



2817 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

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

### **Meeting Minutes - Draft**

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**Tuesday, May 27, 2025**

**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, May 27, 2025 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 Colin, Commissioner Daniels, Commissioner Guidry, Commissioner Neil, Commissioner Moore and Commissioner Sams

**Commissioner Absent:** Commissioner Walton

#### **3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes From April 22, 2025**

**Present:** Chairperson Fred Neal, Commissioner Timolyn Sams, Commissioner Louis Colin, Commissioner Mitchell Guidry, and Commissioner Mariah Moore

**Absent:** Vice-Chairman Art Walton

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[Board Meeting Minutes 04.22.25]

[25-066](#)

Commissioner Sams moved and Commissioner Daniels moved to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2025. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### 4. Reports

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

Commissioner Neal thanked staff for the job well done and looked forward to hearing about the June schedule change.

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

None.

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

None.

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

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to add BRC Construction Group, LLC v. RTA - CDC No.: 2024-03335 and a Personnel Matter to Executive Session.

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

The monthly Chief Executive Officer's Report was given and can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation for the Board Meeting.

CEO Announcement-Employees of the Month of April

Robin Morris - Streetcar Operator - Operations

John Simmons - Hostler - Maintenance

#### **Agency Updates:**

The CEO stated that CBS aired a story by Michelle Miller regarding the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Streetcars Craftsman. The Mayor was going to have a briefing today regarding Hurricane Season. The RTA will pick up passengers from RTA bus stops and drop them off at the Smoothie King Center.

#### **Intergovernmental Affairs:**

The CEO stated that APTA wanted Transit Agencies to Operate Clean and Safety Transit and there will be grant money available from DOTD and Transit Re-Authorization in 2026.

The CEO stated that Bill HB588 - Cleans up the language around the Advisory

Committee that was created for the RTA.

#### F. Chief Transit Officer's Report

The monthly Chief Transit Officer's Report was given and can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation for the Board Meeting.

The Chief Transit Officer stated that unfortunately, the operators are not waiting for the passengers when they arrive early, most operators leave early. Commissioner Daniels stated that this situation is fixable, and staff should be working on a resolution to this problem and the Board would like to know what is the corrective action plan to this problem. Currently, the operators call and let dispatch know when they are leaving for the next pick-up and are told whether to leave or stay at the current location and wait for the passengers. Commissioner Moore stated that staff are not being trained properly, if the operators choose to leave early and don't understand the hardship this is causing to the passengers. The Chief Transit Officer stated that the operators thought that it was a benefit for the buses to arrive early. Commissioner Moore stated that operator breaks should be built into the operators' schedules.

Commissioner Neal asked if staff could do a demonstration of the Swiftly Software to the Board. A Project Manager will be hired to be on staff, but Swiftly will provide the training to staff. Currently, there is no start date scheduled for the implementation of the software. Each operator picks their own route that they operate every day. Commissioner Moore stated that the operators are picking up the same people daily and should become familiar with their customers.

Staff does not have the On-Time Performance for the quarter and the overall On-Time Performance for the month of June is 77%.

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

The monthly Chief Financial Officer's Report was given and can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation for the Board Meeting.

The CEO stated that she and the Infrastructure Team are looking for Federal Grants and the State of Louisiana does not offer many opportunities for grants and as it relates to Public Private Partnership that would be project specific. Staff were looking into a Public Private Partnership with Bus Shelters. Staff is also looking for a way to generate more revenue for the agency. Also, staff is about to draw down the last of the ARPA Funds that the RTA was using these funds for General Operating. The RTA did meet the Sales Tax Projection from Super Bowl.

### **5. Informational Report: Proposed Service Changes For June 2025**

**This item was considered after the Consent Agenda.**

Summer 2025 Service Change Title VI Analysis

[25-065](#)

**This is an Informational Item.**

This report Summer 2025 Service Change Title VI Analysis can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation for the Board Meeting.

There are times mainly on Friday, Saturday and Sunday when there are not enough buses and not enough operators for certain routes. The RTA needs a total of 32 mechanics to service the system currently the RTA only has 25 which is 78%. To operate the service that goes into effect on June 1, 2025, the RTA needs a total of 11 Red Streetcars and the RTA only have 15, that is 73%. The necessary buses needed to run the service for June 1, 2025, is 82 buses and the RTA has a total of 108 buses and all these numbers roll back to the On-Time Performance of 76%. The RTA has maintenance issues, currently 26 buses are out of service and there are not enough mechanics to maintain the buses. The Board would like to know where staff is going to implement a Workforce Development Plan an Apprentice Program. The RTA will carry these passengers to work on June 1, 2025, and will not have the necessary service available to get them home at 1:00 a.m. some passengers will have to walk at least 15 blocks to get the service they needed to get home.

The RTA has received all the new buses and staff are having issues with the hybrid buses.

#### **At this time the Board went to Audience Questions and Comments**

### **6. Consent Agenda**

#### **The Consent Agenda items were moved and considered before the Summer 2025 Service Change Title VI Analysis**

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. Resolution 25-026 was adopted unanimously.

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

**Aye:** Chairperson Neal, Commissioner Sams, Commissioner Colin, Commissioner Guidry, and Commissioner Moore

**Absent:** Vice-Chairman Walton

Purchase of Paratransit Vehicles [24-126](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to adopt the Purchase of Paratransit Vehicles. Resolution No. 25-027 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 25-027

Change Order for Transit Security Services [25-048](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to a Change Order for Transit Security Services. Resolution No. 25-028 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 25-028

Purchase of Handheld Radios

[25-051](#)

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to adopt the Purchase of Handheld Radios. Resolution No. 25-029 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 25-029

## 7. Authorizations

Various RTA Insurance Coverages 2025-2026

[25-056](#)

Commissioner Sams moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the Various RTA Insurance Coverages 2025-2026. Resolution No. 25-030 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 25-030

## 8. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

None.

## 9. Audience Questions and Comments

Shirani Jayasuriya - Ride has been asking for the RTA External Communication Policy and still has not received this information and the passengers are not getting correct information concerning detours and late buses. The RTA was running a Pilot Program for the Ferry, and this information was not posted on any of the RTA's websites.

Alan Drake - Transit Training for Paratransit Riding - Staff need to train the Paratransit Riders on how to ride Fixed Route.

Lena Ferguson - She asked for Ferry Funding Information.

Xiomara Blanco - Transit Rider by Choice - When she attended the RAC meeting an employee stated that Shirani Jayasuriya called the "dogs out on the RTA" due to all the passengers attending the RAC Meeting. The reopening of the Rampart Streetcar Line was finally addressed at the RAC Meeting, and she voiced her concerns about how there was a lack of communication regarding Rampart route. The Chief External Affairs Officer told her that all the information regarding the Rampart reopening could be found on the RTA's website and when she pulled up the RTA's website there was no information regarding the Rampart Streetcar. She stated that she took a bus and a streetcar to make a valid point at the RAC Meeting. In February RIDE put together useful customer information regarding the transit system that was not taken into consideration by staff and staff have ignored the riders for a

long time.

Commissioner Moore offered an apology on behalf of the RTA to Ms. Blanco and no one at the RTA should talk about any passengers that ride the system, and she is deeply troubled by that experience and all customers should be respected.

Ronald Horn stated that the routes are not managed by the supervisors. The biggest problem with the system is New Links. The system can do without New Links. The Magazine Route was always a 24-hour route. The passengers are going to have to walk 8 to 10 blocks to get to the Tchoupitoulas Route because the Magazine bus will not be running.

Valerie Jefferson invited the Board to the Women Caucus Meeting that will be held in New Orleans on June 20, 2025. The employees of the Operations Department were always out in the field dealing with passengers and the operators.

Paul Davis left the meeting and did not speak.

Commissioner Sams stated that Community Engagement is very important to the agency and the RTA needs to respond to the community and she will ask the necessary questions to staff to help the community understand the system. The Board is going to do better with the community engagement.

Commissioner Moore stated that for too long the Board has heard that the RTA employees were being nasty to passengers and to each other and this internal culture needs to be addressed and that kindness goes a long way and when people choose to use transit that should not be taken lightly. The comments that were made at the RAC meeting were very unacceptable. Management needs to hold staff accountable, and it is uncomfortable to be held accountable.

Commissioner Colin stated that the public has taken time out of their day to come to these meetings and still has not received the necessary answers from staff and he does not want to hear anyone stating that staff is not responding to their questions.

The CEO stated that the Disruption Communication Plan is being worked on by staff and that this plan has two components and that she owns the community a timeline of this plan.

The CEO stated that Route No. 46 was being held up by the City of New Orleans and the signal is being tested by the city.

Commissioner Daniels stated that the CEO should have a staff member taking down all the Action Items needed by the Board and the public. He would like management to hold staff accountable and if they are not going to treat the public with respect they should not be working at this agency. Passengers are losing jobs due to buses not showing up on time. These things are not acceptable to the Board.

The CEO stated that her staff is falling short in a variety of ways and will work better on communicating with the public. The RTA does not have the necessary money for the Ferry.

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[Public Comment Handouts]

[25-070](#)

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

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

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

## **These two (2) items were added to the Executive Session under RTA General Counsel's Report**

### **BRC Construction Group, LC v. RTA - CDC No.: 2024-03335**

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to approve the General Counsel recommendation. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Personnel Matter**

Commissioner Moore moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to approve the General Counsel Recommendation. The motion passed with 5 yeas; 1 abstain and 1 absence.

#### **A. Karen Samuels v. RTA, Civil District Court No.: 2024-4846**

Commissioner Colin moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to accept the recommendation of the RTA General Counsel. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **B. Jose L. Davilafalu v. Regional Transit Authority, et al CDC, Orleans Parish, Docket No. 2020-3623 cc/w 2020-2609 et seq.**

Commissioner Sams moved and Commissioner Moore seconded to accept the recommendation of the RTA General Counsel. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **11. Adjournment**

Commissioner Daniels moved and Commissioner Sams seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of May 27, 2025. The motion was approved unanimously.

[Board Meeting PowerPoint Presentation]

[25-071](#)