



2817 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

## New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

### Meeting Minutes

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Tuesday, October 31, 2023

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, October 31, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Please be advised that all meeting participants will be required to wear masks inside the boardroom due to the recent rise of COVID-19 cases in the City of New Orleans and at the RTA.

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.

#### 1. Call to Order

#### 2. Roll Call

**Commissioners Present:** Commissioner Walton, Commissioner DeFrancesch, Commissioner Ewell, Commissioner LeBeouf, Commissioner Neal and Commissioner Sams

**Commissioner Absent:** Commissioner Raymond

#### 3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to approve the Board Meeting of September 26, 2023. The motion was approved unanimously.

approved

[Board of Commissioners Meeting September 26, 2023]

[23-184](#)

#### 4. Reports

##### A. RTA Chairman's Report

A moment of silence was taken in remembrance of Commissioners Sams mother.

##### B. Operation & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

No Report.

##### C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Walton stated that the Board will get an update from staff on the implementation of Oracle.

##### D. Jefferson Parish Report

Commissioner DeFrancesch gave the Jefferson Parish Report. This report can be found in the Board PowerPoint Presentation for October 31, 2023, under the Jefferson Parish Report.

Commissioner Neal stated that he would like a tour of the new Jefferson Parish Facility once it is completed.

##### E. RTA General Counsel's Report

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

##### F. RTA's Chief Executive Officer's Report

Lona Hankins reported that October was Professional Development Month and various staff participated and completed the following training :

Latinos in Transit Leadership Academy

2023 ENO Transportation Mid-Manager Accelerate Program

WTS Mid-Career Signature Leadership Training

Leadership APTA

USDOT Transportation Safety Institute (hosted in New Orleans)

Lona Hankins reported that Sarah McLaughlin Porteous was named Chief of External Affairs and Ryan Moser was promoted to Chief Asset Management Officer.

Lona Hankins reported that the RTA held a 100 Year Anniversary Block Party for the Perley A. Thomas Streetcars that was well attended by the Community.

Commissioners Neal, Ewell and DeFrancesch stated that this was an amazing event and thanked staff for a wonderful job.

Lona Hankins reported that the RTA Employee of the Month was as follows:

Michael Peabody - Operator

Christopher Richardson - Maintenance  
Floyd Hurts - Administration

#### G. RTA's Chief of Staff Legislative Update

The RTA 2024 Budget Presentation to City Council - November 13, 2023.

#### H. Operations Update

Christopher Clark gave the Operations Update. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated October 3, 2023, under the Operations Update.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Christopher Clark reported that "Game" for Temporary Detours denotes the Pelican and the New Orleans Saints Games.

In response to Commissioner LeBeouf, Lona Hankins reported that the RTA in January started using APC Counters instead of counting passengers by farebox. This APC Counting was an FTA requirement and was accurate and staff does not report passenger counts by farebox anymore. Currently, the staff does not have a year of data for the APC Counting.

#### I. RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report

Commissioner Coulon came to the meeting during this report.

Gizelle Banks gave the RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report. This report can be found in the Board of Commissioners PowerPoint Report dated October 3, 2023, under the Finance Officer's Report.

In response to Commissioner Walton, Gizelle Banks reported that the use of the APC Count was a National Standard and the 30% discrepancy in the farebox count to the APC count was the RTA's difference.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Gizelle Banks reported that during the summer months Sales Tax Revenue was lower than during the holiday season and currently the RTA is 3% under budget. The City of New Orleans Economist have tightened projects for Sales Tax revenue to 9%-10% for this year and the RTA's projected budget for Sales Tax was 6%-7% and staff knew that Sales Tax was going to slow down.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Gizelle Banks reported that Sales Tax Revenue was adjusted for the Budget by months and staff do take into consideration Sales Tax trends.

Commissioner Neal stated that the APC Counter was a Federal Standard and he asked that at the Operations Committee Meeting staff do a presentation on how the APC Counter works on buses and streetcars.

approved

## 5. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to defer Janitorial Services. This item was taken out of the Consent Agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Fred moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt all remaining items in the Consent Agenda. Resolution No. 23-073 was adopted unanimously.

Streetcar Motor Repair Contract

[23-128](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the Streetcar Motor Repair Contract. Resolution No. 23-074 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-074

Change Order for Transit Security Services

[23-153](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to adopt the Change Order for Transit Security Services. Resolution No. 23-075 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 23-075

Janitorial Services Contract-KSM

[23-161](#)

After the Board was informed that a protest was received, Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to defer Janitorial Services Contract-KSM. The motion was deferred unanimously.

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## 6. Authorizations

FY 2024-2025 State Capital Outlay Request: Ferry Capital Program

[23-168](#)

In response to Commissioner Walton, Lona Hankins reported that the RTA was awarded 2 Grants to renovate the Algiers Point Ferry Terminal and the Lower Algiers Maintenance Facility and at the November Board Meeting staff will be asking the Board to approve the Architectural Services Contract for both of these projects Also, the Landing Barge at the Algiers Ferry and Chalmette Ferry on the Algiers side are going to be replaced.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Lona Hankins reported that the RTA spent \$4.6Million of its own money on the Canal Street Ferry Terminal.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Lona Hankins reported that if the State does not give the RTA all of the money that was requested the projects will be prioritized.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to adopt the FY 2024-2025 State Capital Outlay Request: Ferry Capital Program. Resolution No 23-076 was adopted unanimously.

approved

Enactment No: 23-076

Contract to Purchase 8 New Flyer Transit Buses

[23-170](#)

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Lona Hankins reported that the delivery date should be the same time as the 21 buses that were ordered which is March 2024.

Commissioner LeBeouf moved and Commissioner Ewell seconded to adopt the Contract to Purchase 8 New Flyer Transit Buses. Resolution No. 23-077 was adopted unanimously.

approved

Enactment No: 23-077

RTA 2023 Bank Signatures

[23-177](#)

Commissioner Ewell moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to adopt the RTA 2023 Bank Signatures. Resolution No. 23-078 was adopted unanimously.

approved

Enactment No: 23-078

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

None.

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

Alan Drake - There is a mile of unused streetcar track - The Convention Center is sponsoring River District - the RTA can add tracks to service the new River District.

Millie Tanner - Paratransit Service is a valuable service - Paratransit is changing the original times that the passengers are scheduling - buses are arriving outside of the window given to arrive - the routers are sending the buses to the wrong address and some schedule rides are not showing up on the manifest for pickup. She stated that she has sent emails to the Board expressing her concerns.

Barbara Bloodworth - stated that the elderly have to walk 12 blocks to catch a Tulane Bus in Hollygrove - the Airline and Louisiana Buses no longer service her area. It is easier for her to catch a Jefferson Parish Bus instead of the RTA. She asks the RTA if they can put a walkway bridge over the railroad tracks.

Louise Colman - there is a new hospitality app that the RTA can join to show the bus/streetcar schedules and events.

Shirani Jayasuriya - Ride - The current transit system is not working for the riders due to the lack of working buses and the RTA is not providing accurate, reliable information on when buses are taken out of service - riders are constant late for work - riders are getting fired and this is a crisis for the working poor. RTA should provide timely information on service disruption and be transparent - The Board Members should do outreach with Ride to understand the issues.

Kory Dupree - There was an operator that was shot in Sacramento while operating a bus - operators have concerns about their safety. How can the RTA protect the operators while on the vehicles - It is a serious situation when operators pull-up to a stop late and passengers are frustrated - He is glad that the RTA was ordering additional buses.

Commissioner Coulon stated that last month Ride talked about these same issues. He would like to get an answer on how complaints are being handled by staff and how can the Board receive a copy of the resolved complaints.

Commissioner Walton stated that currently there is nothing set-up for the Board to review complaints that have been submitted by the public and he would like the Board to be notified when staff has handled complaints received.

Commissioner LeBeouf would like to know that the complaints submitted to the Board has been responded to by staff.

Commissioner Neal stated that New Flyer Bus Manufacture has a lot of new safety features that the RTA needs to investigate these features for the operators when ordering the new buses.

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

Commissioner Sams moved and Commissioner LeBeouf seconded to approve to go into Executive Session. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

approved

ULU Local 100

Personnel Matters

## **10. Adjournment**

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of October 31, 2023. The meeting was adjourned unanimously.