery remained relatively flat, increasing by only .25%.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Ferry - Farebox Recovery Rates 2021 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) - Ferry ridership has dropped dramatically because of the pandemic, causing fare revenue to offset a significantly lower percentage of operating expenses. After reaching a year-high mark in June, the farebox recovery rate for ferry operations slid for the second consecutive month; this time by 2.22%.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Operating Revenues (Budget, Actual & Prior Year) - Overall, Operating Revenues display positive results for the month when compared to the prior year. (Note that fare collections were suspended in April 2020.) Passenger Fares especially took a hit in August because of Hurricane Ida, falling short of the budget by \$194k or 26.8%. When compared to July's fare collections, August's actuals fell by 21%. CNO sales tax collections through July have been received, exceeding the 7-month projections by \$8m or 22.5%.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Operating Revenues (Actual) - of the \$7.9m in Operating Revenues, 79% or \$6.3m is derived from General Use Sales Taxes.

Gizelle Banks reported that Operating Expenses - Labor and Fringe Benefits,

the largest expenditure at \$4.5M, comprised 61.5% of this month's actual expenses. Staff's massive post-transition payroll analysis and true-up continue. The contrast in 2020 and current year results for Labor and Fringe Benefits and Services is directly related to the transition from the O & M contractual arrangement with Transdev to 100% in-house operations. In total, Operating Expenses for the month compared favorably with the budget with a 25.7% or \$2.5m positive variance.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Net Revenue (Before and After Government Assistance) - Net Revenue (Before Government Assistance) is \$346k for the month of August. This positive position is largely attributable to the \$650k in Net Operating Revenue for the month. After applying the month's \$1.6m in Government Operating Assistance, which included \$491k in CRSRSAA Act funding, Net Revenue increased to \$1.9m.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Capital Expenditures and Debt Service - As result of the bond refinancing in September 2020, Debt Service was dramatically reduced by \$388k from prior year actuals for the month and by \$3.9m year-to-date.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Operating Reserve - The positive variance that resulted from Net Revenue (After Government Assistance) added \$1.1m to Restricted Operating/Capital Reserve after the offset of \$774k in Debt Service.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Maritime Operations - Passenger fare revenue for ferry operations decreased by \$25k from the prior month. This drop is largely due to the suspension of service beginning August 28 as a result of Hurricane Ida. August 2021 operating expenses, however, produced mixed results - over budget by \$241k and down by \$183k from the prior year.

Gizelle Banks reported that the total Operating Revenue that was budgeted was \$14.5m and the month ended at \$9.5m so the agency was under budget.

Gizelle Banks reported that the total usage budgeted was \$12.6m and came in at \$8.4m which left a variance of \$4.2m. Year-to-date budget was \$97.5m and actually spent \$79m.

7. Procurement Items

Authorizations:

Safety On-Call Consultant

[21-154](#)

Commissioner Wegner moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adopt the Safety On-Call Consultant. Resolution No. 21-080 was adopted unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wegner, seconded by Commissioner Tillery and adopted. The motion carried by the following

vote:

Aye: Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Tillery, Commissioner Bryan, and Commissioner Wegner

Absent:

Enactment No: 21-080

8. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

Commissioner Tillery moved and Commissioner Wegner seconded to add
On Site COVID-19 Testing
Sustainable Transit for a Healthy Planet Challenge
To the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tillery, seconded by Commissioner Wegner and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Tillery, Commissioner Bryan, and Commissioner Wegner

Absent:

On-Site COVID-19 Testing [21-138](#)

In response to Commissioner Neal, Alex Wiggins reported that if necessary, the contract could be extended.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Alex Wiggins reported that the testing would be a mandate for all employees.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Alex Wiggins reported that all employees will be tested over a two-week period.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Alex Wiggins reported that this contract was for 2 months and if there is a need to extend the contract the contract will be extended.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Alex Wiggins reported that the testing could begin, and staff can come back to the board with the details of the contract.

Commissioner Wegner moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adopt the On-Site COVID-19 Testing. Resolution No. 21-081 was adopted unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wegner, seconded by Commissioner Tillery and adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Tillery, Commissioner Bryan, and Commissioner Wegner

Absent:

Enactment No: 21-081

[AUTHORIZATION TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT BIDEN’S SUSTAINABLE TRANSIT FOR A HEALTHY PLANET CHALLENGE IN 2021]

21-179

Commissioner Neal stated that he would like the RTA to implement this Challenge into the RTA everyday operations.

Commissioner Wegner moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adopt President Biden's Sustainable Transit for a Healthy Planet Challenge. Resolution No.21-082 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 21-082

9. 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.

Courtney Jackson stated that Ernest Johnson has an issue with one of the buses he is riding is not coming on time and the generator for the lighting at Duncan Plaza was not working.

Jim Goodwin - Questions:

He would like a Ferry Status Update.

Will the Ferry be running for Special Services in the Cities such as for the Algiers Bonfire in December?

Councilperson Palmer would like to have a public meeting on the Ferries.

How are the accessible riders being handle regarding the ferry?

In response to Robin Cooley, Alex Wiggins reported that the RTA mandated in July that all employees needed to be vaccinated and 98% of the employees are vaccinated.

In response to Robin Cooley, Alex Wiggins reported that the transit employees were eligible for the booster shot.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Wegner, seconded by Commissioner Tillery and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Tillery, Commissioner Bryan, and Commissioner Wegner

Aye: Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Tillery, Commissioner Bryan, and Commissioner Wegner

Absent:

Absent:

Gallagher v Regional Transit Authority

Morial Convention Center v Regional Transit Authority

Amalgamated Transit Union

11. Adjournment

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Wegner seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of October 26, 2021. The motion was adopted unanimously.