



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 23, 2021

10:00 AM

Via Zoom

The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority does hereby certify that it is unable to hold a commission meeting under regular quorum requirements due to Covid-19. On authority of the Governor under Section 2 of Proclamation Number 84 JBE 2020, the next Commission meeting will be held via telephone and/or video conference on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 10:00 am. All efforts will be made to provide for observation and input by members of the public.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:13 am.

2. Roll Call

A quorum was confirmed.

Present: Chairman Flozell Daniels, Commissioner Fred Neal, Commissioner Mark Raymond, Commissioner Walt Tillery, Commissioner Mostofa Sarwar, Commissioner Laura Bryan, Commissioner Art Walton, and Commissioner Sharon Wegner

Absent:

3. Consideration of Minutes

[January 26, 2021 Board Minutes]

[21-012](#)

This matter was adopted.

4. Reports

A. RTA Chairman's Report

Chairman Daniels commended Yolanda Rodriguez for setting up the Granicus software for the Board's Office.

Chairman Daniels also wanted to extend the Board's assistance to the colleges in the

Texas Transit System from the snow storm that took place in the Texas Region.

New Business: Motion to appoint Lori Bartholomew to RTA's Pension Board

The motion was approved unanimously

B. Committee Reports

Brief reports were given from the Operations & Administration Committee and the Finance Committee. Commissioner Raymond stated that staff was continuing to monitor the effects of COVID-19 on the Budget. Commissioner Neal stated that there was a Safety Report, Operations Report and a report on the New Links given at the Operations Meeting. Commissioner Neal thanked Terri Wright for her help with the Riders Advisory Committee.

C. Jefferson Parish Report

No report was given.

D. RTA General Counsel's Report

No report was given.

RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

Alex Wiggins reported that Transit Personnel 55 and older was eligible for vaccination and the VA was also doing vaccinations along with the City of New Orleans vaccinating the Paratransit Operators and the RTA will continue to work with Ochsner to deliver off-site vaccinations.

Mr. Wiggins also reported that if COVID-19 Numbers continue to decline staff will bring Service Restoration/New Links Implementation during the 3rd quarter of the year. He stated that staff will also introduce an "On Demand Paratransit Pilot Program in New Orleans East. The Federal Government is going to have \$889 Million available for Infrastructure Projects that the RTA can apply for and \$180 Million was also available for Low/No Emission Vehicles. The Transit Essential Day of Action was held on March 2, 2021 and the transit industry lobbied for \$30 Billion to support public transit as a part of President Biden's American Rescue Plan. Mr. Wiggins concluded his report by stating that on February 26, 2021 he participated in a Transit Equity Forum that Chairman Daniels moderated.

F. DBE Report

Keziah Lee stated that RTA's DBE Goal for 2021 was 30% and last year the RTA exceeded its goal by 2% and awarded approximately \$92,000 to DBE/SBE Projects. Also the RTA would like to strengthen its current partnership and implement a metro protégé program and continue to provide oversight to awardees to ensure timely payments to subs and making more use of the B2GNow Program and implement more training for DBE's. The RTA will continue to Publish Notices of Availability of Funding and host networking events.

5. Discussion Items

A. Recognition of RTA Team Members

Tierrani Clark and Erneston Arnold, Transit Supervisors were presented with certificates for assisting fire victims in a New Orleans East fire and the RTA Board thanked them for a job well done. Mr. Wiggins reported that he would like to start acknowledging employees for their hard work.

B. On-Time Performance Presentation

Thomas Stringer report can be found in the Board Meeting File Folder. After the presentation, Mr. Stringer responded to a question from Commissioner Walton. Mr. Stringer reported that the time points for On-Time Performance need to be spaced correctly and that the team was looking at what affects the On-Time Performance on a daily basis. He concluded by saying that On-Time Performance will help the efficiency of the GoMoblie Application.

C. New Links Final Network Plan

New Links Network Redesign Plan - Final
Recommendations

21-015

The final plan was presented to the Board by Sam Buckley, Regional Planning Commission and in March the plan will go before the Operations Committee and then to the full Board for adoption .

Chairman Daniels thanked Samuel Buckley and his team for the final product. Commissioner Wegner stated that the riding public was in favor of the New Links Project. Commissioner Bryan stated that the project connected with the riding public. Commissioner Sarwar and Tillery stated that it was great to have the RTA connect with Jefferson Parish Transit and Chairman Daniels stated that it was very important that the riders have access to health appointments. Alex Wiggins stated that staff would start working on an Fare Integration System.

This Report was referred to the Operations & Administration Committee for their 3/11/2021 meeting.

6. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adopted the Consent Agenda Items. Resolution No. 21-006 was adopted unanimously.

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. Resolution No. 21-006 was approved unanimously.

Agency Wide Work Policies

21-001

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adopt the Agency Wide Work Polices. Resolution No. 21-007 was adopted unanimously.

This Resolution was adopted.

Enactment No: 21-007

Rampart Streetcar Line: Emergency Recovery Project: Amend
AECOM Engineering's Contract

[21-006](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adopt the amended contract with AECOM for the Emergency Recovery Work on the Rampart Streetcar Line. Resolution 21-008 was adopted unanimously.

This Resolution awarded a contract.

Enactment No: 21-008

Bus Remanufactured and Overhauled Engines

[21-008](#)

Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Walton seconded to adopt the contract for Bus Remanufactured and Overhauled Engines. Resolution No. 21-009 was adopted unanimously.

This Resolution awarded a contract.

Enactment No: 21-009

7. Financial Statements - December

Gizelle Banks reported that for the month of December the Operating Revenues were \$5.9 Million compared to the original budget of \$9.4 Million and was under budget by \$3.5 Million. The Hotel/Motel Sales Tax revenue was greater than projected. Operating Expenses for the month was \$7.2 Million and was under budget by \$1.9 Million. The TMSEL Legacy Costs was \$138,00 for the month and \$2 Million for the year. Maritime Expenses ended the year at \$14 Million and \$2.6 Million of the CARES Act money was used for the gap in funding Maritime. Governmental Assistance was \$50 Million and the RTA has drawn down \$37 Million in CARES Act Funding. The RTA has a \$9.3 Million surplus.

8. Procurement Items

None

A. Procurement Status Report

No Report.

9. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

Commissioner Tillery moved and Commissioner Raymond moved to add the Memorandum of Agreement for Closed Point of Dispensing to the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

This was approved.

Memorandum of Agreement for Closed Point of Dispensing
["POD"] Site with Louisiana Department of Health

[21-016](#)

The proposed motion was read into the record.

Commissioner Raymond moved and Commissioner Sarwar seconded to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to the State designating the RTA as a closed Point of Dispensing (POD) site to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine. Resolution No. 21-010 was adopted unanimously.

This Resolution was adopted.

10. Audience Questions and Comments

PLEASE NOTE: Persons wishing to submit public comments must either enter their full name in the chat sections of the Zoom meeting to provide comments during the meeting or email your comments to rtaboard@rtaforward.org to have your comments read aloud at the meeting.

David Shepard, Director of Policy for Youth Sports NOLA supports the New Links Project and wanted to make sure that the young people were supported in this project and had the necessary access to jobs, education and medical appointments. Chairman Daniels stated that the New Links Project would get the younger generation using public transit.

Reverend Bell was no longer at the meeting but did leave his number so someone can contact him. After the meeting, the Board's Office phoned Rev Bell to follow-up. Rev Bell was concerned about a gap in service involving the Barracks bus line and its connection to the St. Claude line for elderly residents living in the Douglas Apartments. Rev Bell explained that prior to Hurricane Katrina, the Barracks bus stopped in front of the apartment complex providing residents with a transfer connection to the St. Claude line. Because the stop no longer exists, Rev Bell stated that residents must walk 5-6 blocks to catch the St. Claude line which is a real challenge for most. The Board's Office informed Rev Bell that the RTA is currently reviewing service on all existing lines and exploring new ways to provide micro-transit or on-demand service for areas experiencing gaps like the one he reported. Rev Bell requested a follow-up to any changes or future decisions involving the Barracks bus line.

Nana Anoa stated that she was also in favor of the New Links Project and she was representing the Living Facility where she resides in the lower 9th Ward and the current bus stop was a five blocks away from the facility and everyone in the facility is not able to make that long walk and at times she has to take an Uber to and from her home to run errands.

April Former placed her concerns in the chat.

Kelsey Foster, Executive Director of the Algiers Economic Development Foundation stated that the buses only run once an hour and service in Algiers is rough and she was in favor of the New Links Project.

Sheila Early, RTA Operator had an issue with the 39 Route being such a long route and was asking if this route would become an Express Route because it is so long the On-Time Performance would be affected. Alex Wiggins stated that he would take a close look at that route.

David Fuselier is a developer in the New Orleans area and he is developing Affordable Housing around the City of New Orleans and he would like to partner with the RTA to make sure there was bus service in the areas of his development and he was also in favor of the New Links Project.

Valerie Jefferson, ATU 1560 was also in favor of the New Links Project to support the connecting of all different parishes with transit. She stated that the St. Charles Streetcars was over crowded with passengers and the RTA needs to look into the St. Charles Line on the weekends. Also the Franklin Line does not have enough running time and the RTA has a meeting once a week regarding service and the Union are not invited. She also thanked Alex Wiggins for making sure the RTA employees can obtain the vaccine.

Samuel Buckley thanked the public for all the positive comments supporting the New Links Project.

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

None.

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Wegner moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of February 23, 2021. Motion moved unanimously.
This was adjourned.