

**METRO RTA
BOARD MINUTES
ROBERT K. PFAFF TRANSIT CENTER BOARD ROOM
TUESDAY, JULY 27, 2021
8:45 A.M.**

Trustees Present: Robert DeJournett, Gary Spring, Chuck Rector, Renee Greene, Vincent Rubino, Donald Christian, Bob Konstand, Mark Derrig (virtual)

Trustees Absent: Nick Fernandez, Heather Heslop Licata, David Prentice, Rupa Gurung

METRO Team

Members Present: Dawn Distler, Angela Neeley, Valerie Shea, Molly Becker, DeHavilland McCall, Jay Hunter, Shawn Metcalf

Guests Present: Wayne Cole, Dr. Daniel Van Epps (virtual)

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. DeJournett called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

RECOGNITION

Mr. Metcalf recognized the following individuals from METRO and the Akron Police Department for their response to the May 18, 2021 incident at the Robert K. Pfaff Transit Center:

- Operations Supervisor Michael Williams
- Operations Supervisor Michael Smith
- Operations Supervisor Eric Clevenger (unable to be present)
- Sergeant Robert Horvath
- Detective Anthony Kelly
- Officer Nicholas Antonucci (unable to be present)

Ms. Distler and Mr. DeJournett commended the individuals for their quick response time and safety efforts surrounding the incident.

SWEARING IN OF METRO BOARD OF TRUSTEES BY THE HONORABLE JUDGE TODD M. MCKENNEY

Mr. Derrig joined the meeting virtually for the swearing in of the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Spring introduced the Honorable Judge Todd M. McKenney from Barberton Municipal Court. The following Board members took an oath of office by Judge McKenney: Robert DeJournett, Gary Spring, Chuck Rector, Renee Greene, Vincent Rubino, Donald Christian, Bob Konstand, and Mark Derrig. As METRO CEO/Secretary-Treasurer, Ms. Distler is permitted to swear in those who were absent (Nick Fernandez, Heather Heslop Licata, David Prentice and Rupa Gurung).

Mr. Derrig left the meeting immediately following the swearing in of the Board of Trustees. He did not participate in the business brought forth before the Board as he was not able to attend in-person. Mr.

Konstand made a motion to ratify all prior actions taken by the METRO Board of Trustees dating back to the Board's origination for the purpose of protecting all Board-approved actions prior to the July 27, 2021 meeting. Second by Mr. Spring. All those present voted 'yes.' The motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. DeJournett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2021 meeting. Ms. Greene made a motion for approval, second by Mr. Rector. The minutes were unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS & RESOLUTIONS

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE & SERVICE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Mark Derrig

Mr. Rubino provided the committee report from the July 21, 2021 meeting on behalf of Mr. Derrig. Mr. Rubino reviewed the KPIs and reported that METRO's first two electric buses are expected arrive in January 2022.

ASSET PROTECTION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Chuck Rector

Mr. Rector reviewed the committee's KPIs and reported the Employee Engagement Center continues to explore other healthcare pools in effort to lower METRO's healthcare costs. METRO remains in the Ohio Transit Risk Pool through the end of the year. Mr. Hunter clarified METRO has the option to stay in OTRP. The OPTA conference will be held in Akron in September. Mr. Rector noted METRO's Transit Police officers will receive body cameras next month and the Safety & Protection Department was awarded a grant to purchase body armor. Mr. Rector commended Mr. Metcalf for researching funding for products and/or services that are needed.

Ms. Distler swore in METRO Transit Police Officer Ms. Dietra Goggins. Ms. Goggins, a Summit County Sheriff Deputy, has worked at the RKP Transit Center for six years and has been with the Sheriff's office for 30 years.

Ms. Distler commended Chief Metcalf for seeking out and hiring two of the best officers to represent METRO and the community. Mr. DeJournett echoed Ms. Distler and welcomed Ms. Goggins.

PLANNING / MARKETING / RAIL COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Donald Christian

Mr. Christian reported the committee met and there are no resolutions to be submitted to the Board. Mr. Christian asked Ms. Shea and Ms. Becker to give a brief summary on their reports. Ms. Shea reported on Independence Day ridership – on July 4, METRO recorded 66% of the average ridership compared to a Sunday in June and on 75% of the average ridership compared to a Monday in June on July 5. Ms. Shea gave a brief presentation update on the Strategic Plan. Ms. Becker noted marketing updates are reflected in the minutes. Mr. Christian asked Ms. Shea about rail and Ms. Shea said METRO continues to have conversations regarding all rail lines.

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Nicholas Fernandez

Ms. Neeley provided the committee report on behalf of Mr. Fernandez at the request of Mr. DeJournett. Ms. Neeley summarized the four issues that were brought up in the audit review. Ms. Neeley introduced

the resolution for consideration to the Board.

Resolution 2021-13: Authorizing a one-year extension of the maintenance and support agreement through Avail Technologies, Inc. Mr. Konstand made a motion for approval, second by Mr. Christian. All those present voted 'yes.' Resolution 2021-13 was unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Two resolutions approved at the April Board of Trustees were numbered incorrectly – Resolution 2020-09 and Resolution 2020-10. Those resolutions have been renumbered correctly (Resolution 2020-09 → 2020-11 and Resolution 2020-10 → 2021-12). Numbering resumes with the resolution brought forward by the Finance & Audit Committee, Resolution 2021-13.

OFFICERS' REPORT

President: Mr. DeJournett reiterated to the Board that attendance at committee meetings is much needed. Board members appointed to a committee must be in-person to participate and take action in meetings. Committee [meetings] are open to all board members. If you cannot make a meeting, you can observe a meeting by calling in or logging into Zoom. APTA is opening up for in-person conferences; the Board retreat and conference is scheduled for October 3-5 in Philadelphia. Mr. DeJournett encourages those who are comfortable traveling and available to attend the conference. Mr. DeJournett attended the conference the last few years and learned a lot about what other transit boards are doing across North America. Those interested in attending should contact Ms. Distler.

Chief Executive Officer: Ms. Distler discussed Independence Day ridership. The numbers proved there is a need surrounding what our community has been asking for [holiday service] and we need to make sure we meet that need and listen to our community. Ms. Distler discussed the unfortunate situation involving METRO and TWU president Mr. Rick Speelman. Mr. Speelman was terminated and filed a grievance against METRO, which was brought to an arbitrator by TWU. METRO worked through the process with its attorneys and the arbitration ruling denied Mr. Speelman's grievance in its entirety. Mr. Speelman will not return to METRO. Ms. Distler noted the process has been very tumultuous; METRO's leadership has been through a lot of pain and fear, yet the group stood together as a team and as a family. Ms. Distler recognizes that it was a difficult decision for the Board to bring in outside legal help to go through the arbitration process, but the finding shows it was the right thing to do. Ms. Distler said it is never a good thing to terminate someone, but she believes it was the best thing for this organization. Wayne Cole, an Executive Board Union Representative, was introduced to the Board. Ms. Distler said Mr. Cole stands for his union and told Mr. Cole that she is willing and ready to move forward to work with him, and as a union, and work together to build trust and confidence in METRO. Ms. Distler gave Mr. Cole her commitment. Mr. Cole stated his appreciation and looks forward to working together as a team.

Mr. DeJournett said the arbitration report is available for the Board to review if they wish. Union or non-union, Mr. DeJournett said everyone needs to work together. METRO has a responsibility to provide transit service to the community. Mr. DeJournett thanked the Board for their support, their time and commitment.

Mr. Rector asked if Mr. Speelman is still president of TWU. Ms. Distler said she is meeting with METRO's attorneys this afternoon to discuss steps moving forward and Mr. Cole will speak with the International Union leaders to understand the union bylaws. Mr. Christian asked if a special election will be held. Mr. Cole explained his and his colleagues' positions on the Executive Board and the election/special election process.

Mr. Konstand encouraged METRO to meet with the newly appointed leaders once new appointments and/or a special election takes place. Ms. Distler ensured Mr. Konstand that METRO plans on reinstating their regular labor management meetings and is hopeful for better, open, and professional communication moving forward.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, Mr. Rector made a motion to adjourn, second by Mr. Spring.

The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 9:55 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: August 31, 2021

**ROBERT E. DEJOURNETT,
PRESIDENT**

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