



2817 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

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

### **Meeting Minutes**

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**Thursday, August 11, 2022**

**9:00 AM**

**RTA Boardroom, 2nd Floor**

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The New Orleans Regional Transit Authority's Board of Commissioners hereby certifies that it will convene a meeting on Thursday, August 11, 2022 in accordance with the provisions of La. R.S. 42:17.1(A)(2)(a)-(c).

#### **1. Call To Order**

#### **2. Roll Call**

**Commissioners Present:** Commissioner Neal, Commissioner Bryan, Commissioner Coulon and Commissioner DeFrancesch

**Other Commissioners Present:** Commissioner Ewell and Commissioner Walton

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

[O&A - July 14, 2022]

[22-125](#)

Commissioner Coulon moved and Commissioner DeFrancesch seconded to approve the meeting minutes of July 14, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

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

Alex Wiggins reported that staff was still tracking the impact of COVID on operations and currently the RTA has 54 employees that are affected by COVID.

Alex Wiggins reported that staff has put out more service on the streets this month than last month.

Alex Wiggins reported that regarding the Bus Rapid Transit Study (BRT) RTA received a lot of feedback from the Westbank community regarding the traffic on the Crescent City Connection and the RTA's goal with BRT was to make traffic flow faster and more reliable and better

service across the area.

Alex Wiggins reported that all feedback from the community will be taken into consideration regarding the BRT Project.

Commissioner Neal stated that the feedback regarding the BRT was great and asked the public to continue to give the RTA the necessary feedback on the project.

Commissioner Bryan state that she hopes that the City of New Orleans was working with the RTA to address any issues regarding the congestive roadways.

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

Gerard Guter reported that Total Ridership for June 2022 was 789,000 riders which was a decrease from the previous two months.

Gerard Guter reported that during the month of June, On-Time Performance for bus was 77% and streetcar 76%.

Gerard Guter reported that during the month of June the highest performing line was Route #45 Lakeview, and the lowest performing line was Route 86 Maurice-Arabi.

Gerard Guter reported that 22 of the 34 Service Routes were affected by Temporary Detours: 64.7% and 2 of the 5 Streetcar Service routes were affected by Temporary Detours: 40% 7 of the 38 Bus and Streetcar Service Routes are affected by Long Term Detours: 18.4%.

Gerard Guter reported that 95% of the System was in service.

Gerard Guter reported that Paratransit On-Time Performance was 85%.

Gerard Guter reported that Boarding Per Revenue Hour for Bus was 11.3, Streetcar 30.02 and Paratransit was 2.04.

Gerard Guter reported that Preventable Accidents for Bus during the month of June was 0.61 and on the streetcar side it was 4.76. Paratransit Preventable Accidents was 0.82.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Gerard Guter stated that the Year to Date metric is available and will be included in the slides.

Commissioner Neal would like to see the numbers regarding the service that the RTA was running on Paratransit in Jefferson Parish.

Gerard Guter reported that the service being ran from Marrero to Ochsner Hospital has been in great demand.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Alex Wiggins reported that the new vehicles on the Paratransit side was having air-conditioning issues and 20 out of the 30 buses was having

issues in the peak of summers.

Alex Wiggins reported that the buses purchased after Hurricane Katrina are now 12 to 13 years old and over 60 buses have exceeded their useful life cycle. In the last three years the RTA has purchased 40 buses and staff has found money to purchase more buses.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Alex Wiggins reported that the manufacture for the buses has been sending technicians to address the issues with the buses.

In response to Commissioner DeFrancesch, Alex Wiggins reported that with the Paratransit Buses the buses had mostly air-conditioning issues and on the fixed route side the issues were electrical to power-train and the impact has been minimal on service.

In response to Commissioner DeFrancesch, Alex Wiggins reported that there has been supply chain issues definitely on the fixed route side.

In response to Commissioner Neal, Gerard Guter reported that ridership increased in April and May from the festivals but the summer drop-off has not been bad and ridership was improving as reliability and On-Time Performance improves.

Commissioner Bryan complimented all the operators that had On-Time Performance for the month of June.

Commissioner Neal stated that staff needs to visit other agencies that are implementing BRT.

## **7. Ferry Operations Report**

Jose Ruiz reported that he was reporting on the Ferry Operations for the month of June.

Jose Ruiz reported that 99% of all scheduled trips were completed.

Jose Ruiz reported that there was a slight decrease in ridership on the Canal Street Ferry but the average passengers per trip for both the Chalmette and the Canal Street Ferry was an average of 19 passengers per trip

### **USCG's Port Condition**

USCG sets four (4) port conditions depending on the expected arrival of sustained gale force winds (39-54 mph/34-47 knots) using a system of port conditions. The port conditions uses specific terms on understanding the port conditions based on the weather characteristics

- 72-hours - Whiskey - Relocate ferry out of service or on stand-by
- 48-hours - XRay - Shutdown ferry service and relocate remaining ferries
- 12-hours - Zulu - The port is closed.

Commissioner Neal stated that once Ferry Service is stopped, please make sure that the necessary Public Service Announcements are sent to the public.

## 8. Public Safety Report

Sgt. Kevin Jackson reported that during the month of July there was only one Part 1 Crime which was an Armed Robbery and the person was apprehended and staff did follow-up with the gentleman that was robbed.

Sgt. Jackson reported that during the month of July there was one Criminal Damage which was a minor criminal damage. The operator attempted to pass a pedestrian that was standing in the middle of the street and the pedestrian became irritated and threw an unknown object at the bus causing the window to shatter and the pedestrian fled the scene and he was unable to be apprehended.

Sgt. Jackson reported that there were 2 Arrests, 23 Calls for Service, 72 Boarding Inspections 17 Interactions with the Transit Homeless, 6 Citations and 16 Written Warnings/Reports to Follow.

Dominique Stewart reported that during the month of July, there were 25 contacts and two referrals with the homeless population. She reported that she has been referring the homeless population to the Salvation Army, New Orleans Mission, the Covenant House and different Mental Health Services for the homeless population.

Alex Wiggins reported that the Board of Commissioners asked staff to create a Crisis Intervention Coordinator to help identify people riding the system that have social challenges, rather than criminal challenges that can be helped with different agencies.

In response with Commissioner Coulon, Dominique Stewart reported that there are times that some take the referrals and others don't want help.

Alex Wiggins reported that the RTA will continue to partner with Social Service Agencies in the Region to help address this challenging problem.

In response to Commissioner DeFrancesch, Dominique Stewart reported that she introduces herself to the individuals and then she does a complete assessment of the individual and collects their necessary information and from her assessment she refer them to the correct agency. She stated that unfortunately, there are limited resources for Mental Health.

Commissioner DeFrancesch stated that she knows this job is a great challenge due to the limited resources.

Commissioner Neal stated that this was a very important job for the agency.

Commissioner Bryan stated that she appreciates the work from the Transit Police.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Sgt. Jackson reported that if the operators need assistance he receives the reports from the Operating Department.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Gerard Guter reported that in an Emergency Situation the Operator has a radio to communicate with, they also have a covert button on the vehicle that they can use to press and talk, or they can call the dispatcher and the dispatcher will alert the Transit Police and if he can't talk, he can go to the code covert and help is on the way.

In response to Commissioner Ewell, Gerard Guter reported that he was willing to discuss with the commissioner a device that could be worn around their neck for faster police response.

## **9. New Links Update**

Dwight Norton reported on the following:

Currently there are 259 Operators for the September 25, 2002, and the total number needed is 280.

A total of 1600 stops will be changed

### **Key Dates:**

8/8-8/11 Run Cut ATU Review

8/12-15 ATU Hangs Rosters

8/15-19 ATU Picks Rosters

### **Signage**

"Stop Closed" Signs Installed

"Route Change" Signs Installed

New Stops Installed\*

### **Hubs**

Interim Downtown Hub - Main Library

Interim N.O. East Hub

### **Rider Tool Development**

Text update subscription RTA Updates to 41411

Le Pass Mobile App

Dual Trip Planner

Batch Trip Planner

### **Messaging**

Internal Messages

Press releases

Social Media

Internal Newsletter

Le Pass Communication

### **Collateral**

Webpage

CleverVision

Print Collateral

New Schedules

New System Map

### **Training**

Rideline Information Training

Rideline Route Training  
Community Engagement Training  
Operator Training Event  
Staff Awareness Event

**Rider Outreach**

Open House Event  
Stop Route Outreach

Commissioner Neal stated that it was very important for the RTA to have a vision and a master plan.

Commissioner Neal stated that he was concerned about the communication strategies for the New Link Project and staff need to take every opportunity to engage the public, talk to riders, to make sure that people fully understand New Links.

Commissioner Neal asked that the Board received weekly updates regarding New Links.

Alex Wiggins reported that staff was finalizing the Marketing and Communication Plan which will begin to launch next week and staff was going to have a huge push, not to only communicate the changes but most importantly discuss the new benefits it would have on service.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Alex Wiggins reported that the agency was deploying Transit Ambassadors in the field to meet the RTA riders at the bus stops around the City.

In response to Commissioner Coulon, Alex Wiggins reported that the Communications Plan will incorporate traditional media, newspaper, print radio, television, along with social media and this push will begin next week.

In response to Commissioner DeFrancesch, Alex Wiggins stated that he was going to do a number of Spotlight Interviews with local media and radio stations and communicate with riders on the ground.

Alex Wiggins reported that at the next Board Meeting he will present the full Communications Package for New Links.

In response to Commissioner Bryan, Dwight Norton reported that the Transit Ambassadors started on Tuesday, and was communicating with riders letting them know about the new mobile app and the new route schedules and the Ambassadors will also board the buses to talk to the passengers on the bus.

## 10. Authorization

Strategic Mobility Plan

[22-122](#)

Alex Wiggins reported that he felt that there was a need to update the Strategic Mobility Plan to prioritize the Capital Projects and he wanted the Board's input

on prioritizing these Capital Projects and by updating the plan it will also give the opportunity to find the necessary funding.

Alex Wiggins reported that he wants to make sure that the RTA has the necessary internal staff to update the plan or rely on outside resources.

Commissioner Neal asked that the plan include the regions of Jefferson and St. Bernard Parishes.

Commissioner Coulon moved, and Commissioner Bryan seconded to approve the Strategic Mobility Plan. The motion was approved unanimously.

Enactment No: 22-60

## **11. New Business**

None.

## **12. Audience Questions & Comments**

Yolanda Rodriguez read the email from Courtney Jackson into the record.

Yolanda Rodriguez stated that the RTA was still recruiting for the Transit Ambassadors and staff will also look into the picture of the homeless person.

## **13. Adjournment**

Commissioner DeFrancesch moved, and Commissioner Bryan seconded to adjourn the Operations and Administration Committee Meeting of August 11, 2022. The motion was approved unanimously.