**REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

**LOCATED AT 2817 CANAL STREET**

**NEW ORLEANS, LA 70119**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2015 AT 6:00 P.M.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairman Salvador Longoria, Commissioner Connie Goodly, Commissioner Flozell Daniels, Commissioner Barbara Major, Commissioner Earline Roth, Commissioner Sharon Wegner and Commissioner Walter Tillery

COMMISSIONER ABSENT: Commissioner Al Herrera

# INVOCATION:

Deslie Isidore gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

# APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**MARCH 24, 2015**

Commissioner Goodly moved and Commissioner Major seconded to approve the minutes of March 24, 2015. Verbal Motion 15-019 was approved unanimously.

**RTA CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:**

No Report.

**PROCUREMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**

**TO AWARD:**

**RAILROAD TAMPING HEAD UNIT**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was asking approval to award a contract for Railroad Tamping Head Unit.

Commissioner Tillery moved and Commissioner Major seconded to authorize the Board to award a contract to **Modern Track Machinery, Inc.** Resolution No. 15-023 was adopted unanimously.

**E-COMMERCE FULFILLMENT SERVICES**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was asking approval to award a contract for E-Commerce Fulfillment Services.

Commissioner Goodly moved and Commissioner Roth seconded to authorize the Board to award a contract to **QCS Logistics.** Resolution No. 15-024 was adopted unanimously.

**TO AMEND:**

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR – RAMPART STREET/ST. CLAUDE AVENUE STREET PROJECT**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was asking approval to amend the contract for General Contractor – Rampart Street/St. Claude Avenue Street Project.

Deslie Isidore stated that this change order would result in a credit to the agency.

Commissioner Goodly moved and Commissioner Major seconded to authorize the Board to amend the contract with **Archer Western .** Resolution No. 15-025 was adopted unanimously.

**UNLEADED GASOLINE DISPENSING SERVICE**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was asking approval to amend the contract for Unleaded Gasoline Dispensing Service.

Commissioner Major moved and Commissioner Roth seconded to authorize the Board to amend the contract with **Fuel Trac.** Resolution No. 15-026 was adopted unanimously.

**PROCUREMENT STATUS REPORT:**

Deslie Isidore reported that the Procurement Activity Report was in the Commissioners’ Binders.

**GRANTS**

**FY 2015 SECTION 5307 GRANT APPLICATION – TRANSIT OPERATIONS**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was requesting authorization to file a Grant Application under Section 5307 for PM (Bus); Bus Stop Signage; Data Collection (NTD); Before and After Study (Loyola/UPT); Annual Social Equity Analysis; Title VI Service Change Analysis and GIS Mapping; Alternatives Analysis (Downtown Transit Center); Shelter; Transit Enhancement (Landscape Bus Stops); Transit Security (Vehicle Camera Systems); West Esplanade Design and Construction; ADP Software; Administrative Support and Construction Canal St. Terminal and Preventative Maintenance FY 2015 under Section 5307 for $9,550,000.

Commissioner Roth moved and Commissioner Goodly seconded to authorize staff to file a grant for **FY 2015 Section 5307 Grant Application – Transit Operations**. Resolution No. 15-027 was adopted unanimously.

**FY 2015 SECTION 5337 – STATE OF GOOD REPAIR GRANT APPLICATION**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was requesting authorization to file a Grant Application for Preventative Maintenance (Rai); Power Source Inverters; Special Track Work Thalia and Riverfront; Administrative Support; and Preventative Maintenance (HOV) for FY 2015 under Section 5337 for $3,643,719.

Commissioner Goodly moved and Commissioner Major seconded to authorize staff to file a grant for **FY 2015 Section 5337 – State of Good Repair Grant Application**. Resolution No. 15-028 was adopted unanimously.

**FY 2015 SECTION 5337 – HOV BUS GRANT APPLICATION**

**DEFERRED**

**ASSIGNMENT OF CPA SERVICES**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was requesting approval of the assignment of the Gurtner Zuniga Abney, LLC.

Commissioner Major moved and Commissioner Roth seconded to authorize the assignment of the firm Gurtner Zuniga Abney, LLC. to **Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC.** Resolution No. 15-029 was adopted unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQURIRED TO CONSIDER)**

Commissioner Major moved and Commissioner Roth seconded to add **FY 2015 Section 5339 – Purchase Paratransit Vehicles** and **The State of Good Repair – Carrollton Barn** to the agenda. Verbal Motion 15-020 was approved unanimously.

**grants:**

**fy 2015 section 5339 – purchase paratransit VEHICLES:**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was requesting approval to file a Grant Application for Purchase of Paratransit Vehicles; Administrative Support for FY 2015 under Section 5339 for $869,971.

Commissioner Major moved and Commissioner Daniels seconded to authorize the Board to file a Grant Application for **Paratransit Vehicles; Administrative Support for FY 2015 under Section 5339 for $869,971.** Resolution No. 15-030 was adopted unanimously.

**TO REJECT AND RESOLICIT**

**THE STATE OF GOOD REPAIR – CARROLLTON BARN**

Deslie Isidore stated that staff was asking approval to Reject and Resolicit for the State of Good Repair – Carrollton Barn.

Commissioner Major moved and Commissioner Goodly seconded to authorize the staff to Reject and Resolicit the State of Good Repair – Carrollton Barn. Verbal Motion No. 15-021 was approved unanimously.

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Lyne Serpe stated that she takes the bus every day and she suggested that the RTA hold more public meetings at 6:00 p.m. and RTA should advertise these meetings on the buses and at bus shelters.

Lyne Serpe stated that buses were arriving at the bus stops early and that’s a problem when the buses on that route only pass once an hour.

Jennifer Terry stated that she often rides the St. Charles Streetcar and when the streetcars and/or buses are out of service, the public should receive better notification.

Jennifer Terry stated that a passenger was trying to board the St. Charles Streetcar and was having a very difficult time because he was a double amputee, and she knows the St. Charles Streetcar was on the National Register but she feels that ADA passengers should be able to ride the St. Charles Streetcar.

Justin Augustine stated that the Board had authorized staff to work on making the St. Charles Streetcar ADA Accessible and all the Board Members support these endeavors.

Michelle Abeyta stated that she rides all the buses and streetcars in the RTA’s system and the stop at Washington and Board should be addressed by the RTA because 6 people were shot at that stop and that stop needed to be reconsidered by the RTA and there were also issues with the bus stop at Elk and Canal because several shootings had also taken place at that location.

Michelle Abeyta stated that she wanted to have the 51, 62 and 91 routes run more frequently and, if the routes could be cut at Claiborne and other places along the line, the routes would serve the public better.

Michelle Abeyta stated that the Transit Police did not respond timely to the shooting at Washington and Broad and when the buses were ahead of schedule it was an inconvenience to the passengers.

In response to Commissioner Daniels, Michelle Abeyta stated that maybe the RTA could work with the local community and local businesses that have security in the Broad and Washington Area and/or notify the Neighborhood Associations for assistance with security.

In response to Commissioner Roth, Michelle Abeyta stated that she would be willing to go out to the local community and ask them to work with the RTA regarding security in that area.

Commissioner Roth stated that it was not easy to move a bus stop.

Michelle Abeyta stated that the RTA could start with the Broadmoor Neighborhood Association and ask the Association to help with security and ask the Neighborhood Association to assist in finding a better location for the current bus stop and she was willing to work with the Broadmoor Neighborhood Association with this task.

Commissioner Major stated that Michelle Abeyta would have to first deal with the community and see what the community wanted for that area and there was danger all over the City.

Commissioner Major stated that you have to see what ideas the community would come up with and if the businesses in that particular area were willing to do something.

Commissioner Major stated that moving a bus stop may be safer but you have to evaluate how far people would have to walk once the bus stop was moved.

Commissioner Major stated that she has a concern with the buses arriving ahead of schedule and staff needs to look into that.

Commissioner Major stated that Michelle Abeyta needed to meet with the Broadmoor and the Central City Communities because that bus stop affects both communities and she should contact Stacy Head’s office because they work with Central City.

Chairman Longoria stated that for the RTA to move a bus stop, the RTA needs to work in partnership with the City of New Orleans.

Justin Augustine stated that he was meeting with Michelle Abeyta this week.

Justin Augustine stated that the RTA was working on an indoor transit hub to get passengers that ride transit off the streets in that area.

Justin Augustine stated that the RTA was not responsible for security; the City of New Orleans was responsible for security and the RTA has a limited number of Transit Police because the City of New Orleans Police Department was under staffed.

Justin Augustine stated that private security has rules and regulations regarding crowd control.

Justin Augustine stated that bus stops were not unsafe and the RTA carries 20 Million people and it is unfortunate that evil doers in the community perform crimes at bus stops.

Justin Augustine stated that he was willing to meet with anyone in the community that was willing to discuss making the RTA better.

Michelle Abeyta stated that she understands the public security issues and that there are certain places where neighborhood security could be used.

Keli Ryanie stated that she was speaking on behalf of the Riders Advisory Committee and she discontinued riding public transit because of the rerouting of the Freret bus to the UPT which increased her commute time by 1 hour daily

Keli Ryanie stated that she is the Architecture Archivist at Tulane University and she has the old streetcars and bus route maps and it would nice if more routes would cross Canal Street.

Keli Ryanie stated that a lot of riders on Freret were commuting more than an hour every day and had to leave at 5:00 a.m. in the morning to get to jobs for 8:00 a.m. and if the RTA could create an express service for the universities it would be a nice service.

In response to Commissioner Roth, Keli Ryanie stated that she was a member of the Riders Advisory Committee associated with Ride New Orleans for which the Board gave approval.

Commissioners Major stated that some of the private entities should help provide resources needed to help the minimum wage employees get the transportation necessary to service its workers.

Commissioner Major stated anchor institutions should start investing in public transportation and build public private partnerships.

Keli Ryanie stated that she was willing to help start the initiative.

Mr. Calvin stated that the RTA should not cut the 94 Broad route because he relies on that route to get him to and from his job and if that route was cut he may lose his job and he currently lives in Michoud.

Justin Augustine stated that the RTA was not recommending cutting the Board route it was a consultant report that was presented to the Board that made that recommendation to cut the Broad route.

Commissioner Roth stated that there were a lot of people that live in Michoud that rely on public transportation and that route was not going to be cut.

Commissioner Roth stated that she wanted to hear from the school kids that ride the buses at 6:00 p.m. after they complete after school activities, she wanted to get their input.

Commissioner Major stated that the Board was very conscious of where people were living in the City of New Orleans and the Board looks at the impact of service to the different communities.

Commissioner Major stated that she always looks at equity and the RTA needed to balance out its resources.

In response to Mr. Calvin, Deslie Isidore stated that the next Board Meeting was scheduled for May 26, 2015.

Kendrick Pounds stated that he was a school system kid that rides the Broad and the Franklin buses after his school activities and it takes him almost 2 hours to get home in Michoud and if that bus were cut he could not participate in the extra activities after school.

Commissioner Major stated that the public school system did not renew its contract with the RTA and the school bus companies were not getting the kids home that participate in after school activities.

Commissioner Major stated that the public school was paying a lot of money for the contract with the school buses and they are not providing adequate service for kids that participate in after school activities.

Commissioner Roth stated that Ride Nola needed to help the kids get adequate transportation from the Public School System for kids that participate in after school activities.

Minh Nguyen stated that he represents families of low income people of color in the Michoud area and he has traveled around the country looking at different transportation programs that assist kids that participate in activities that keep them safe and off the street after school and he wanted the RTA to participate by giving the kids in these programs free passes or discounted fares.

Minh Nguyen stated that New Orleans was different; that kids at risk range from 16 -24 and these kids were called Opportunity Youth and there are 30, 000 of these kids in the City of New Orleans.

Minh Nguyen stated that the demographics had changed in the City of New Orleans and he wanted to make sure that the immigrants in the City of New Orleans were educated on how to ride public transportation.

Minh Nguyen stated that he supports the RTA getting the contract back from the Public School System to transport the kids to and from school.

Commissioner Daniels stated that more transportation service was needed around the City and the RTA and Executive Staff had started the conversation on how to raise the necessary funds needed and he appreciates that Mr. Nguyen wants to help the RTA with new creative revenue strategies.

Cedric Thompson stated that he lives in the Algiers area and he takes routes 114, 115 and the 106 and he rides the bus on an average of 5 to 6 days a week and routes 114 and 115 were always 45 minutes to 1 hour late.

Cedric Thompson stated that when he inquires as to why the buses were late, the operators always stated that it was traffic.

Cedric Thompson stated that Jefferson Parish always runs on time and it was run by the same company and coming over the same bridge.

Cedric Thompson stated that there were roaches on the 106 buses and he has called and complained.

Cedric Thompson stated that the 106 buses broke down and the bus came from the station and went to Elk and Canal and it was the last bus of the evening and it missed the passengers standing at the bus stops before Elk and Canal and the passengers had to run to catch up with the bus.

Justin Augustine stated that 76% of the bus routes on the RTA were affected by some type of construction that was happening in the City.

Justin Augustine stated that once the tolls were taken off the bridge, it created a traffic nightmare and the Jefferson Parish buses were coming from a different direction and those buses do not encounter the bridge traffic and the RTA was trying to come up with different solutions regarding the bridge traffic.

Justin Augustine stated that DOTD and RPC said they were going to build another ramp but that would take another 20 years.

Justin Augustine stated that roaches on route 106 would be corrected and he apologized for the inconvenience.

Justin Augustine stated that if a bus breaks down and was rerouted incorrectly it would be corrected immediately and the RTA would do its best to insure that it does not happen again.

Commissioner Roth stated that a supervisor should follow those routes to make sure that these buses are running correctly.

Commissioner Roth stated that she was glad that the public was at the Board Meeting bringing this information to the Board.

Justin Augustine stated that a Comprehensive Transit Plan would be brought to the Board.

Justin Augustine stated that once the tolls were removed from the bridge it made traffic on the westbank worst.

Peter Bennett stated that he wanted to read the report that was presented to the Board regarding the scheduling changes and find out what was the reasoning behind the consultant’s recommendations.

Peter Bennett stated that a lot of the comments made today addressed more frequencies on the bus lines and he knows it was going to take time and public input before these changes were implemented and he wanted to be a part of those discussions.

Ranchel Heiligman stated that over a year ago, on January 14, 2014, the Board approved the Riders Advisory Committee and 30 applicants applied for seats on the committee and people were here at today’s meeting to support the Riders Advisory Committee and she wanted to see the committee move forward by appointing the necessary committee members.

Pamela Legge stated that she applied to be on the Riders Advisory Committee.

Pamela Legge stated that she uses the bus every day and she goes on line to schedule her trips and she does not have any problems except the fact that she lives in Lakeview and she was upset when the consultants mentioned that the 45 Route should not be in Lakeview because the ridership was low and the bus operates in a circle and does not go near the lake.

Pamela Legge stated that if you live in Lakeview and need to go to the main Ochsner Client you have to first get to the Cemeteries and take three other buses before she boards a Jefferson Parish Bus and the RTA and Jefferson Parish should connect.

Pamela Legge stated that she wanted to participate on the committee that the Board would form to help with Funding Strategies for the RTA.

Pamela Legge stated that the Hayne bus does not run on Saturdays and Sundays and that does not make any sense.

Valerie Jefferson stated that the Woman of Action support Ride New Orleans because the organization supports the ridership of the transportation in New Orleans.

Valerie Jefferson stated that she appreciated the Board having the meeting in the evening giving the passenger that ride the system the opportunity to attend the meeting.

Valerie Jefferson stated that she supported Ride New Orleans because together concerns would be heard.

Irvin Foret thanked the Board for having the evening Board Meeting so more people could attend and he drives the Lakeview Bus Route Monday-Friday and for his elderly passengers that’s the only form of transportation for them to get to and from doctor’s appointments.

Irvin stated that some tourists ride the Lakeview Bus Route expecting to ride along the lakefront and the bus does not go along that path anymore.

Chairman Longoria thanked the public for attending the evening Board Meeting and stated that transportation was important in New Orleans and the number one priority are the people that need to get to work on time and to schools and doctor’s appointments.

Chairman Longoria stated that signage on the buses was both in Vietnamese and Spanish and the Media Marketing Campaign was both in Spanish and Vietnamese.

Chairman Longoria stated that the RTA Board has initiated talks with Jefferson Parish regarding coordinating bus service to make it easier for passengers.

Chairman Longoria stated that the RTA has been working on changing the transit hubs around the City and has encountered some road blocks.

Chairman Longoria stated that the Board was very concerned with the riders being able to get to work on time, to school, the hospital and the grocery store.

**RTA GENERAL COUNSEL’S REPORT:**

No Report.

**JEFFERSON PARISH REPORT:**

No Report

**FIRST QUARTER REPRORTS**

**TRANSIT POLICE**

No Report

**CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT**

No Report

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT REPORT:**

Justin Augustine stated that the FTA has announced that there are TIGER Discretionary Grants in the amount of $500 Million.

Justin Augustine stated that the Pre-Application Deadline was May 4, 2015 and the Final Application Deadline was June 5, 2015 and staff would bring the TIGER Application before the Board for approval at the May Board Meeting.

Mark Young stated that Streetcar Accident Mitigation Challenges are that the RTA has 185 unprotected grade crossings.

Mark Young stated that the majority of accidents are due to passenger vehicles turning left in front of the streetcars.

Mark Young stated that to mitigate these accidents the following was done:

* 150 “Look Both Ways” signs
* Strobe Lights added
* Replaced headlamps with whiter/brighter LED lights
* Extensive training for streetcar operators
* Award-winning public awareness campaign “Live Outside the Lines’

Mark Young stated that streetcar accidents per 100,000 Miles in 2009 were 18.63 and 2014 were 8.08 which was 57% reduction in streetcar accidents.

Mark Young stated that the new RFID Safety Technology was the “No Left Turn Signs” which are blank until the streetcar approaches then they light up and notify the public not to turn left.

Mark Young stated that they were at five intersections with ten signs and the concept was developed in house at the RTA and the project was completed for 1/3 of the cost of existing technology.

In response to Commissioner Daniels, Mark Young stated that RFID means Radio Frequency Identification.

In response to Commissioner Daniels, Mark Young stated that staff picked the stops closest to the Canal Facility so that the data could be monitored closely.

Commissioner Daniels stated that the increase in ridership should be added to the statistics when dealing with accidents per 100,000 mile.

Commissioner Major stated that the RTA needed to think of safety issues for the passengers on the buses and the operators driving the buses.

Justin Augustine stated that the RTA was working with the City of New Orleans regarding the “Outside the Line” signs and billboards along Canal, Riverfront and St. Charles Avenue and various neighborhood groups did not want the signs up all the time.

Justin Augustine stated that staff was working on technology inside the bus to protect the passengers on the buses.

Commissioner Major stated that the RTA has a responsibility to change the culture of the passengers that were riding the buses and streetcars.

**VEOLIA TRANSPORTATION SERVICES, INC. – FERRY REPORT:**

No Report.

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRESS REPORT**

**N. RAMPART STREET/ST. CLAUDE AVENUE STREETCAR EXPANSION PROJECT CANAL TO ELYSIAN FIELDS**

No Report.

**STATE OF GOOD REPAIR**:

**CARROLLTON FACILITY:**

No Report.

**NAPOLEON FACILITY:**

No. Report

**CANAL BLVD. STREETCAR/BUS TERMINAL:**

No Report.

**STATUS OF FEMA PROJECT WORKSHEETS**:

No Report.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

No Report.

**OPERATIONS REPORT**

Gerard Guter stated that the On-Time Performance for the month of March for Buses was72.3% and for Streetcars was 61.4%.

Gerard Guter stated that the RTA runs 33 Bus Routes and 5 Streetcar Lines in the City of New Orleans and during the month of March over 76% of bus lines had some type of detour during the month of March and only 9 Lines were not affected by any type of detour.

Gerard Guter stated that staff received a call that on St. Charles and Calliope the City had changed the route of a piece of equipment that was being delivered in the City and needed the RTA to shut down the catenary and stop the streetcars and put buses on the line to shuttle the passenger so that this piece of equipment could navigate its way through the streets of New Orleans.

Gerard Guter stated that more supervisors would be added to the line to assist the RTA with achieving better On Time Performance.

Justin Augustine stated that there were 12,000 people affected with the delivery of that equipment and the City of New Orleans needed to communicate better with the RTA when things like this were affecting the RTA bus service.

In response to Commissioner Daniels, Justin Augustine stated that someone at the City of New Orleans was issuing these permits and should notify the RTA.

Commissioner Daniels stated that the City should have one person to contact the RTA regarding these types of issues and maybe the RTA needed to write the City a letter.

Gerard Guter stated that the company was billed for all the expenses that the RTA occurred to make this delivery happen.

**ADA**

No Report

EXECUTIVE SESSION (2/3RDS VOTE TO CONSIDER)

Deferred

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Major moved and Commissioner Goodly seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of April 28, 2015 at 7:39 p.m. Verbal Motion No. 15-022 was approved unanimously.