



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 24, 2023

10:00 AM

RTA Board Room

3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

[Board Meeting Minutes - December 13, 2022]

23-008

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Reports

A. RTA Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that the Board held its retreat on January 21, 2022, and staff began meeting with the BRT Stakeholders.

Commissioner Raymond stated that the FTA Awarded the RTA \$5.2 M for the Algiers Ferry Terminal.

B. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Neal stated that the Operations Committee received an updated report on Project Move.

Commissioner Neal stated that the Operations Committee recommended the BRT East-West Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative to the full Board for approval.

C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

No Report

D. Jefferson Parish Report

Commissioner Ewell reported on the following:

Mardi Gras 2023

Jefferson Transit announces its bus service changes for the 2023 Mardi Gras season effective Sunday, February 5th - Tuesday, February 21, 2023. Pamphlets will be made available on all JP-Transit buses notifying riders of Parade detours.

New Eastbank Bus Administration and Maintenance Facility**December Bus Ridership Totals:**

WESTBANK = 45,108 MITS RIDERSHIP = 4,440

EASTBANK = 67,737 BUS ACCIDENTS = Non-Preventable 5 /
Preventable 0

MITS ACCIDENTS = 1 non-preventable accident

E. RTA General Counsel's Report

No Report.

F. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

Lona Hankins reported that the Board Retreat was great, and she thanked staff for all its hard work that was established with the RTA Work Plan.

Lona Hankins reported on the following for BRT:

Two bus tours with community stakeholders and elected officials to learn the proposed route.

Three community meetings in Orleans Parish this week.

Beginning Jefferson Parish outreach - starting with Jefferson Parish District #1

Lona Hankins reported on the January Service Pick:

Extending the #11 Magazine to serve both the bus hub and Canal Street/French Quarter.

Formalizing the extension of #66 Hayne Loop to serve SUNO and UNO.

Additional stops for all buses traveling on Rampart (#6, #55, and #9) to improve access the French Quarter.

Lona Hankins reported that the RTA's Mardi Gras information will be on the RTA's Website.

Lona Hankins reported that the \$5.2M that was awarded from FTA for the ferry will allow the RTA to add a 2nd floor to the Algiers Terminal.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Lona Hankins reported that the ferry barge went into service and the permanent landing is operational.

Commissioner Ewell thanked staff for including Jefferson Parish into the BRT Study.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that the \$5.2M for the ferry was a FTA grant and staff will pull from the On-Call Engineering List.

Commissioner Coulon stated that he was willing to help set-up a meeting with the Jefferson Parish Council Members that represent the Westbank.

In response to Commissioner DeFrancesch, Lona Hankins reported that this grant was an annual ferry grant.

G. Chief of Staff Legislative Update

Katherine Felton reported on the following:

Legislative Update:

City Council Transportation Committee Meeting - 2/24

BRT legislative outreach with City Council and the New Orleans delegation

Jefferson Parish District 1 and JeT to begin specific BRT outreach in JP.

Beginning the process to formalize our specific strategy to address our Ferry Funding fiscal cliff in 2024

H. Operations Update

COMMISSIONER LEBEOUF LEFT THE MEETING

Gerard Guter reported that total Ridership for the month of November 2022 was 761K.

Gerard Guter reported that On -Time Performance for bus was 75% during the month of November and 75% for streetcars.

Gerard Guter reported that Route 80 Desire-Louisa had the highest On-Time Performance with 90% and the route with the lowest On-Time Performance was Route 66 Hayne 31%.

Gerard Guter reported that 24 of the 28 bus service routes were affected by Temporary Detours which was 85.7%, 4 of the 4 streetcars service routes were affected by Long Term Detours which was 12.5% of the routes.

Gerard Guter reported that for the month of November RTA delivered 94% of Bus Service and 92% of Streetcar Service.

I. RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report

Gizelle Banks reported that - Ridership in November decreased by 18.5% compared to October 2022 actuals. Through November, total system ridership (bus, streetcar, and paratransit) was 778K, 31% exceeding November 2021 actuals (593K), 23% below November 2019 pre-COVID actuals (1M), and 18% above the forecast. The results show improved but mixed results across the spectrum.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Farebox Recovery Rates 2022 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) - Fare revenue continues to offset a slightly modest percentage of operating expenses as ridership continues to rebound. November's farebox recovery rate decreased slightly from 9.69% in the prior month to 8.77%; a total decrease of less than 1%. The farebox recovery rate for November 2019 (Pre-COVID) was 12.76%.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Ferry - Farebox Recovery Rates 2022 vs. 2019 (Pre-COVID) - The decrease in farebox recovery to 8.73% in November from 12.42% in October is a result of decrease in passenger revenues and an increase in operating expenses from the prior month. Fare revenues continue to offset a small percentage of operating costs.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Operating Revenues (Budget, Actual & Prior Year) - RTA's two largest revenue sources are General Use Sales Tax (\$9.3M) and Fare Revenue (\$757K). The two combined make up 83% or \$10M in total revenue. Overall, total operating revenues for the month of November are \$12M. Passenger Fares for November decreased by 12% or \$106K compared to the previous month of October actuals (\$863K).

Gizelle Banks reported that - Net Revenues (Before and After Government Assistance) - Net Revenue (Before Government Assistance) is \$3.1M for the month of November. After applying \$5.3M in Government Operating Assistance, Net Revenue ended with 8.1M or a positive variance of 330% for the month of November (compared to the budget of \$1.9M).

Gizelle Banks reported that - Operating Expenses - Operating Expenses for the month of November are roughly \$8.6M. Labor and Fringe Benefits, the largest expenditure at \$5.6M, comprised 64.6% of this month's actual expenses. In total, Operating Expenses for the month of November show a slight decrease of 3.1% from \$8.9 M in October.

Gizelle Banks reported that - Operating Reserve - The strong positive variance that resulted from Net Revenue (After Government Assistance of approximately \$5.3M) added \$7M to Restricted Operating/Capital Reserve after the offset of \$564K in Debt Service.

5. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. Resolution No. 23-001 was adopted unanimously.
adopted

Marketing and Advertising Services (Campaigns) and Media
Planning and Buying Services

[22-111](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to approve the Marketing and Advertising Services (Campaigns) and Media Planning Buying Services. Resolution No. 23-002 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-002

Radio Communications Infrastructure 2

[22-159](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt the Radio Communications Infrastructure 2. Resolution No. 23-003 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-003

Clever Device Maintenance Agreement

[22-175](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt Clever Device Maintenance Agreement. Resolution 23-004 was adopted unanimously

Enactment No: 23-04

NEOGOV Contract Renewal

[22-176](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt the NEOGOV Contract Renewal. Resolution No. 23-005 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-005

Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) between the City of New Orleans and Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Audubon Nature Institute (ANI)

[22-179](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) between the City of New Orleans and Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and the Audubon Nature Institute. Resolution No. 23-006 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-006

Transit Security Services - SEAL Security Services

[22-188](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Coulon seconded to adopt the Transit Security Services - SEAL Security Services. Resolution No. 23-007 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-007

6. Other Items for Consideration

BRT East-West Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative

[22-177](#)

Commissioner Neal stated that he wanted to thank staff for modifying the resolution to include community engagement and Jefferson Parish Partners.

Commissioner Neal thanked the RTA team that was addressing the public and to continue with public outreach and to meet riders where they are.

Commissioner Neal stated that the RTA was going to create Rapid Transit in New Orleans and talk about the "Why" and the "How" and everyone was not going to be happy with the final decisions.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Lona Hankins reported that Local Preferred

Alternatives tells the "Where" and this will position the RTA for the FTA grant funding.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Lona Hankins reported that the RTA does not know the "How".

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adopt the BRT East-West Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative. Resolution No. 23-008 was adopted unanimously.

adopted

Enactment No: 23-008

RTA & City of New Orleans 2023 Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA)

[23-007](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Ewell seconded to adopt the RTA & City of New Orleans 2023 Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. Resolution No. 23-009 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-009

7. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

None.

8. Audience Questions and Comments

PLEASE NOTE: Anyone who wishes to speak at the public meeting must fill out a speaker card. Speakers will get three minutes to pose a question or comment.

Shirani Jayasuriya stated that she would like to know how the Marketing and Advertising Services (Campaigns) and Media Planning will be handled with the riding public.

Commissioner Raymond asked Yolanda Rodriguez to get back with Ms. Jayasuriya with a response.

August Green was concerned with RTA's communications with the riding public and what are the RTA's plans for communicating with the riding public.

Kory Dupree asked the Board to give a minute of silence for Leslie N. Newman.

Kory Dupree stated that there are serious concerns with the operators, they are not happy, and the stress levels for these operators are out the roof. Management needs the necessary skills to deal with operators, these operators are not robots they are human beings.

Kory Dupree stated that operators need to be treated with dignity, respect and with professionalism.

Kory Dupree stated that he has communicated with Chairman Raymond and the Interim CEO, Lona Hankins and no one has returned any calls. He stated that this situation was not going to end good with the operators.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Commissioner Raymond stated that the union concerns were a toxic work environment, bad culture and over discipline.

In response to Kory Dupree, Commissioner Raymond stated that his concerns were discussed at the Board Retreat and he has taken all the union concerns to heart and the Board are going to address the issues and make the appropriate changes.

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

None.

10. Adjournment

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of January 24, 2023. The motion was adjourned unanimously.