



2817 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

## **New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners**

### **Meeting Minutes - Final**

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**Tuesday, April 23, 2024**

**10:00 AM**

**RTA Board Room**

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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, April 23, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Meetings start at the scheduled time but may be delayed until a quorum of the Commissioners is present. The agency's website will stream the in-person meeting live and wearing masks in the boardroom is optional.

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.

This meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. To help assure availability, modifications or accommodations linked to a disability must be requested 72 hours before the meeting or hearing. Please direct requests for public meeting accommodations to the Office of Board Affairs, 2817 Canal Street, NOLA 70119, or call 504-827-8341 or by email ([rtaboard@rtaforward.org](mailto:rtaboard@rtaforward.org)).

#### **1. Call to Order**

#### **2. Roll Call**

**Commissioners Present:** Commissioner Raymond, Commissioner Cisco, Commissioner Daniels, Commissioner Hurley, Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Richard, and Commissioner Walton

**Commissioner Absent:** Commissioner Sams

**Present:** Chairperson Fred Neal, Vice-Chairman Art Walton, and Flozell Daniels

**Absent:** Commissioner Timolyn Sams

#### **3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Commissioner Neal, seconded by Vice-Chairman Walton and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton,  
Commissioner Sams, Daniels, Hurley , Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:**

[Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes - February 27, 2024]

[24-025](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to approve the Board Meeting Minutes from February 27, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **4. RTA Chairman's Report**

##### **A. Swearing in of Commissioners**

Judge Kern Reese sworn in Commissioners Colin Cisco, Commissioner Flozell Daniels, Commissioner Toni Hurley, and Commissioner Brad Richard.

##### **B. Assignment of Committees**

###### **Executive Committee:**

Arthur Walton, Chairman  
Mark Raymond  
Fred Neal  
Toni Hurley

###### **Finance Committee:**

Arthur Walton, Chairman  
Flozell Daniels  
Toni Hurley  
Colin Cisco

###### **Operations and Administration Committee:**

Fred Neal Chairman  
Timolynn Sams  
Brad Richard  
Colin Cisco

#### **5. Reports**

##### **A. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report**

No Report.

##### **B. Finance Committee Chairman's Report**

No Report.

**C. Jefferson Parish Report**

No Report.

**D. RTA General Counsel's Report**

Sundiata Haley stated that his report will be handled in Executive Session.

**E. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report**

According to Lona Hankins, the RTA recognized the operators and mechanics on March 18, 2024, which was designated as "National Transit Employee Appreciation" day. Additionally, it was revealed that on Transit Day in Baton Rouge, all administrative staff members were recognized and the RTA also celebrated "Women in Transit" this month. Lona also welcomed back Justin Cayless to the RTA as the new Chief Transit Officer.

The following employees were recognized for their service along with Operator Rose Broke who observed a youngster wondering on the I-10 Service Road at around 3:45 a.m. on April 16, 2024. She reported the incident to the authorities and waited for them to arrive ensuring the child's safety.

**Employee of the Month - February**

Jessica James - Paratransit

Gary Edwards - Maintenance

**Employee of the Month - March**

Treva Bulter - Operator

Anthony Jordon - Maintenance

Tyren Snyder - Administrative - Employee of the Quarter

The Commissioners were shown images from the "Birth of a Bus" along with the RTA's most current marketing campaign. The Rampart Streetcar line's return to service date of May 15, 2024 was declared, and there was an update on Super Bowl preparations.

**F. Chief of Staff Legislative Update**

According to Lona Hankins, the organization applied for a grant to buy FY24 Lo/No Vehicles and make upgrades to the ENO Facility so that these buses may be used. The Algiers Terminal project's design is now undergoing community participation, and the TJ ferry's dry docking is planned.

It was reported that HB544 and HB760 have moved out of the house and are now going before the Senate. Also, there are a host of bills that was going to affect the unions and that the union officials had their own lobbyist in Baton Rouge. USDOT Secretary Carlos Monje, Jr. joined Lona on a tour of the Canal Street Ferry and the UPT. And, Commissioner Neal stated that on April 5, 2024, the Urban Planners, from the University of New Orleans did an RTA Day and did a tour of the Carrollton Facility.

### G. Operations Update

Justin Cayless gave the Operations Update. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated April 23, 2024.

Regarding On-Time Performance, Justin reported that construction, detours, accidents and heavy ridership and when the passengers are paying with cash, these are all the things that can affect service. Commissioner Neal requested that when additional service is used for festivals, please show those additional lines on the app. Justin reported that the Ferry Service will be maintained for Jazz Fest.

### H. 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 dated April 23, 2024 under RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report.

Gizelle Banks reported that the Farebox recovery rate was down after COVID about 8% and some numbers has changed, because some people are returning to work and forecasting is difficult in the city due to all the festivals. It was also reported that team was working on the NTD Report, the External Audit has begun, and HR Consultants were working with staff. The RTA went live with the Oracle System in October 2023, and certain software still needs to be integrated into the system. Staff are now trying to make sure that the Oracle System was user friendly.

## 6. Authorizations

FY 2024 Trapeze Support

[24-013](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the FY2024 Trapeze Support. Resolution No. 24-012 was adopted unanimously.

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

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Daniels, Hurley, Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:** Commissioner Sams  
Enactment No: 24-012

Oracle SaaS Annual Subscription

[24-016](#)

In response to Commissioner Daniels, Gizelle Banks reported that Mythics, Inc. provides the RTA with Customer Service, and the RTA is satisfied with the service.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Ronald Baptist reported that the \$721,000 was for 2 years.

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Oracle SaaS Annual Subscription. Resolution No. 24-013 was adopted unanimously.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Walton, seconded by Commissioner Neal and adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Daniels, Hurley , Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:** Commissioner Sams  
Enactment No: 24-013

Paratransit Buses [24-021](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Daniels seconded to defer Paratransit Buses. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Walton, seconded by Daniels and tabled. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Daniels, Hurley , Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:** Commissioner Sams  
Enactment No: 24-028

Website Services [24-022](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Daniels seconded to adopt the Website Services. Resolution No. 24-015 was adopted unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Neal, seconded by Vice-Chairman Walton and adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Daniels, Hurley , Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:** Commissioner Sams  
Enactment No: 24-015

FY24 Lo/No Vehicles - Bus Facilities FTA Grant Application [24-026](#)

Lona Hankins reported that one of the challenges that the industry is facing is that there are only 2 bus manufacturers in the United States and the FTA mandates that the agency Buy America and different States are requiring electric buses so everyone is trying to purchase electric buses.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Dwight Norton reported that the Grant is due

to the FTA tomorrow.

In response to Commissioner Daniels, Ryan Moser reported that there will be fewer labor hours with the electrical buses and Lona Hankins reported that the manufacturer will come in and train the mechanics to work on the buses.

In response to Commissioner Raymond, Dwight Norton reported that the RTA was awarded \$101 Million in grant monies.

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the FY24 Lo/No Vehicles - Bus Facilities FTA Grant Application. Resolution No. 24-016 was adopted unanimously.

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

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Daniels, Hurley, Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:** Commissioner Sams  
Enactment No: 24-016

## **7. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)**

Yolanda Rodriguez stated that the following will be added to Executive Session:

Mandamus Procedure Lawsuit BRC Construction Group, LLC vs. Regional Transit Authority  
Civil District Court 2024-0335 Division F-14.

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to approve the item to Executive Session. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Daniels, Hurley, Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:** Commissioner Sams

## **8. Audience Questions and Comments**

Alan Drake stated that the RTA should not have taken over the Chalmette Ferry Service and should stop supporting the Ferry because the majority of the vehicles using the Ferry are not from Orleans Parish but from other surrounding parishes.

Jim Goodwin wanted to know RTA's strategy for Transportation Day at the Capital, and he was going to attend and he will be asking about Ferry Funding, and during the French Quarter Fest the Ferry Service was excellent.

Shirani Jayasuriya distrusted rider feedback to the Board. At the April's RAC Meeting RTA

was asked to create a Communications Policy to ensure that riders have real time, up to date information when navigating the system. The policy should outline how this information would be shared with the riders. She also mentioned that Ride hosted a Ride-A-Long with 15 youths. The youths were asked to ride the system using the App and Rideline for information. Due to a lack of signage, they could not find the 57 Bus Route Stop and the App did not show the 10:48 am bus and Rideline stated that this bus was not available, but the bus did show up. On the return trip the group was going to take the 91 Bus Route, but that bus disappeared from the App and the group had to walk to the 8 Bus Route Line, where they had to transfer and walk further to reach the groups destination. She stated that the RTA needed to make sure that the correct information was on the App and that Rideline has the correct information.

Kory Dupree stated that he was glad to hear that the new buses will be arriving this summer. The community is suffering and they take their frustration on the operators. The RTA have more security on the buses for the operators. The operators are still having issues with the grievance process. Legislative Bill 544 was passed and Legislative Bill 919 was trying to bust the Union.

Deon White stated that he was an ex-employee and was arrested and wrongly sent to jail while on the job He still does not have his job and he does not understand why he was arrested and treated so bad. This happened to him 2 years ago and he still has not gotten any answers from the RTA. He has never had a criminal record and this experience has traumatized him.

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

Commissioner Richard moved and Commissioner Hurley seconded to reconsider Mandamus Procedure Lawsuit BRC Construction Group, LLC vs. Regional Transit Authority Civil District Court 2024-0335 Division F-14 this motion was originally added to New Business. The Motion to reconsider was approved unanimously.

Yolanda Rodriguez stated that the following will be added to Executive Session

Mandamus Procedure Lawsuit BRC Construction Group, LLC vs. Regional Transit Authority Civil District Court 2024-0335 Division F-14

The audience was given the opportunity to make comments at this time. There were no comments from the audience and this item was added to the agenda.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Daniels seconded to approve Mandamus Procedure Lawsuit BRC Construction Group, LLC vs. Regional Transit Authority Civil District Court 2024-0335 Division F-14 to Executive Session. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to go into Executive Session for

Ernest N. Morial Exhibition Hall Authority vs. Regional Transit Authority Civil District Court No 2021-04470, Division "J-15" and

Mandamus Procedure Lawsuit BRC Construction Group, LLC vs. Regional Transit Authority  
Civil District Court 2024-0335 Division F-14.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Daniels seconded to come out of Executive Session. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Daniels, seconded by Vice-Chairman Walton and amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Daniels,  
Hurley , Cisco, and Richard

**Absent:** Commissioner Sams

Ernest N. Morial Exhibition Hall Authority v. Regional Transit Authority Civil District  
Court No. 2021-04470, Division "J-15"

## 10. Adjournment

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adjourn the Board of Commissioners Meeting dated April 23, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

[PowerPoint 04.23.24]

[24-037](#)