



2817 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

## **New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Operations & Administration Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes - Draft**

---

**Thursday, December 12, 2024**

**9:00 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 Thursday, December 12, 2024 at 9:00 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 Sams, Commissioner Daniels, Commissioner Guidry

**Other Commissioners Present:** Commissioner Neal and Commissioner Colin

**Present**

Chairperson Timolyn Sams, Commissioner Mitchell Guidry,  
and Commissioner Flozell Daniels

**Absent**

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

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Guidry seconded to approve the minutes of

June 13, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

**Aye:** Chairperson Sams, Commissioner Guidry, and Commissioner Daniels

**Absent:**

[O&A Meeting - June 13, 2024]

[24-137](#)

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

Chairman Neal stated that the RTA is a public agency and excited about the role of providing transit. The Board would like to be transparent, open to the public, listen to the public and work toward making transit better and would like the public to continue to have faith in the agency.

#### **5. Chief Executive Officer's Report**

The CEO read a prepared statement to the Board and to the public. This statement can be found in the Operations and Administration Committee Meeting File.

In response to a question from Commissioner Daniels, the CEO reported that the current software has templates that staff were not trained to use and is not currently using them. The operators are reporting that the routers are scheduling rides from the Eastbank to the Westbank and some manifest has the wrong addresses printed on them.

In response to Commissioner Sams OTP question, the CEO reported that staff was measuring On-Time Performance on the passengers drop off time. The industry standard for On-Time Performance was based on pick-up time. Commissioner Daniels stated that it seems that staff were doing things based on old habits.

Commissioner Sams stated that she would like staff to engage with the public and make sure that staff was doing right by the riders and the CEO agreed and stated that staff need to have a frank conversation with the Council on Aging.

Commissioner Guidry stated that if you purchased a new software for Paratransit staff was looking into 9-12 months of training, would it be better to just upgrade Trapeze. The CEO stated that staff were going to do an RFQ to see what other software's are available.

The CEO stated that staff has gone through the RFQ process and was going to make a recommendation to the Board for a software. Staff were also trying to use the current tools to better Paratransit.

In response to a comment made by Commissioner Colin, the CEO stated that in Michigan they have a concierge system that is great and would like to model the RTA Paratransit System. A former Chairman of APTA has a consultant service that deals with Paratransit and

would like to assist the RTA. It was further stated that an RFP will go out so he can be a competitive bidder.

Commissioner Sams stated that the community must be engaged in the process and Commissioner Daniels stated that staff should also use social media as much as possible. Lona Hankins stated that the RTA was going to start using door knockers to leave with Paratransit passengers to fill out.

The CEO reported that the RTA has partnered with Covenant House to donate items for their clients during the holidays.

## **6. Chief Transit Officer's Report**

Petrina Lewis gave the Chief Transit Officer's Report. This report can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation in the Operations Administration Committee Report.

The CEO reported that the operators are allowed to pick their schedules 3 times a year. Regarding Route 103 some operators was not following the correct schedule and on Route 66 there are no more detours.

Ms. Lewis reported that the dispatchers can see the buses and alert the supervisors when the buses are not following the correct routes. The CEO stated that staff also listen to the customer complaints to better service the routes.

Commissioner Guidry stated that Owl Services had always had its share of issues and the new operators always get these routes. He further stated that On-Time Performance should be monitored on each line and that can help staff identify issues on those routes.

In response to Commissioner Sams question about detours, the CEO reported that staff has regular meetings with DPW and has asked that the City include the RTA in the design phase of the projects.

Commissioner Sams stated that it is unfortunate the City of New Orleans does not communicate with the public like it should.

## **7. Chief Asset Manager Officer's Report**

The Chief Asset Manager presented the monthly report. This report can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation in the Operations Administration Committee Report.

In response to a question from Commissioner Neal regarding paratransit, the CEO stated that once a consultant is brought on board, she was going to ask the consultant what is correct fleet size for Paratransit.

Commissioner Daniels stated that the issues with Paratransit are the fleet size and the number of operators currently working in Paratransit and adding additional personnel will affect the Paratransit Budget.

In response to a question from Commissioner Sams, the Chief Asset Manager reported that roll call directly affects On-Time Performance and vehicles are assigned randomly to bus route. The staff has invested in training for the mechanics.

In response to a question from Commissioner Guidry, the CEO reported that the Vehicle Maintenance Delay was posted for the community to know why a bus was late. The Chief Asset Manager reported that he was going to check on what was Vehicle Maintenance Day.

In response to a question from Commissioner Guidry, Ryan Moser stated that Paratransit vehicles can last between 4-7 years.

## **8. Chief Safety/Security Officer's Report**

The Chief of Safety/Security gave the monthly safety report. This report can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation in the Operations Administration Committee Report.

In response to a question from Commissioner Daniels regarding the unhoused, the Chief of Safety reported that the Transit Police do a wellness check on the homeless that are on the vehicles and at bus stops.

In response to a question from Commissioner Sams regarding accidents, Mike Smith reported that the RTA needs to partner with the Department of Vehicles at the State Level to make drivers aware of the streetcars.

In response to a question from Commissioner Guidry about security, Mike Smith reported that the RTA currently has 3 Transit Officers.

The Chief of Safety reported that there are a total of 6 Labor Participates and 6 Management Participates on the Safety Panel. Currently, if the passengers have any concerns they can go to the operator and/or report issue on the LePass App. The app information has not been advertised to the public. Commissioner Colin stated that this information should be available to the public as soon as possible.

## **9. Authorizations**

Renaming of the Algiers Ferry Terminal

[24-119](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved Commissioner Guidry seconded to rename the Algiers Ferry Terminal. The motion was approved unanimously.

Enactment No: 24-064

## **10. New Business**

None.

## **11. Audience Questions & Comments**

Barbara Major stated that a lot of smoke was being blown at this meeting. The plans need to be implemented for the passengers that ride the system. She further stated that the RTA needs projections regarding the Paratransit Department and the Customer Service Department for Paratransit does not answer the phones.

Barbara Major stated that the Board asked some relevant questions, and having been a previous RTA Board Member, she would not have one person come before the Board and answer all the important questions, the Board should also have the employees that do the job answer the important questions because as a Board Members you want to hear all the different sides because there are things that you don't know.

Ms Major mentioned that her youngest son was on dialysis, and he stated how the passengers are waiting for Paratransit for a very long time. You don't have people waiting in the rain and when passengers needed rides when she was on the Board staff would make sure that they got a ride to their locations.

After Hurricane Katrina Ms. Major stated that everyone came together (Board and Staff) to help rebuild the RTA to provide the correct service. She stated that she does not trust the agency and where was the team when people were waiting in the rain. Today, she stated that the agency does not have the community's best interest and if a paratransit passenger report their issues they are retaliated against. She said that it was rumored that employees are afraid to say anything due to retaliation. Ms. Major said she knows that the agency has issues. The Board gave her a little hope from the questions that were asked. The Board needs to stop taking the word of one person because the Board has the responsibility to reach out to the whole community to find out what is going on at the RTA.

Barbara Major complained that there has been very little transparency. The agency was paying for a lot of consultants and for a lot of training and the Board needed to look into these things.

Courtney Jackson stated that RIDE has signed up 3,144 opportunity youths. The American Rescuer Funds needs to be spent by 2026. The program needs at least 3,000 riders and currently is under 800. There has been a major dip in enrollment. RIDE has gone to 49 locations to sign up riders. RIDE does need support from the RTA to enroll riders for the program. RTA can provide radio spots and advertisements on the shelters.

Having youth ambassadors working with RIDE helps with reaching out to the youth from age 16 to 21 and RIDE is looking into grants to help other riders.

Howard Rodgers, Council on Aging, stated that he was the Chairman of the paratransit Committee that sued the RTA for compliance and his agency has been inundated with calls from paratransit riders that they can't get picked-up on time, no one is answering calls nor returning calls and he is willing to meet with the RTA to discuss these issues. He has been involved with paratransit since the Morial Administration.

## **12. Adjournment**

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Guidry seconded to adjourn the Operations

Administration Committee Meeting dated December 12, 2024. The motion was adopted unanimously.

[12.12.24 Ops PowerPoint]

[24-144](#)