

**METRO RTA  
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
ROBERT K. PFAFF TRANSIT CENTER BOARD ROOM  
TUESDAY, MAY 31, 2022  
9:00 AM**

**Trustees Present:** Robert DeJournett, Mark Derrig, Vincent Rubino, John Valle, Renee Greene, Donald Christian, Chuck Rector, Gary Spring, Dana LaGarde, David Prentice

**Trustees Absent:** Bob Konstand, Heather Heslop Licata

**METRO Team**

**Members Present:** Dawn Distler, Angela Neeley, Jarrod Hampshire, Shawn Metcalf, Bambi Miller, Molly Becker, DeHavilland McCall, Valerie Shea, Eric Scott

**Guests Present:** None

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Robert DeJournett called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None

**RECOGNITION**

After a hiatus from doing recognitions due to COVID, Ms. Dawn Distler recognized METRO Bus Operator Barbara Cowans, Ms. Cowans retired today with 30 plus years of service. She was thanked for her service by Ms. Distler as well as by the Board, and was given a round of applause by all those present.

**BOARD MINUTES**

Ms. Renee Greene made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 26, 2022 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS & RESOLUTIONS**

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE & SERVICE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Mark Derrig

The committee met on April 26 and KPIs were reviewed. There were two resolutions recommended.

**Resolution 2022-09:** A resolution authorizing the purchase of paratransit (demand response) buses from Coach and Equipment Bus Sales (Page 4)

This resolution authorizes the replacement of up to 44 vehicles that are at the end of their life. The lowest bidder was Coach and Equipment Bus Sales in Penn Yan, New York. The cost is not to exceed \$4,242,000. Delivery is expected for this time next year. A discussion ensued about the specifications of the new buses, specifically the suspension. It was assured the new buses meet METRO's specifications. A federal grant will provide 80% of the cost of the vehicles.

Mr. Derrig made a motion for approval. All those present voted 'yes'. Resolution 2022-09 was unanimously approved.

**Resolution 2022-10:** A resolution authorizing the purchase of a utility truck with snow removal equipment from Valley Truck Center, Cleveland, OH. (Page 6)

This resolution authorizes the purchase of a utility truck with a snow plow and salt spreader, not to exceed \$108,978.00. A state grant will provide 80% of the cost. It was reported METRO has 4 snow trucks and is currently seeking grant money to replace. This is an immediate need, if you buy now, you get it by winter.

Mr. Derrig made a motion for approval. All those present voted 'yes'. Resolution 2022-10 was unanimously approved.

Ms. Distler discussed an added KPI that shows where we are budgeted and where we are currently with Bus Operators. We are currently sitting at 55 to 60 short. This KPI is being put forward so these shortages are on everyone's mind. METRO did not go back to the pre COVID service, not because of lack of finances, but lack of Operators. Operator concerns about weekends, schedules and seniority were discussed. This KPI was put in to get METRO up to budgeted amount of Operators.

## **ASSET PROTECTION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Chuck Rector

The committee met on April 26, and the KPIs were discussed. Health costs slightly increased and training hours dropped slightly but should increase with the electric bus and new hire training.

Injuries increased slightly and miles between preventative accidents were reported. Safety and Security partnered with the EEC for the March EEC Days. Safety and Security collected donations of over 200 gun and trigger locks from multiple agencies which were distributed to all Bus Operators and staff. Donations were received from Bath Police, Akron Police, Summit County Sheriff's Office, Copley Police, Pro Armament, Fin, Feather, and Fur, and Summit Armory. Gun safety locks were offered to Board members.

A Bus Operator Meet & Greet was held, with 22 candidates invited. Fourteen showed up, twelve were invited for interviews and ten were offered and accepted positions. Ms. Distler assured the Board that METRO is not lowering their standards when it comes to hiring.

## **PLANNING / MARKETING / RAIL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Donald Christian

The committee met on April 26 and the KPI's were reviewed. Ridership continued to be up year over year. METRO applied for a discretionary grant for the Ohio Public Transportation Partnership Program and will report if it is granted.

It was reported that METRO is having free fare weekends in June, July and August. Promotional business cards are being handed out. An email was sent to the Board for the June events. Juneteenth buttons were on display for Board Members to see. The Transportation Workers Union had requested METRO do something to recognize Juneteenth, and buttons will be distributed to Operators and passengers. METRO will also do social media posts.

## **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Vincent Rubino

The committee met on April 26, and reviewed the KPIs. Total revenue and sales tax revenue was reported. YTD expenses were favorable

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

## **OFFICERS' REPORT**

### **Board President:**

Mr. DeJournett reported that at the last retreat there was talk of going deeper. On August 5<sup>th</sup> there will be another get together to finish conversations from the previous retreat. Everyone was asked to mark their calendars. Mr. DeJournett thanked those who signed up to go to the APTA Board Members Conference July 30 – August 2. He also thanked those who responded with their preference for committees. Those assignments will be ready by the next meeting.

### **Chief Executive Officer:**

Ms. Distler reported that METRO continues to move forward and look to the future. METRO is having good luck filling the open positions, including the hiring of the new Chief Culture Officer, Tatia Harris. Ms. Harris started last week and the Board can look forward to meeting her at the next Board meeting. Ms. Harris has worked and lived all over the country and was the former Diversity and Inclusion Manager for the City of Knoxville. She worked with the Knoxville Police Department to get kids off the street, including the Save Our Sons program which focused on the community of people of color. She was working to change the culture in Knoxville and it is hoped that she will make good, positive change here. The former Knoxville mayor was one of her references. METRO is hiring an Administrative Coordinator who will be the Board liaison and will be starting next week. An offer has been made for the Senior Planner position with a July 5 start date. An offer will be made for an open Marketing position. Ms. Distler stated she is glad to see people come in because some people are performing the responsibilities of open positions. She reported it is good to hear people say positive things about METRO during the interview process. She asked everyone to mark their calendars for the August 5<sup>th</sup> retreat. The Board was invited to attend METRO's annual

company picnic on Wednesday June 8<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm at the bus garage. It will be catered by the D&M food truck.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business to come before the Board, Mr. Rubino made a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 9:31am.

## **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE**

Pursuant to Section III, Article 3.2 of the Rules & Regulations of the METRO Regional Transit Authority, METRO has complied with the Notice and Notification to the public and news media.

**DATE APPROVED:** June 28, 2022

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**ROBERT E. DEJOURNETT,  
PRESIDENT**

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**DAWN S. DISTLER,  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/  
SECRETARY-TREASURER**