

BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SOUTHWEST OHIO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF: Regular Meeting of the SORTA Board of Trustees

DATE: Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 9:00 a.m.  
SORTA/Metro Mt. Adams Board Room  
602 Main Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

**BOARD MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:** Jason Dunn, Maurice Brown, Ron Mosby, Jack Painter, Ken Reed, Karl Schultz, Daniel St. Charles, Brad Thomas

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Brendon Cull, Gregg Hothem, Kreg Keesee, Mary Miller, Gwen Robinson

**STAFF MEMBERS:** Dwight Ferrell, Donna Adkins, Matt Conover, Michelle Cantor, Bill Desmond, Butch Gaut, Paul Grether, Jennifer Haines, Darryl Haley, Sallie Hilvers, Brandy Jones, Olivia Jones, Mary Moning, Wright Parkes, John Ravasio, Alan Solomon, Randy Weaver, Mike Weil

**OTHERS:** Nick Sunyak, City of Cincinnati; Troy Miller, Reco Owens, & Inga McGlothlin, ATU Local 627; Multiple Members from ATU Local 627; Chris Wetterich, Business Courier; Tana Weingartner, WXU; Lisa Bernard-Kuhn, WCPO Digital; Joe Curry, Everybody Rides Metro

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Dunn, SORTA Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

**PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 20, 2015, REGULAR MINUTES**

Mr. Thomas made a motion that the minutes of the October 20, 2015, regular meeting be approved as previously mailed, and Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. By voice vote, the Board approved the minutes.

**HEARINGS FROM CITIZENS**

Mr. Dunn asked if there were any citizens present who would like to address the Board.

Mr. Miller addressed the Board regarding the labor negotiations and noted frustration. He then notified the Board that on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the union will be taking a vote of no confidence for Metro CEO, Dwight Ferrell. He voiced frustration that Mr. Ferrell, at this point, has not shown up to negotiations.

Ms. Angelique Watson addressed the Board stating that as a 15-year operator for Metro she is concerned about the health care costs for families. She is single and her children are now grown, but she is worried for her co-workers and their increased costs. She then asked the Board why the CEO has yet to show up for negotiations.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS****FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Mr. Mosby reported on the Finance Committee meeting held on Thursday, November 12, 2015.

Mr. Ferrell updated the Board on capital and operating costs for the coming years, stressing that funding and revenue is not growing, but costs continue to rise. This is not financially sustainable long term.

Mr. Mosby then proposed the following resolutions to the Board for approval:

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-29: Approval of Contract for Health Insurance**

Mr. Mosby moved for adoption, and Mr. Painter seconded the motion. SORTA's current healthcare contract expires December 31, 2015. SORTA's broker HORAN conducted a full market bid requesting both fully insured and self-insured quotes. SORTA staff and HORAN reviewed the options and recommends the Board approve the proposal of Humana Health Insurance for a one (1) year policy at a total cost not to exceed \$11,330,000.

By roll call vote, the Board approved Resolution No. 2015-29.

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-30: Approval of Contract for Dental Insurance**

Mr. Mosby moved for adoption, and Mr. Reed seconded the motion. Since 1994 and 1997 respectively, SORTA has contracted with CIGNA and Dental Care Plus to provide contractual dental insurance coverage for all employees. The current dental contracts expire December 31, 2015. Dental Care Plus agreed to no increase in premium for 2016. The CIGNA dental plan held a rate guarantee through December 31, 2016. HORAN and SORTA staff recommends that the Board renew the contracts with Dental Care Plus and CIGNA for 2016 coverage at a total cost not to exceed \$385,500.

By roll call vote, the Board approved Resolution No. 2015-30.

**Planning and Operations Committee**

Mr. Thomas reported on the Planning and Operations Committee meeting held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015, and proposed the following resolutions to the Board for approval:

**Proposed Motion: Approval of OKI Appointment**

Mr. Reed moved for adoption and Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. This motion appoints Dwight Ferrell as SORTA's representative to the OKI Board of Trustees and Darryl Haley as the alternate.

By voice vote, the Board approved the Motion.

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-31: Approval of Service Contract with Warren County**

Mr. Thomas moved for adoption, and Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. Metro operates Route 71X Kings Island Express Route and the 71 Kings Island Job Connection Route into Warren County. Metro operates nine (9) a.m. express trips and eight (8) p.m. reverse commute service from Warren County to downtown. There are also two (2) a.m. and two (2) p.m. trips designed to bring commuters from downtown to Warren County. For the period of January 1, 2016, through December 31, 2016, Warren County shall pay SORTA an amount equal to 50% of its 5307 federal funding for the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2016.

By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2015-31.

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-32: Approval of Revenue Contract with Duke Energy**

Mr. Thomas moved for adoption, and Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. In 2002, SORTA negotiated a contract with Duke Energy for Route 85 to serve Duke's parking lot on Mehring Way. Duke pays the cost for their employees to ride. Estimate for 2016 is \$100,000. Atrium One also subsidizes Route 85 and will pay \$132,000 in 2016. SORTA's net operating cost for Route 85 in 2016 is expected to be about \$190,000 after subsidies and fare.

By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2015-32.

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-33: Approval of Advertising Policy**

Mr. Thomas moved for adoption, and Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. On December 14, 1998, the SORTA Board adopted an Advertising policy. Staff recommends that the Board adopt a revised advertising policy to include the streetcar and streetcar shelters.

By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2015-33.

Mr. Dunn asked if anyone else would like to address the Board since many arrived past the time when the Board opened up for public comment.

Mr. Dan Reynolds addressed the Board noting that he has been a Metro operator for 17 years. He said that he, and many of his colleagues, feel that there is an effort to move on without the current operators. He feels that small buses should be operating and maintained by our current operators and mechanics.

Mr. Dunn then asked Ms. Moning to give a brief update on the strategic plan. Ms. Moning briefed the Board on SORTA's mission, vision, how our current strategic plan is progressing and steps going forward to get a balanced scorecard system.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Mr. Dunn reported on the Executive Committee meeting held on Thursday, November 12, 2015, and proposed the following motion and resolutions to the Board for approval:

**Proposed Motion: Approval of 2016 Board and Committee Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Dunn moved for adoption and Mr. Reed seconded the motion. This motion approves the proposed dates for 2016 Board and Committee meetings.

By voice vote, the Board approved the Motion.

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-34: Approval of Frank H. Bowen, Jr. as a Royal Coachperson**

Mr. Bowen was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees of SORTA on April 25, 2012. Mr. Bowen was a loyal and dedicated board member, and his expertise contributed greatly to the improvement of public transportation. The efforts of Mr. Bowen for public welfare should be recognized.

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-35: Approval of Brennan Grayson as a Royal Coachperson**

Mr. Grayson was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees of SORTA on June 26, 2013. Mr. Grayson was a loyal and dedicated board member, and his expertise contributed greatly to the improvement of public transportation. The efforts of Mr. Grayson for public welfare should be recognized.

**Proposed Resolution No. 2015-36: Approval of Lamont Taylor as a Royal Coachperson**

Mr. Taylor was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees of SORTA on December 9, 2003 and served until October 1, 2006. Mr. Taylor was later reappointed in December 12, 2007 and served until January 20, 2015. Mr. Taylor was a loyal and dedicated board member, and his expertise contributed greatly to the improvement of public transportation. The efforts of Mr. Taylor for public welfare should be recognized.

Mr. Dunn moved for adoption, and Mr. Reed seconded the motion for proposed resolutions 2015-34, 2015-35, and 2015-36.

By roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No's. 2015-34, 2015-35 and 2015-36.

**Ridership Report for September 2015**

Mr. Conover provided the September ridership report and stated that total ridership was 1,486,006 in September and 2.3% below our projections. Local ridership was down 1.1%, express ridership was down 16.7% from projections. Year-to-date ridership for 2015 is down 3.5% or 429,079 rides from our projection. On-time performance was 83.7% for local routes and 78.7% for express routes. Passengers per hour for local routes was 25 passengers per hour and express routes carried 16 passengers per trip. Average fixed ridership for weekday was 61,315, Saturday was 25,604 and Sunday was 19,194. Mr. Conover also presented the September Access ridership report noting total ridership for Access was 7.5% above projections and year-to-date ridership was up 4.3% or 6,495 rides from projections. On-time performance was 94.64% for pickup and drop-off was 92.7% on-time. Passengers per hour was 2.37. Mr. Ferrell briefed the Board on 2016 changes and expectations regarding ridership.

**Financial Report for September 2015**

Mr. Solomon presented the September financial report. Total revenues were unfavorable to budget by \$110,000. Total expenses were favorable to budget by \$153,000. The end result is a net favorable variance of \$43,000 for the month and \$962,000 favorable year to date. Fare revenue is unfavorable to budget by \$119,000. Mr. Solomon then reviewed with the Board the significant contributing factors to these variances.

Mr. Mosby asked if fuel costs are lower, does it typically negatively impact our system. Mr. Ferrell responded that yes it could, but we have a growing population who want to use public transportation as a preferred method of transportation regardless of fuel prices.

Mr. Brown asked where we stand on hiring of operators. Ms. Jones noted we have 30 vacancies for operators and we have 27 in training currently. Mr. Ferrell noted that in 2016 the plan is to increase our operators to 500.

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Curry to give a brief update on Everybody Rides Metro. Mr. Currey noted that ridership is down 10% for 2015. Mr. Curry is suggesting to the Everyone Rides Metro Board that they join Community Shares to reach out for additional funding for 2016. Cash balance is \$208,000. They are able to fully fund the Mayor's hand up initiative program.

**STREETCAR UPDATE**

Mr. Grether provided a streetcar update through October 31<sup>st</sup> including, streetcar delivery schedules, the turnover to Transdev, operations and maintenance planning, a rail activation committee update, fare equipment delivery schedule, wheel truing machine delivery and testing, an update on safety and security certification, proposed advertising and marketing and upcoming activities.

**BOARD UPDATE**

Mr. Ferrell updated the Board on the Metro Futures Task Force, upcoming major projects, the express service change open house, stuff the bus outreach mission, millennial council and employee commendations.

**Labor Committee**

Mr. Reed reported on the Labor Committee meeting held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015, stating that negotiations are continuing.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Reed made a motion that the board go into Executive Session as provided in Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(4), "Preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining session with public employees . . ." and Mr. Mosby seconded the motion.

By roll call vote, the Board approved the motion and went into Executive Session at 9:54 a.m.

Mr. Schultz made a motion that the Board return to regular session and Mr. Thomas seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion and returned to regular session at 10:55 a.m.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business to report.

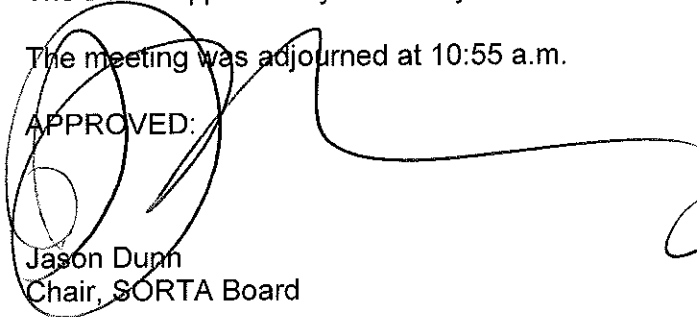
**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the SORTA Board of Trustees is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, 2015, at 9:00 a.m., the SORTA/Metro Board Room, 602 Main Street, Suite 1200, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mr. Schultz made a motion that the meeting be adjourned and Mr. Mosby seconded the motion. The Board approved by motion by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.


The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

APPROVED:

A large, circular handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Jason Dunn".

Jason Dunn  
Chair, SORTA Board

ATTESTED:

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Dwight Ferrell".

Dwight Ferrell  
CEO & General Manager