

**PARTA**  
**PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**April 25, 2024**

**Board Members Present:**

Karen Beck	Mike Lewis, Vice President	Frank Vitale
Jeff Childers	R. T. Mansfield	Stacey Wilson
Debbie Davison	Jack Murphy	Karen Wise
Dave Gynn, President	Janice Simmons-Mortimer	Marvin Woods, TPO

**Board Members Not Present:**

Victor Baerman (1<sup>st</sup> excused absence)                      Virginia Harris (4<sup>th</sup> excused absence)

**Staff Present:**

Claudia Amrhein	Kelly Jurisch	Rebecca Schrader
Marcia Fletcher	Natalie Rothenbuecher, Roetzel & Andress	Brian Trautman
Ashley Forbes		

**Guests in Attendance:**

Shannon Gaines and guest

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Dave Gynn called the April 25, 2024, PARTA Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7 p.m. and thanked everyone for coming. He asked for a roll call, after which it was determined that a **quorum was present**.

Moving on, Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2024, Board meeting. **Mr. Marvin Woods** made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, which was seconded by **Mr. Jack Murphy**. Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he said the **motion to approve the minutes, as presented, passed unanimously.**

**GUEST COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Gynn noted there were two guests in attendance. He asked them to stand and introduce themselves after which he would give them a few minutes to speak to the Board.

Mr. Shannon Gaines introduced himself and said he was an 18-year resident of Portage County living in northern Mantua. He is a blind man trying to support his family and be a productive member of society. He started working at Portage Industries about a year ago. At first, things were good but during the last several months he has been getting denied rides up to three and four times a week and PARTA is his only option. He can't drive, ride a bike, or walk to work. Portage Industries understands how PARTA works but they need him to work full time so that understanding will only go so far. He wanted to make sure that the Board was aware of his situation. He doesn't understand why he doesn't qualify for ADA because he is an American with a disability. He concluded by thanking the Board.

Mr. Gynn thanked Mr. Gaines for coming and informed the Board that he spoke with Mr. Gaines prior to the meeting. He said Mr. Gaines is aware that the Board's responsibility is to pass policies and that specific problems are forwarded on to the appropriate individual at PARTA for them to address. He then asked Ms. Claudia Amrhein to give the General Manager's report.

Mr. Gaines and his guest left the meeting.

### **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

Ms. Amrhein thanked Mr. Gynn and everybody for coming out tonight. She said there were a few policies to go over, which were reviewed by the Administration Committee prior to this meeting. The presentation tonight will be about FORE! Transit, which raises funds to help social service agencies assist their clients with transportation. She drew the Board's attention to President Gynn's invitation to the RubberDucks outing in June. She noted that it was not the night of the Board meeting like the past few years. She said it's likely the June Board meeting will be canceled but it's a little too soon to say.

Mr. Gynn said he expects both the golf outing and RubberDucks outing to have wonderful weather. For the RubberDucks outing, those attending can meet at PARTA and ride the trolley or meet at the ballpark. If anyone would like to attend, they should contact Ms. Kelly Jurisch.

Ms. Amrhein said RSVPs could also be provided to Ms. Marcia Fletcher. There's also a form in the Board packet that can be filled out and returned.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Amrhein and moved on to the committee reports.

### **ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Administration Committee met tonight and he asked Ms. Karen Wise to give her report.

Ms. Wise said the Administration Committee discussed nominations for Board officers and reviewed the two resolutions. The three Board officer positions are President, Vice President, and Temporary Presiding Officer. Those positions are annual, and the new terms begin in July. If anyone was interested in any of the three leadership positions, they should contact Ms. Fletcher, Ms. Amrhein, or Mr. Gynn. This will be brought up again next month. She asked if the Administration Committee would be meeting again in May.

Ms. Amrhein said a meeting of the Administration Committee is normally scheduled in May.

Ms. Wise then moved on to the two resolutions. She said Ms. Jurisch provided a brief presentation and both resolutions were approved for forwarding to the Board. The first resolution was approving three personnel manuals: Exempt, Nonexempt, and Student. Changes to the manuals were the logo, legal language, titles, vacation and sick time caps, and social media language. The second resolution was approving changes to the pay structure for nondrivers, both exempt and nonexempt employees, to accommodate today's market in attracting and keeping talent.

Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Wise for her report and Mr. Jack Murphy and Ms. Stacey Wilson for serving on the committee. He asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he moved on to the Finance Committee report.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Lewis said the Finance Committee met on Tuesday and went through all the reports. For PARTA, Sales Tax Revenues was higher, as expected, at \$69,314 over budget. It trails three months behind with December usually hitting in March. Federal Operating (ARPA) was a little above budget. Everything else was in line. On the expense side, Advertising Fees was \$2,108 over budget due to a purchase for the

fair. For the month, there was a surplus to the budget of \$270,423, which brought YTD to a surplus of \$593,960 to budget. Everything else was strong and in line. Some time was also spent going over the investment Portfolio, which is reviewed every quarter. Half of the investments are in STAR Ohio, which earned about \$15,000 in interest. The other investments are with Fifth Third. All the investments are covered under FDIC insurance posing no risk to PARTA.

Moving on to the Kent Central Gateway (KCG), Mr. Lewis said parking was down a little bit, but should go back up. There's not a lot of activity downtown during January, February, and March. Hotel Overnight Parking was a little under and Monthly Parking Passes was a little over, which balanced out. Contract Maintenance Service was \$13,901 over the budget due to the unforeseen expense of repairing the sprinkler system. Overall, there was a deficit to budget of \$12,412 and a YTD deficit of \$3,847 keeping in mind that the maintenance expense was \$13,000 itself over budget for the month which pretty much accounts for the entire deficit. As previously discussed, with the parking deck getting older, there will be more maintenance issues that pop up, which can't always be planned for.

Ms. Rebecca Schrader added that the grant for the walkway was closed out. She said there was a drawdown for Federal Operating (ARPA) for expenses from January and February. The plan is to have ARPA money through 2028. The entire amount wasn't budgeted for this year but rather budgeted for between four and six months. Then it will start to be drawn down again in 2025.

Mr. Lewis asked if there were any questions on either PARTA or KCG.

Hearing none, Mr. Gynn thanked Mr. Lewis for his report and Mr. Jeff Childers and Ms. Virginia Harris for attending the Finance Committee meeting. He then moved on to the Operations Committee report.

### **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Operations Committee did not meet and moved on to the Personnel Committee report.

### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Personnel Committee did not meet and then moved on to Old Business.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Gynn said there was no Old Business and moved on to New Business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Amrhein presented her PowerPoint on FORE! Transit, which is attached.

Following the presentation, Mr. Gynn moved on to the two resolutions.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2024-04-01.

**#2024-04-01: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AMENDING THREE (3) PERSONNEL POLICY MANUALS TO INCORPORATE VARIOUS POLICY CHANGES MADE OVER THE YEARS AND TO ADD NEW POLICIES RECOMMENDED BY LEGAL COUNSEL TO ADDRESS VARIOUS CURRENT EMPLOYMENT TRENDS.**

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to approve Resolution #2024-04-01.

**Motion: Jack Murphy**

**Second: Stacey Wilson**

Mr. Gynn said the Administration Committee reviewed and discussed this resolution. Changes occur every few years to keep the manuals up to date. He asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Fletcher for a roll call.

<b>Roll Call:</b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>No</u></b>		<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>No</u></b>
Jeff Childers	<u>X</u>	___	Janice Simmons-Mortimer	<u>X</u>	___
Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	___	Stacey Wilson	<u>X</u>	___
R. T. Mansfield	<u>X</u>	___	Jack Murphy	<u>X</u>	___
Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	___	Mike Lewis	<u>X</u>	___
Karen Wise	<u>X</u>	___	Virginia Harris	<b>EXCUSED</b>	___
Victor Baerman	<b>EXCUSED</b>	___	Debbie Davison	<u>X</u>	___
Frank Vitale	<u>X</u>	___	Dave Gynn	<u>X</u>	___

Following roll call, Mr. Gynn said the resolution passed. He then introduced Resolution #2024-04-02.

**#2024-04-02: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AMENDING PAY STRUCTURES FOR EXEMPT AND NONEXEMPT EMPLOYEES TO UPDATE JOB CATEGORIES, PAY GRADE DESIGNATIONS, AND RANGES BASED ON RELEVANT AND CURRENT OCCUPATIONAL WAGE DATA.**

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to approve Resolution #2024-04-02.

**Motion: Karen Beck**

**Second: Debbie Davison**

Mr. Gynn said this was discussed in detail at the Administration Committee meeting. He asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Frank Vitale asked for an explanation of the changes.

Mr. Gynn said this changes the wage range to be competitive when recruiting and retaining good employees. It does not set salaries. It sets the minimum, midpoint, and maximum range within each category. He reiterated that this only pertains to nonunion employees. He then asked Ms. Fletcher for a roll call.

<b>Roll Call:</b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>No</u></b>		<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>No</u></b>
Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	___	Jack Murphy	<u>X</u>	___
R. T. Mansfield	<u>X</u>	___	Victor Baerman	<b>EXCUSED</b>	___
Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	___	Mike Lewis	<u>X</u>	___
Karen Wise	<u>X</u>	___	Virginia Harris	<b>EXCUSED</b>	___
Frank Vitale	<u>X</u>	___	Debbie Davison	<u>X</u>	___
Stacey Wilson	<u>X</u>	___	Jeff Childers	<u>X</u>	___
Janice Simmons-Mortimer	<u>X</u>	___	Dave Gynn	<u>X</u>	___

Following roll call, Mr. Gynn said the resolution passed. He then moved on to the Executive Session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Gynn said there was no need for an Executive Session and asked if there were any other comments.

Ms. Wise said tonight's guest left her wondering procedurally what happens with the guest's stated concern.

Ms. Debbie Davison also asked if he brought his concern to the right place.

Mr. Gynn said a public meeting was a good place to start.

Mr. Brian Trautman said he was aware of this situation because Mr. Gaines wrote a letter to PARTA. Mr. Gaines lives in Mantua and has been using the demand response service. PARTA provides between 1,250 and 1,300 rides on demand response service a week, which is about 250 rides per day. The further out someone lives, the harder it is to provide consistent daily transportation to and from work. It's going to be difficult to address his problem without providing him with something that PARTA is not willing to provide for everyone in the same situation. He's not alone in getting denied. There are denials every day. As more drivers are hired, adding some service to the road may relieve some of these issues. Each person's needs are a little bit different whether it's a dialysis patient, a blind person, or somebody who is elderly. He is going to try to help Mr. Gaines but at the end of the day to say that he's going to be able to set up something for him to get to and from work five days a week would be misleading. He would not be doing the organizational structure any justice by singling that individual out and providing him with something that he's not willing to provide to somebody from Palmyra, Atwater, or Deerfield because every town has someone like him.

Ms. Wise asked if there was anything Mr. Gaines could do at his end.

Mr. Trautman said yes, there is. He needs to contact Job & Family Services (JFS) because they have more resources and can get him in a program that can provide structured transportation, not just through PARTA, even though PARTA has a contract with them. JFS also has contracts with several other transportation providers. He will get Mr. Gaines in contact with the right people at JFS to get him on the right path. PARTA is not the only solution. It's just the only one he knows about.

Ms. Wise asked if the inability to honor his request was because he lives so far away.

Mr. Trautman said it comes down to timing. Everybody wants to go someplace in the morning and go home in the afternoon. There are not a lot of people in Mantua at that time of day trying to go to Ravenna. On the days when there are several people in Mantua who are going towards Ravenna, those are the days Mr. Gaines is getting his trip because it is a shared ride service. Several people in one area requesting that service fits PARTA's design. When there are several people in an area requesting service and one person in another area, the larger group will get the ride and the one person will get denied.

Mr. Lewis pointed out that Mr. Gaines said he didn't see how he couldn't qualify for ADA. He didn't say he didn't understand why PARTA can't get a bus to him. Maybe there is a misunderstanding, and he thinks PARTA is denying his ride because he doesn't qualify. No one is saying they don't believe he's disabled. PARTA is not going to be able to solve everybody's transportation need and some people may not be happy.

Mr. Trautman said he told Mr. Gaines that if he lived  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from one of the fixed routes, he would qualify for complementary ADA transportation service. That means if someone is disabled and can't use the fixed route, their civil right is for PARTA to provide complementary transportation service to that fixed route. ADA does not mean countywide.

Mr. Vitale asked who decided what complementary ADA service was.

Ms. Amrhein said that's the federal definition from the FTA.

Mr. Trautman said those are the rules for complementary ADA service that *PARTA* is given to work with compared to the door-to-door (DART) service, which is open to everybody and is what Mr. Gaines is using.

Ms. Jurisch added that being disabled on DART would give him a reduced fare.

Mr. Trautman agreed that it would give him a reduced fare, but it wouldn't give him preferential transportation.

Mr. Gynn asked Mr. Trautman to contact Mr. Gaines and thank him for coming to the Board meeting.

Mr. Trautman said he would put Mr. Gaines in contact with the right people at JFS and express the Board's appreciation for bringing this to their attention.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing nothing further, Mr. Gynn entertained a motion to adjourn. **Mr. Mike Lewis** made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by **Mr. Jack Murphy**. Mr. Gynn asked all in favor to signify by saying aye. He asked any opposed to signify by saying no. Hearing no opposition, the **motion to adjourn passed unanimously**.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcia Fletcher  
Executive Assistant



1

A photograph of a golf club head and a white golf ball resting on a green lawn under a blue sky with light clouds. The club head is on the left, and the ball is on the right, both in sharp focus against a blurred background of trees and sky.

## What is FORE! Transit?

- PARTA formed FORE! Transit to help meet unmet transportation needs throughout PC.
- FORE! Transit is a nonprofit 501c3 tax exempt organization.

2

## What does FORE! Transit do?

- We hold an annual golf outing to raise funds.
- We use the proceeds to sell full-fare bus passes to social service agencies at half the cost.



3

## How does FORE! Transit help?

- Many local agencies assist their clients by purchasing *PARTA* bus tickets, passes, and trip cards.



4



- Agencies may be limited in what they can afford to purchase.



5



- Each year more than a dozen Portage County non-profit organizations receive grants from PARTA's subsidized fare program to help clients who cannot afford the cost of public transportation.

6

**This allows individuals who do not qualify for traditional reduced fare programs (E&D and Medicare cardholders) to have access to full fare bus passes.**



7



**GOAL: \$10,000**

- **Golfing**
- **Sponsorships**
- **Donations**

8

# 19th Annual Golf Outing

## Friday, May 17, 2024



### Event Details

- 8:30 am Check-in
  - 9:00 am Shotgun start
  - Lunch on the turn
  - 2:00 pm Dinner & Prizes
- Paradise Lake Country Club  
1900 Randolph Rd.  
Mogadore, OH 44260

Golf with a purpose. Support Portage County residents who can least afford public transportation. Golf outing proceeds help provide reduced fare bus passes to low-income clients of local social service organizations.

9



## THANK YOU!



10