



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

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, June 25, 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 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).

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

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

Commissioner Sams walked into the meeting during the legislative update.

Present: Chairperson Fred Neal, Vice-Chairman Art Walton, and Flozell Daniels
Absent: Commissioner Timolyn Sams

3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Cisco seconded to approve the Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes of May 28, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Daniels, seconded by Cisco and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Absent: Commissioner Sams

[Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes - May 28, 2024]

[24-062](#)

4. Reports

A. RTA Chairman's Report

Commissioner Raymond stated that the RTA would be in Budget Season again and will be looking for the money needed to implement 2025 Plans and Projects.

B. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Neal stated that at the Operations and Administration Meeting reports were given on the New Vehicle Plan and On-Time Performance.

C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

No report.

D. Jefferson Parish Report

Commissioner Cisco reported on the Jefferson Parish Report that can be found in the Board of Commissioners Meeting dated June 25, 2024, PowerPoint Report.

E. RTA General Counsel's Report

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

F. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

Lona Hankins reported that the Employee of the month was Gerald Hawkins - Operator Streetcar Donneil Miner - Maintenance - Mechanic. The report also included an update on the Chalmette Ferry and that it would be out of service for longer than 90 days. Regarding the Algiers Ferry project, the agency has held 3-sets of meetings with the community and the main concern was the pedestrian walkway and making sure that the terminal has some type of shelter. Commissioner Neal stated that he attended the Algiers Meeting regarding the New Ferry Terminal and all the information presented at

the meeting is on the RTA website.

The RTA received the first 3 of the 7 new buses. The remainder of the buses will arrive during the week. Once the RTA receives the vehicles staff must get with the manufacture to deal with certain components on the buses and between now and September the current schedules will be still maintained to make sure the system is reliable and to give the mechanics the opportunity to learn about the new buses. The new schedules will be implemented in January.

The RTA has held a Transit Access & Equity Quarterly Meeting - This was a disability council meeting that was re-established. The RTA also had its 2nd Table Top Exercise Prep for internal staff for the Hurricane Season. And, the RTA is assisting the City of New Orleans with the hot summer and also supplying water to the staff members that are outside in the heat.

G. Chief of Staff Legislative Update

Lona Hankins reported that the RTA has a FY 2024 TOD Pilot Program Grant Application that is due on July 22, 2024, on the agenda for approval. This is a planning grant that will deal with zoning along the BRT corridor that deals with affordable housing. Also, the Low No Grant is moving through the FTA process.

Commissioner Sams attendance was acknowledged.

H. Operations Update

Justin Cayless gave the Operations Update. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated June 25, 2024.

In response to Commissioner Daniels, Justin Cayless reported that the Haynes Bus route has a detour, and the detour makes the route longer and the time difference for the detour was not included in the schedule Supervisors have been placed on the route to communicate with the changes to the passengers. According to the union rules, the operators has to bid on the new route with the new time schedule. Commissioner Daniels stated that the On-Time Performance has to be better managed, passengers are losing jobs due to late buses and the Lakeview Bus Route does not have the same problem as the Haynes Bus Route. Staff need to communicate better to the Board and the passengers when there are issues regarding On-Time Performance on a particular route. Commissioner Walton commented that staff need to create a better way to communicate with the public regarding On-Time Performance. Commissioner Neal added that staff need to get the schedules right, but the RTA is putting the buses out on the street for the public. These issues with no signs and shelters impact the riding public.

In response to a question from Commissioner Raymond, Lona Hankins reported that Pontchartrain Park has major construction going on in its area and staff was waiting for a response from Sewerage and Board for an update on the construction project in this area.

I. RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report

Gisele Banks reported on the RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated June 25, 2024.

5. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to remove the CY 2023 Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire from the Consent Agenda. This motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Consent Agenda. Resolution No. 24-025 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

FY 2024 ADP Annual Services [24-017](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the FY2024 ADP Annual Services. Resolution no. 24-026 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-026

Office of Internal Audit and Compliance's Confidentiality Policy (GEN12) [24-011](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Office of Internal Audit and Compliance's Confidentiality Policy (GEN 12). Resolution No. 24-027 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-027

Paratransit Buses [24-021](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Paratransit Buses. Resolution 24-028 was adopted unanimously,

Enactment No: 24-028

Universal Accessibility Study [24-024](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Universal Accessibility Study. Resolution No. 24-029 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-027

New Orleans East Bus Wash Repairs [24-034](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt New Orleans East Bus Wash Replacement. Resolution No. 24-030 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-030

Canal Street Bus Wash Replacement

[24-035](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Canal Street Bus Wash Replacement. Resolution No. 24-031 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-031

CleverVision Replacement Pilot

[24-044](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the CleverVision replacement Pilot. Resolution No. 24-032 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-032

A Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) between Jefferson Parish and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

[24-045](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt A Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) between Jefferson Parish and the Regional Transit Authority. Resolution No. 24-033 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-033

ENO Air Compressors

[24-049](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the ENO Air Compressors. Resolution No. 24-034 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-034

CY 2023 Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire

[24-050](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the CY 2023 Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire. Resolution No. 24-035 was adopted with 5 yeas and 3 abstained.

Enactment No: 24-035

6. Authorizations

Authorization to Extend Transit Security Month-to-Month Services with Security Experts and Leaders (SEAL)

[24-033](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the Extended Transit Month-to-Month Services with Security Experts and Leaders (SEAL). Resolution No. 24-036 was adopted with 5 yeas and 3 abstained.

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

Aye: Raymond, Chairperson Neal, Vice-Chairman Walton, Commissioner Sams, and Daniels

Absent:

Abstain: Hurley , Cisco, and Richard
Enactment No: 24-036

FY2024 TOD Pilot Program Grant Application

[24-056](#)

In response to a question from Commissioner Daniels, Dwight Norton reported that staff is going to need help reaching out to the different communities to make sure that their visions are carried out. Commissioner Neal added that the RTA needs to make sure that the right stakeholders are attending these meetings.

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adopt the FY2024 TOD Pilot Program Grant Application. Resolution No. 24-037 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: 24-037

7. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

None.

8. Audience Questions and Comments

Alan Drake stated that the during the Hurricane Season the RTA should not promise more than they could deliver. This Hurricane Season there are no plans for contraflow lanes during evacuation.

- **RTA RESPONSE:** The RTA will execute the mandatory evacuation prior to the

implementation of contraflow on I-10. The City of New Orleans and the State are aware that the RTA requires full access to lanes and roads to successfully transport evacuees to the Orleans Parish Pickup Point (Smoothie King Center). Additionally, RTA is working closely with the City of New Orleans and the State to develop additional emergency transportation options (contract buses, paratransit, rideshare) to augment RTA's role.

Kory Dupree - ATU 1560 - He was excited to know that some of the new buses has arrived. A lot of Operators are going out with broken buses and the Operators are being forced to operate these broken buses. He stated that he has talked to management, and nothing is being done. An operator had a gun put to her head since the back door was broken, and the person could not exit through the back door after he had a confrontation he had with another passenger on the bus. RTA has a policy that passengers exist the bus through the back door, but the back door on the buses don't work. He has 3 arbitrations that have not been satisfied by management and there are also grievances that have been on the book for 2 years with no resolution. He would like to meet with the Board to see if these issues between management and the union can be resolved.

- **RTA RESPONSE:** Management takes the safety of operators and passengers very seriously. Operators are required to perform pre-check inspections of their vehicles before taking them on the road. If there is a major issue with a vehicle, the vehicle is immediately taken out of service and swapped for another. If an operator finds an issue with a vehicle that does not impact the safety of the vehicle while the vehicle is in service, the operator will complete a DVIR (Driver Vehicle Inspection Form) when parking the vehicle. The DVIR notifies the maintenance team that there is an issue with the vehicle and the vehicle is pulled off the line for inspection and or repair.

Operator Safety Response: The recent assault involving an operator, this is currently a police matter, and our participation in public discussions about it this limited. When incidents or accidents involving operators occur, management typically follows up to ensure the employee is aware of our Employee Assistance Program.

Arbitrations: We cannot discuss personnel matters in a public forum. The agency is working to resolve these issues per the rules of the contract. Management is happy to meet with ATU leadership to discuss further. Please contact the Board office to coordinate a meeting with Board members.

Brenda Holmes - The number 80 Bus Route needs to be extended to the Main Library. She would like to know when the new buses are put on the street and will the RTA resume its original schedule. When Bus Route No. 8 St. Claude is detoured to Franklin Ave several passengers are not being picked up because the stops are not being identified. With the current schedule she must take 3 buses to go home. There are a several of riders losing their

jobs due to late buses.

Commissioner Daniels asked that staff come back at the next Board Meeting to answer the complaints from the public. Commissioner Raymond added that the Board understands the public's concerns and that the RTA is listening to the complaints.

- **RTA RESPONSE:** The 80 Desire-Louisa is a neighborhood route that prioritizes reliability. Since the route was shortened in 2022, it has had one of the best on-time performance records in the system, consistently topping 90%. While it now requires a transfer to go to the CBD, there is a great benefit to residents who are traveling to destinations in the neighborhood or making transfers to other routes. The transfer to get downtown at Elysian Fields and St Claude is designed to be convenient, with several frequent options to get downtown, including the 55 Elysian Fields, the 8 St Claude, and as of May 2024, the newly reopened 46 Rampart Streetcar.

Detours on the St Claude: Sometimes buses need to be put on detour due to a disruption like a train on the tracks. The detour is typically designed so that it misses as few stops as possible. However, when the St Claude has to detour around the tracks at Press, it misses the four stops between Franklin and Desire. The RTA does its best to alert passengers of detours, but the train on the tracks at Press Street is an unpredictable disruption and we usually don't know that detour is happening until it is live.

If the bus is on detour and passes stops that are not on its regular route (such as if the 8 St Claude is traveling on Franklin), it is not RTA policy to service those extra stops. Passengers at stops on Franklin should wait for the scheduled Franklin or Desire-Louisa bus to pick them up.

Shirani Jayasuriya - Riders and Operators are confused with stops on bus route that has no signage. The Operators are not stopping at certain bus stops with no signage and the passengers are being told by the operators that certain stops are not stops on bus routes. The RTA needs to keep the public updated on the signage process.

Courtney Jackson - There are very few bus stop signs along the bus route and many routes have no signage. The RTA needs to develop Policy and Procedures for communications, such as when buses do not show and how does riders report issues with detours. Lona Hankins reported that the RTA still has the metal signs and when the stickers arrive, they can be placed on the metal signs and they will be reinstalled at bus stops.

- **RTA RESPONSE:** Riders may report detour issues using
Customer Care Rideline: 504-248-3900
Customer Care Rideline for Hearing Impaired: 504-827-7833

Email: comments@norta.com <<mailto:comments@norta.com>>

Online Customer Feedback [Form](#)

[<https://www.norta.com/help-and-contacts/feedback-and-customer-service>](https://www.norta.com/help-and-contacts/feedback-and-customer-service)

Staff will investigate the appropriate mechanism to keep the public informed of the status of the signage installation project.

Ms. Tompkins - Paratransit is broken - The Paratransit operators will leave the passengers when they are late. It is very important to have an evacuation policy for the Paratransit riders. Paratransit needs to be honest with the riders and let them know if they are going to be late picking-up the passengers.

- **RTA RESPONSE:** We strongly encourage our riders to participate in our IVR (Interactive Voice Response) system. This system will automatically reach out to our customers via phone call to notify them of their appointment time via phone call reminder. Paratransit customers may sign up for this service by contacting our Rideline, Reservationist or Eligibility representatives. Additionally, we are working with other Transit Systems to establish best practice for notifying customers of arrival and or departure after the 5- minute wait for the customer upon arrival.

The RTA supports the City Assisted Evacuation Plan, executed by the City of New Orleans, by providing point-to-point on-call emergency transportation to the Smoothie King Center, the New Orleans Parish Pick-up Point. Once the Mayor issues a mandatory evacuation order, the RTA redirects transportation requests to the Orleans Parish Communication District's 311 number. This plan has been communicated to all paratransit operators who have volunteered to assist with emergency transportation for the 2024 hurricane season.

Anytime that there is a delay in service, we make every attempt possible to have our dispatch staff reach out directly to our customers to notify them of the issues. We are currently in the process of hiring additional dispatchers to assist with this, as well as training supervisor staff to assist when necessary.

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

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to go into Executive Session. The Motion was adopted unanimously.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioners Daniels seconded to come out of Executive Session. The Motion was adopted unanimously.

A motion was made by Daniels, seconded by Cisco and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Absent: Commissioner Sams

BRC Construction Group, LLC versus New Orleans Regional Transit Authority, Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans No.: 2024-0335, Div. "F"- 5

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

[06.25.24 PowerPoint Presentation]

24-064

10. Adjournment

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Neal seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of June 25, 2024. The motion was adjourned unanimously.