



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 25, 2023

10:00 AM

RTA Board Room

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, April 25, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Please be advised that masks inside 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: rtaoard@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 Walton, Commissioner Coulon, Commissioner Ewell, Commissioner LeBeouf and Commissioner Neal

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner DeFrancesch

presented

3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

[Board of Commissioners Meeting - March 28, 2023]

[23-063](#)

Commissioner Coulon moved and Commissioner Ewell seconded to approve the Board of Commissioners Meeting of March 28, 2023. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Reports

A. RTA Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that the RTA was addressing the needs of the riding public such as On-Time Performance and the Maintenance of the vehicles.

B. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Neal stated that he had a very informative Operations and Administration Committee Meeting, and he took some people to visit the Ferry Terminal.

C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Walton stated that the RTA was in the progress of the Audit.

D. Jefferson Parish Report

Commissioner Ewell gave the Jefferson Parish Report. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated, April 25, 2023, under the Jefferson Parish Report.

E. RTA General Counsel's Report

Sundiata Haley stated that he will address his report in Executive Session.

F. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

Lona Hankins reported that the RTA received the Innovative Award for New Links from the Women in Transit Services, and she received the Rosa Parks award.

Lona Hankins reported that she visited the Lighthouse for the Blind to see how Paratransit impacts the workers work schedule.

Lona Hankins reported that the Strategic Mobility Plan is out for review until May 4, 2023.

Lona Hankins reported that she met with Guy McInnis, President of St. Bernard Parish and they discussed relocating the layover where the buses currently stop and during the summer pick the RTA will be extending the St. Maurice/Arabi Line to Nunez College beginning June 4, 2023.

Lona Hankins reported that staff will be monitoring the Canal Street/City Park and Jackson/Esplanade Routes for Jazz Fest, making sure there are enough buses on the routes. Also, the mobile ticket booths will be located at Canal/Carondelet and Canal/Wisner.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Lona Hankins explained that if necessary for Jazz Fest streetcars will be pulled from the Cemeteries Line and buses added to the Jackson/Esplanade Line.

Commissioner Walton stated that this rerouting would be done based on need.

Lona Hankins Employees Recognition for the Month, Terrell Butler, Howard Amos, Demetrius Garner.

G. Chief of Staff Legislative Update

Katherine Felton gave the Chief of Staff Legislative Update Report. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated, April 25, 2023, under the Chief of Staff Legislative Update Report.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that the RTA has a Capital Outlay request and staff was working with the Lobbyist to create the Appropriations Request.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that staff was going to layout several options to get the necessary funding for the next 5 years.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that she was not familiar with any Bills that would be detrimental to the RTA.

H. Operations Update

Gerard Guter gave the Operations Report. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated, April 25, 2023, under the Operations Report.

Commissioner Ewell thanked Gerard Guter for meeting with himself and Commissioner Neal to help them better understand the Operations Report.

Commissioner LeBeouf complimented Gerard Guter and his staff for being flexible and being able to keep the buses rolling with all the events that take place in the City of New Orleans.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Gerard Guter reported that the staging of extra fleet for Jazz Fest will be at Wisner and City Park which will be streetcars and buses will be added if needed.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Gerard Guter reported that the Gentilly Lines will not be affected.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Gerard Guter reported that the RTA will also be doing a Press Release and reporting on social media.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Lona Hankins reported that staff was taking advantage of every Workforce Development possible in the City.

I. RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report

Gizelle Banks gave the RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated, April 25, 2023, under the RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that she has received the data from the Compensation Plan and she is making sure that the job functions are matched to the proper grade levels and once that is completed she will bring the information before the Board for Approval and the adjustments will be made accordingly.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Lona Hankins reported that the Compensation Study was only for Administration Employees.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Lona Hankins reported that the Fiscal Cliff for 2024 was \$19 Million which includes a \$6 Million repair to the Levy Ferry.

Gizelle Banks reported that the 2023 Budget included Ferry Service for 2023.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that between the two-funding sources the RTA receives between \$5.1-\$5.4 Million for the ferry.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that he was correct when he stated that \$19 Million and the RTA also receives Federal Monies for maintenance.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Gizelle Banks reported that the RTA \$5.7 Million in revenue for Ferry Operations.

[February 2023 Financials]

[23-059](#)

5. Consent Agenda

Commissioner LeBeouf moved, and Commissioner Neal seconded to take two items out of the Consent Agenda RTA and The Kennedy Group Contract and the Oracle ERP Cloud Implementation. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to approve the Consent Agenda with RTA and The Kennedy Group Contract and Oracle ERP Cloud Implementation removed from the Consent Agenda. Resolution No. 23-024 was approved unanimously.

adopted

RTA and The Kennedy Group Contract

[23-025](#)

This was taken up under New Business.

Enactment No: 23-031

Trapeze Software Support

[23-035](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the

Trapeze Software Support. Resolution No. 23-023 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-023

FY2021 Low-No Emissions Bus Program

[23-041](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the FY2021 Low-No Emissions Bus Program. Resolution No. 23-025 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-025

Oracle Cloud SaaS Subscription

[23-044](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the Oracle Cloud SaaS Subscription. Resolution No. 23-026 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-026

Oracle ERP Cloud Implementation

[23-045](#)

This was taken up under New Business.

Enactment No: 23-032

OpenGov Budget Software Procurement

[23-048](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the OpenGov Budget Software Procurement. Resolution No. 23-027 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-027

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Program Development and Training

[23-049](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Program Development and Training. Resolution No. 23-028 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-028

FY23 Federal Appropriations Request (NOUPT)

[23-051](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the FY23 Federal Appropriations Request (NOUPT). Resolution No. 23-029 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-029

FY24 Federal Appropriations Request

[23-053](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the FY24 Federal Appropriations Request. Resolution No. 23-030 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-030

6. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to add

RTA and The Kennedy Group Contract and Oracle ERP Cloud Implementation to the agenda.

The motion was approved unanimously.

RTA and The Kennedy Group Contract

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Mark Major reported that this contract was entered into in 2011 and this was a five-year contract. In the contract there was a provision for self renewal, and it did in 2016, it was approved by the Board and this approval took the contract to 2022. There was still money on the Purchase Order that allowed staff to pay for the services until 2022.

Mark Major reported that as RTA's Broker of Record the Kennedy Group acquires all of the RTA's Commercial Insurance such as Property Insurance, Flood Insurance and the ALGL Insurance. They are not allowed to be paid Commission on these accounts. Secondly, they provide Third Party Administration for a group of eligible retiree's pursuant to a 1983 Document and this population had declined significantly.

Mark Major reported that during negotiations the 5-year renewal was reduced to 2 years. The portion of the contract that staff was asking for funding was from November 2022 - March 2023. The new reduce rate will start March 2023 through the ending period of 2024.

Mark Major reported that staff will come back to the Board to renew this contract.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Mark Major reported that this award was the result of a Competitive Solicitation that continue to renew according to the contract.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Mark Major reported that there were no issues on the Commercial Insurance Side and small issues with on the TPA Side that staff was able to work through.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Mark Major reported that the contract will terminate in 2024 the automatic renewal will be removed from this contract with the Board approval of this agenda item.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Lona Hankins reported that the contract was not expired, the Purchase Order had no more money.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Lona Hankins reported that the contract was not expired because of the automatic renewal language, and this would be taken out of the new

contract.

Commissioner LeBeouf stated that the agency has to make sure that RFP's are issued accordingly and particularly with contracts with such high amounts.

Lona Hankins reported that staff was looking into the RTA being self-insured or should insurance be taken to the market, an analysis will be done to determine what is best for the agency.

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the RTA and The Kennedy Group Contact. Resolution No. 23-031 was adopted by 5 Yeas and 1 Nay.

Oracle ERP Cloud Implementation

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Gizelle Banks reported that staff was implementing a new Financial System along with a new HR System and the primary extension for the Change Order was for the extension of time. The Time Frame that was originally priced out on State Contract from June 2022 - May 2023 and now staff needed more time to September 2023. The originally time-frame was very aggressive and staff still needs more time to finish the project. The project will be running out of money soon.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that the contractor will run out of money and the RTA would have an incomplete project.

Commissioner LeBeouf stated that staff made a purchase that does not meet the agency's needs as originally anticipated and now staff was asking for a \$1.7Million amendment, gives her major concern.

Gizelle Banks reported that the software does address the needs of staff, but when it was originally purchased staff did not have all the necessary information needed.

Lona Hankins reported that the current software was installed in the 90s and updated in 2008.

In response to Commissioner Raymond, Lona Hankins reported that if this project was not approved today the project would have to stop and would be an incomplete project.

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to approve the Oracle ERP Cloud Implementation. Resolution No. 23-032 was adopted by 5 Yeas and 1 Nay.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Gerard Guter reported that the participation for the De-escalation Seminars with the operators has been great and the feedback has been awesome.

7. Audience Questions and Comments

Alan Drake - The RTA need to raise fares for the buses and streetcars and a separate fare should be set-up for low-income riders. He stated that he'd rather see higher fares than for the RTA to cut routes.

Steve Donahue - The foldable LIFT Ramps that comes down for him to access the bus was not working and the operators had to bring it down manually and the operators choose not to deploy the LIFT Ramps manually. There are times when he is waiting for a bus the operators will pass him up and not allow him on the buses. He stated that he travels with an extra battery for his scooter, and the operators will not allow him to get on the buses with his extra batteries.

Commissioner Raymond stated that staff will talk to the operators regarding the gel batteries that he carries for his scooter.

Arthur Hunter stated that he was at the RTA to represent Delgado Community College and the Angola Re-Entry Program, and both of these programs would like the RTA to donate its dead buses. There are programs that they are currently running to train people to be diesel mechanics and operators.

Commissioner Raymond stated that the RTA can't donate buses.

Lona Hankins reported that she needs the contact information for the Directors of these Programs so the RTA can creatively work through these issues.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Arthur Hunter stated that the Angola program can use 3 Large Buses and 3 Minibuses and Delgado can use 1 Large Bus.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Arthur Hunter stated that currently there are 25 people enrolled in the Delgado Program, that has a waiting list.

Commissioner LeBeouf thanked Arthur Hunter for the work he is doing with Career Development.

Kory Dupree stated that the RTA needs to start an Apprentice Program to train the new employees and if this does not happen the RTA will not have any skilled workers. He stated that it was unacceptable to have LIFT ramps on the buses that are not working and to manually deploy a LIFT is very hard.

Kory Dupree asked the Board where were they when it comes to adequate service and putting buses on the street that works.

Commissioner Neal stated that staff was working on a plan to deal with the broken buses.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that they are short 6 mechanics.

Gretchen Bradford, Ponchartrain Park Neighbor Association - The bus service was changed in Ponchartrain Park and the current route only serves half of the residents - the other residents has to walk 2 miles for bus service. The new route only serves the side with the Students and this is a first, the buses always service the full subdivision.

Noelle Banks - A member of Ponchartrain Park - Has to walk 3.4 miles to get a bus and they also need shelters at the bus stops and there are times the operators does not serve the full route.

Rev Aubrey Watson - A member of Ponchartrain Park - That there are no bus service on Congress Drive and there is a need for service on Congress Drive.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that this is a process that has to be worked through by gathering all the complaints.

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

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to go into Executive Session with Personnel Matters.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to add Mary Smith vs. RTA etc. to Executive Session. The motions were approved unanimously.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to come out of Executive Session.

approved

Personnel Matters

9. Adjournment

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of April 25, 2023. The motion was adjourned unanimously.