

**METRO RTA  
BOARD MINUTES  
ROBERT K. PFAFF TRANSIT CENTER BOARD ROOM  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021  
9:00 A.M.**

**Trustees Present:** (all via teleconference) Robert DeJournett, Nick Fernandez, Gary Spring, Mark Derrig, Heather Heslop Licata, Renee Greene, Vincent Rubino, Donald Christian, David Prentice, Rupa Gurung

**METRO Team Members Present:** Dawn Distler, Angela Neeley, Bambi Miller, Valerie Shea, Jarrod Hampshire, Molly Becker, DeHavilland McCall, Jay Hunter

**Guests Present:** Dr. Daniel Van Epps, Helen Carroll, Bill Sepe

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. DeJournett called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

In keeping with Governor DeWine's order of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, audience participation is suspended for this meeting. No comments had been conveyed to the CEO by the Friday prior to this meeting.

**RECOGNITION**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. DeJournett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2021 meeting. Mr. Christian made a motion for approval, second by Ms. Greene. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS & RESOLUTIONS**

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE & SERVICE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Mark Derrig

Mr. Derrig reported the Committee reviewed the 3-in-1 construction project and KPIs. Mr. Hampshire briefed the Board on the construction project, which came in \$95,000 under budget. Mr. Hampshire summarized a presentation on a new Maintenance and Operations Facility to the Board that was presented during the committee meeting.

**ASSET PROTECTION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Chuck Rector

Mr. Hunter provided the Committee Report on behalf of Mr. Rector. Mr. Hunter reviewed KPIs for the Safety & Protection Department and the Employee Engagement Center (EEC). Mr. Hunter reiterated that the EEC continues to monitor the rising health care costs and is analyzing its membership with the

Ohio Transit Risk Pool.

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

Chair: Donald Christian

Mr. Christian reported the Committee met and has a Resolution to present to the Board for consideration. Mr. Christian asked Ms. Shea and Ms. Becker to provide a brief overview of their KPIs and department reports. In regards to Rail, Mr. Christian said the Committee responded to Mr. Brubaker via letter yesterday addressing his presentation that was given to the Committee.

Ms. Shea gave an overview on the Resolution being presented to the Board for approval.

Mr. Prentice requested the cost proposal from each company and the process the Selection Committee endured to select the company. Ms. Shea explained the process and provided the costs requested by Mr. Prentice. In response to a follow-up question by Mr. Prentice, Ms. Shea said the cost does not include on-site work; due to COVID-19 most of the analysis will be done through virtual workshops and, if needed, on-site work/in-person visits could be considered this summer as deemed necessary.

**Resolution 2021-08:** Approving the award of a Comprehensive Operational Analysis and Transit Development Plan services contract. Mr. Christian made a motion for approval, second by Mr. Derrig. All those present voted 'yes'. Resolution 2021-08 was unanimously approved.

## **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Nicholas Fernandez

Mr. Prentice gave the Committee report on behalf of Mr. Fernandez. Resolution 2021-09 was presented to the Board for consideration.

**Resolution 2021-09:** Authorizing the transfer of \$6,689,535 from METRO's cash account into the Trust Fund account. Mr. Prentice made a motion for approval, second by Ms. Licata. All those present voted 'yes'. Resolution 2021-09 was unanimously approved.

## **GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Gary Spring

No report.

## **CHAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair: Mark Derrig

No report.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Neeley presented Resolution 2021-10 to the Board for consideration.

**Resolution 2021-10:** Supporting the Akron-Summit County Public Library tax renewal levy. Mr. Derrig made a motion for approval, second by Ms. Greene. All those present voted 'yes'. Resolution 2021-10 was unanimously approved.

## **OFFICERS' REPORT**

**President:** Mr. DeJournett offered get well wishes to Mr. Rector, who is recovering from surgery. New Board Member Rupa Gurung, an appointee from the City of Akron, was introduced to the Board.

Ms. Gurung went through the onboard process last week and Ms. Distler led the orientation. Ms. Gurung is filling the expired term from Mr. Jack Hefner which expires in September 2021. Mr. DeJournett gave his support to METRO's efforts to provide free transportation for COVID-19 vaccinations and to the mass vaccination site at the Summit County Fairgrounds. At last month's Board meeting, Mr. DeJournett put out a request for Committee Chair appointments and spoke to all individuals about their current appointment. Mr. DeJournett emphasized the need for more Board participation at committee meetings and encouraged members to serve on at least two committees. All Board members are invited to committee meetings, even if they are not part of the committee, and serve as a voting member if in attendance.

**Chief Executive Officer:** METRO celebrated Transit Employee Appreciation Day on March 18. Yard signs were posted at all METRO facilities and some bus stops and bus shelters, and snacks were provided for team members of all shifts. Ms. Distler said she and other local executives were asked to testify to the state's Transportation Committee regarding the proposed cut in transit funding. Ms. Distler reported their lobbying efforts were successful; transit funding will stay in place, although not at the same level in last year's proposal, and will help METRO get through some key projects. Ms. Distler and other state transit CEOs also had a virtual meeting with Congressman Sherrod Brown to discuss transit funding on the federal level. Ms. Distler said Congressman is very supportive of transit and METRO, and looks forward to bringing more federal funding to Ohio to support transit projects such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Transit Oriented Development, and a new Maintenance and Operations Facility. METRO was a recipient of a state grant to provide free rides to and from COVID-19 vaccine appointments. METRO will provide a shuttle from the Independence Transit Center that will take passengers to the mass vaccination site at the Fairgrounds. METRO will also help underserved areas in the community to provide direct trips to vaccine appointments, including Joy Park, Summit Lake, and the House of the Lord. Ms. Distler said this service is a prime example of being a partner in the community. The group continues to move forward in investing in service, which started with MLK Day bus service. Ms. Distler said converting the holiday from a limited service to a regular service day was well received by the community. METRO will continue to analyze how bus service is provided on holidays.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. DeJournett asked for a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing negotiations of bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other term and conditions of their employment. Motion by Mr. Christian, second by Ms. Greene. Roll call was conducted, and Mr. DeJournett invited Ms. Distler and Attorney Helen Carroll to join the session. The Board entered Executive Session at 9:34 a.m.

Mr. DeJournett asked for a motion to exit Executive Session. Motion by Mr. Christian, second by Ms. Greene. Roll call was conducted. The Board exited Executive Session at 10:15 a.m.

Mr. Fernandez made a motion to recall the vote of the Fact-Finding report, second by Mr. Christian. Mr. DeJournett conducted a roll call and asked Board members if they accept or reject the Fact-Finding report. Board members who accepted the report were Mr. Prentice, Mr. Rubino, Ms. Greene, Mr. Christian, Mr. Derrig, Mr. Fernandez, and Mr. DeJournett. Mr. Spring rejected the report, and Ms. Gurung abstained. Ms. Licata was not present for the vote. Per the majority vote, the Fact-Finder report presented in December 2020 was accepted by the Board.

Mr. Prentice asked about the status of a court case between a METRO operator and METRO. Ms. Distler said the court upheld the arbitrator's decision. Mr. Prentice asked if further action would be taken by METRO. Ms. Distler stated no. Mr. Prentice also asked about the status of the TWU contract. Ms. Distler said negotiations are still ongoing with TWU.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business to come before the Board, Mr. Christian made a motion to adjourn,

second by Mr. Derrig. The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

**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:** March 30, 2021

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**ROBERT E. DEJOURNETT,  
PRESIDENT**

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