



2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

10:00 AM

RTA Board Room

The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Board of Commissioners will hold an in-person public meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 10:00 am. The meeting will begin at the scheduled time but may be delayed until a quorum is present and will be live streamed on the RTA website; masks are optional.

Written public comments on agenda items may be submitted by 1) completing a speaker card on the day of the meeting; 2) email to rtaboard@rtafoward.org prior to the meeting; 3) U.S. mail to RTA, Office of Board Affairs, 2817 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70119. This meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities, and accommodation requests must be made at least 72 hours in advance by contacting the Office of Board Affairs at 504-827-8341 or rtaboard@rtafoward.org.

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Commissioner Guidry, Commissioner Colin, Commissioner Neal and Commissioner Walton

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Daniels, Commissioner Moore and Commissioner Sams

Present: Commissioner Louis Colin, and Commissioner Mitchell Guidry

Absent:

3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Colin moved and Commissioner Guidry seconded to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2026. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

Aye: Neal, Walton, Commissioner Colin, and Commissioner Guidry

Absent: Daniels, Moore, and Sams

[Board Meeting Minutes 01.27.26]

[26-033](#)

4. Informational Reports

A. RTA Chairman's Report

Commissioner Neal stated that the informational reports presented at today's meeting were from the end of FY 2025. The goal of the agency is to have an All-Accessibility System, and the Board is a big proponent for better transit for the City of New Orleans.

B. Operations & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

None.

C. Finance Committee Chairman's Report

Commissioner Walton stated that the items that were approved at the Finance Committee Meeting is being presented under the Consent Agenda.

D. RTA General Counsel's Report

None.

E. RTA Chief Executive Officer's Report

The CEO's Report began with a tribute was given to Freddie Sawyer, the First African American Operator in New Orleans. Councilman Eugene Green along with the Council of the City Of New Orleans gave him a Proclamation honoring him for his accomplishment as the first Black Bus Operator in the New Orleans Transit History. The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority also presented Freddie Sawyer with a Resolution honoring him as the first Black Operator at the Regional Transit Authority.

Commissioner Walton stated that he would like to thank Mr. Sawyer for his success during his service as a bus operator and he overcame many obstacles that were presented to him. Commissioner Colin also commented by stating that he grew up in the 9th Ward and he must have taken the bus with Mr. Sawyer many times when he was younger.

Commissioner Guidry stated that he worked with Mr. Sawyer during his years at the RTA and he remembered a story that Mr. Sawyer told him how the people at the refinery would wait for him and throw rocks at him and the agency had to send police escorts with him to protect him.

Mr. Sawyer thanked everyone for their kind words.

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Guidry seconded to approve the Resolution of Appreciation to Freddie Sawyer. Resolution No. 26-009 was adopted unanimously.

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.

Report Highlights - CEO:

The Employees of the month for January were presented to the Board.

Bus Ridership

The bus ridership has surpassed the 2019 numbers with 11.2M riders. These are unaudited numbers.

Paratransit Update

The RTA will implement a Fare Pilot for riders that want to travel outside the 3/4 Mile radius with a Premium Fare. A Premium Fare will also be assessed for rides going to the Airport and the Ferries. The CEA with Jefferson Parish was never going to be terminated.

All of the following projects are roadmaps used to improve accessibility. The RTA is working on the:

Universal Accessibility Study

Stops Inventory

Streetcar Modernization Study

New Algiers Ferry Terminal will be ADA Accessible

All-Stations Accessibility Grant - will make all streetcars stop accessible

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study

The CFO responded to the Jefferson Parish e-mail and offered to meet with Jefferson Parish to discuss their concerns, and a meeting will be scheduled after the Board Meeting. Jefferson Parish does have a Paratransit System. The RTA and Jefferson Parish would coordinate transportation by using drop-off locations, and the CEA eliminated the drop-offs. Since the CEA the RTA serviced the entire region of Jefferson and Orleans and it is unclear how far Jefferson Parish comes into Orleans Parish.

Jefferson Parish has a smaller system, and RTA system is much larger, and both agencies need to work together on the client's behalf. The RTA staff needs to investigate the changes taking place at the different medical facilities around the different parishes and adjust the schedules accordingly to better assist the clients.

There is a total of 11,000 trips that go outside the 3/4-mile radius. The team would like to see how the new software will assist with scheduling before staff investigate a 3rd party vendor.

Intergovernmental Affairs

Congress passed the FY2026 HUD Appropriations Bill - \$21.1 Billion went to public transit and \$3.3 billion went to Capital Investment Grants - \$390 Million in new grants were awarded

The RTA received \$27.2 Million in funding. This grant money will allow the agency to fund around 6 new buses and make the necessary improvements needed to its facilities. The RTA has received a total of \$200 Million in federal grants. The RTA would like to thank its Federal and State Delegation for their assistance with these grants.

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

During the report it was stated that early arrivals for Paratransit riders do not have an impact on the schedule in a negative way.

Commissioner Guidry commented that during Mardi Gras there were 562 hours lost to late pull-outs, and 660 hours lost due to operators not showing up for work.

Brian Marshall responded that there was a shortage of operators on the night of Endymion and during the Mardi Gras weekend a total of 62 operators didn't come to work. The union and management have agreed to hire more part-time operators to work on weekends and holidays.

G. RTA Chief Financial Officer's Report

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

[December 2025 Financials]

[26-032](#)

5. La DOTD Annual Report by Kevin Lawson, SSO Program Manager

Kevin Lawson - LA DOTD SSO Program Manager reported that the RTA was in complete compliance, and all the necessary information was submitted to the FTA and the RTA was doing a great job regarding safety.

6. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the Consent Agenda. Resolution No. 26-010 was adopted unanimously.

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

Aye: Neal, Walton, Commissioner Colin, and Commissioner Guidry

Absent: Daniels, Moore, and Sams

Adoption of State of Emergency and Disaster Recovery Policy (SAF7) [25-113](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the State of Emergency and Disaster Recovery Policy (SAF7). Resolution No. 26-011 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 26-011

Distracted Driving Policy (SAF 2) Amendment #1 [25-163](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the Award for Vehicle Fluids and Lubricants. Resolution No. 26-013 was adopted unanimously.

Contract Award for Vehicle Fluids and Lubricants [25-174](#)

Enactment No: 26-013

Jury Duty Policy (HR30) Amendment No.1 [26-007](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the Jury Duty Policy (HR30) Amendment No. 1. Resolution No. 26-014 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 26-014

Smoking & Vape Free Workplace Policy (GEN7) Amendment #1 [26-017](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the Smoking & Vape Free Workplace Policy (GEN7) Amendment #1. Resolution No. 26-015 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 26-015

Approval of the 2026 RTA Agency Safety Plan [26-018](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the 2026 RTA Agency Safety Plan. Resolution No. 26-016 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 26-016

RTA1 Drydocking and Maintenance Contract Award [26-020](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the RTA1 Drydocking and Maintenance Contract Award. Resolution No. 26-017 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 26-017

Change Order for Transit Security Services - SEAL

[26-026](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to adopt the Change Order for Transit Security Services - SEAL. Resolution No. 26-018 was adopted unanimously.

Enactment No: 26-018

7. Items Requiring Board Action

Ratification of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) Between the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office (OPSO) for the 2026 Mardi Gras Season

[26-027](#)

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Guidry seconded to Ratify the CEA between the RTA and the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office for the 2026 Mardi Gras Season. Resolution No. 26-019 was adopted unanimously.

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

Aye: Neal, Walton, Commissioner Colin, and Commissioner Guidry

Absent: Daniels, Moore, and Sams

Enactment No: 26-019

8. New Business (UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER)

None.

9. Audience Questions and Comments

Liljose Marie Tompkins - Thanked staff for correcting the issues that Paratransit had. The routing system has become a lot better. She was glad to find out that the RTA was going to continue its relationship with Jefferson Parish. Commissioner Walton thanked staff for addressing the concerns that the riders had.

Shirani Jayasuriya - - RIDE - Commented on the communication failures that took place during Mardi Gras. There was nothing but confusion, inconsistency, lack of timing and accurate communication about detours and riders were left behind by buses that never showed and service changes were never communicated. These issues could have been resolved by simply communicating in real time. The Service Disruption Communication Standard Operation Procedures stated that this would be in place by Mardi Gras and none of these procedures were followed during Mardi Gras. The RTA needs to use every mode of media to communicate the service disruption during Mardi Gras.

After the speaker, the CEO stated that these complaints from RIDE for the first time when

they are presented to the Board the day of the meeting, staff will respond to these complaints .

Courtney Jackson - RIDE - Collation of Quality Transit, would like to meet with the Communication Department, Operations Department, Outreach and Planning, Supervisors and Operators from the RTA. There has been a lack of communication from all modes of transportation and RIDE is in constant contact with the RTA. RIDE sends correspondence along with pictures notifying the RTA of the issues on the routes and nothing has changed for the riders. The riders can't get to jobs or medical appointments on time.

Alan Drake - Paratransit should have a certification process for riders that need to use the system for a limited time of 6 months or less.

10. Executive Session scheduled pursuant to La. Rev. Stat. § 42:17A(2) to discuss the following litigation (2/3RDS VOTE TO CONSIDER):

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to go into Executive Session. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Walton, seconded by Commissioner Colin and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Neal, Walton, Commissioner Colin, and Commissioner Guidry

Absent: Daniels, Moore, and Sams

a. Sharrika Bell vs. Progressive Paloverde Ins. Co. CDC 2023-7711

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to approve the recommendation of General Counsel. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Walton, seconded by Commissioner Colin and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Neal, Walton, Commissioner Colin, and Commissioner Guidry

Absent: Daniels, Moore, and Sams

b. Jennie Green vs. RTA CDC 2023-11837

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Colin seconded to approve the recommendation of General Counsel. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Walton, seconded by Commissioner Colin and approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Neal, Walton, Commissioner Colin, and Commissioner Guidry

Absent: Daniels, Moore, and Sams

[02.24.26 Board Meeting PowerPoint]

26-036

c. Steven A. Manuel vs. RTA CDC 2023-11779

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Guidry seconded to approve the recommendation of General Counsel. The motion was approved unanimously.

11. Adjournment

Commissioner Walton moved and Commissioner Guidry seconded to adjourn the Board of Commissioners Meeting of Tuesday, February 24, 2026. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Walton, seconded by Commissioner Guidry and adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Neal, Walton, Commissioner Colin, and Commissioner Guidry

Absent: Daniels, Moore, and Sams