

PARTA
PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MINUTES**

March 24, 2022

Board Members Present:

Karen Beck
Marge Bjerregaard
Richard Brockett

Debbie Davison
Dave Gynn, President
Virginia Harris

Jack Murphy
Morgan Tipton
Marvin Woods

Staff Present:

Claudia Amrhein
Denise Baba
Marcia Fletcher

Kelly Jurisch
Justin Markey, Roetzel & Andress

Rebecca Schrader
Brian Trautman

Board Members Not Present:

Jeff Childers (1st excused absence)
Mike Lewis (3rd excused absence)
R. T. Mansfield (1st excused absence)

Frank Vitale (3rd excused absence)
Karen Wise (3rd excused absence)

Guests Present:

David Swirsky, AMATS

CALL TO ORDER

President Dave Gynn welcomed everyone to the March 24, 2022, PARTA Board of Trustees meeting. He called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and asked for a roll call. After roll call, it was determined that a **quorum was participating.**

Mr. Gynn then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 27, 2022, meeting. **Ms. Karen Beck** made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, which was seconded by **Ms. Morgan Tipton**. He asked if there was any discussion or questions. Hearing none, he asked all those in favor to say aye. Any opposed to say no. Hearing no opposition, he said the **motion to approve the minutes, as presented, passed unanimously.**

GUEST COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Gynn asked the one guest in attendance to introduce himself.

Mr. David Swirsky introduced himself and said he was from the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS).

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Moving on, Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Claudia Amrhein if she had anything to add to the General Manager's report that was included in the Board packet.

Ms. Amrhein thanked everyone for coming and said it's good to see everybody again after having skipped last month due to the weather. She pointed out the grant award received of about \$1.5 million was from the very competitive Buses and Bus Facilities Program. She said she knew that PARTA was one of five in Ohio and that the total program awarded only 70 projects across 39 states. It's very competitive and she's thrilled that they awarded the four buses, which really helps with the replacement schedule when planning and talking about buses almost every day. She asked if there were any questions.

Hearing none, Mr. Gynn said the first committee report would be the By-Laws Review Committee. He said Ms. Morgan Tipton was stepping in for Mr. Jeff Childers, who is the chair of that committee and was not attending tonight.

BY-LAWS REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Tipton said the Board received a copy of the revised By-Laws that Ms. Kelly Jurisch and the committee worked hard to complete. She asked if there were any questions or concerns about the revisions.

Mr. Gynn noted that Mr. Justin Markey provided some input as the By-Laws did not have a statement about the Annual Meeting and he suggested a new section be added. He asked for a motion to approve the By-Laws.

Motion: Jack Murphy **Second:** Debbie Davison

Ms. Tipton asked all those in favor to say aye. Any opposed to say no.

Hearing no opposition, Mr. Gynn said the revisions to the By-Laws were approved by a unanimous vote from the Board members present, which represented a majority of the Board. He thanked the Board and noted the minor change on the back page where "amended by" should be changed to 3/22. He said these revisions were going to be presented last month but weren't because of the cancelled meeting. He expressed his appreciation for the committee's diligence and hoped the changes would last for a while.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Tipton to give the report of the Administration Committee.

Ms. Tipton said the Administration Committee met this evening to discuss three points of business - two resolutions that will come up later in the meeting and nominations of Board officers for 2022-2023. She noted that the By-Laws Committee was concerned that the nomination and voting process was overdrawn and taking up too much time in Board meetings. She said instead of nominating officers starting in March, it was decided that officers would be nominated starting in April. As a heads up for next month when nominations open, she noted that currently Mr. Dave Gynn is serving as President, Mr. Mike Lewis is serving as Vice President, and Ms. Karen Wise is serving as the Temporary Presiding Officer. She said they are one-year appointments, which began in July of 2021. If anyone is interested in nominating someone or themselves for any of these three positions, they should send a written note to Ms. Marcia Fletcher to keep the process moving in good order. She asked if there were any questions or concerns. Hearing none, she turned the meeting back over to Mr. Gynn.

Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Tipton for chairing the committee and moved on to the Finance Committee.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Gynn said the Finance Committee met on Tuesday and Mr. Lewis, who is the chair, and Mr. Childers were unable to attend. Serving on the committee was Ms. Virginia Harris, who is a member of the committee; Mr. Marvin Woods, who served as an Alternate; and himself, who served as the Alternate Chair. A complete summary of the minutes was distributed. He pointed out that the January and February

reports were discussed because the last meeting covered the year-end reports. He said January had a Gross Operating Deficit of \$152,317 but by February the Gross Operating Surplus changed to \$94,434 year-to-date. The capital grants are difficult to keep track of, but the bottom line is that the Restricted amount for future capital projects is \$5.9 million.

Moving on to the Kent Central Gateway (KCG), Mr. Gynn said the parking graph showed 2022 was starting out in line with where it was before COVID. The Annual Revenue By Source graph showed monthly parking as the highest source of income. The finance report showed a Gross Operating Surplus of \$3,066 in January and a year-to-date Gross Operating Surplus of \$9,706 in February. To date, for January and February, the Cost Per Car was \$5.71 and the Revenue Per Car was \$5.47, which is close but not unusual for this time of year. The committee also considered Resolution #2022-03-03 to purchase up to seven Turtle Top Light Transit Vehicles (LTVs) and recommended its approval to the Board. He asked if there were any questions for the Finance Committee.

Mr. Richard Brockett said at one time PARTA got a hefty amount of money from the government for COVID. He asked if any of that money was left.

Ms. Amrhein said the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding is beginning to be drawn down, which was the last wave of assistance. About \$5 million will be used to draw down operators' salaries and will be stretched out for three years as a cushion. There is more time to spend it and no fear of it lapsing.

Mr. Brockett said it has become a political issue in that some in Congress are asking why they would vote for more money when the money already approved hasn't been spent.

Ms. Amrhein said typically, once a grant is activated and progress is shown, it's encumbered so it's being spent. The comments about COVID are being heard at the state level, as well as the federal level, so funding could be difficult particularly at the state level. Adding in all the supply chain problems, vehicle issues, and shortages makes it more complicated because the money can't be spent if there aren't enough chassis to build the vehicles that the entire transit industry wants. Those issues are being worked through, which is one of the reasons Resolution #2022-03-03 is on the agenda tonight.

Mr. Gynn said grants also are specific and can't be spent for just anything. The money must be spent for what was specifically approved in the grant. In February, \$93,568 was drawn down from the ARPA grant, which was less than the budgeted amount.

Ms. Rebecca Schrader said that number represents the wages for drivers from January. The amount chosen was the annual budgeted amount for drivers' wages divided by 12. The monthly variance will fluctuate and the plan moving forward is to not necessarily spend all the money that was budgeted this year and to stretch out that grant, if possible, to help with operating for the five-year plan. Going forward, drivers' wages will be less than the monthly budget. Some months have three pay days. For example, the draw down for May will be higher because April has three pay days. The draw down is always from the prior month.

Ms. Amrhein said it could vary as well because, at least for drivers' salaries, if there are unfilled positions or employees leave, they are not being paid. It's another complication in this post-COVID world.

Ms. Jurisch said PARTA has until 2029 to completely draw this grant down.

Mr. Brian Trautman recommended guarding against watching the politics about spending COVID money simply because PARTA couldn't execute and perform all the spending in that short period of time under their guidance even if PARTA wanted to because of the time it takes to write a procurement, accurately execute a procurement, and then turn around and use the money as intended by following the processes to get it and spend it. It couldn't possibly happen as fast as what the politicians are talking about on the news right now. He said it's just not possible.

Ms. Amrhein said the politicians don't write the regulations and don't administer them.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any other questions.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Hearing none, Mr. Gynn said the Operations Committee did not meet.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Personnel Committee did not meet.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Moving on to New Business, Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Jurisch to bring everyone up to date on the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan.

Ms. Jurisch thanked Mr. Gynn and presented her PowerPoint on EEO, which is attached. After her presentation, she asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Tipton asked what Board members could do to support PARTA in its employment goals.

Ms. Jurisch said Board members could tell people about PARTA and its mission.

Ms. Tipton said she noticed a lot of great pamphlets on routes at the Kent Free Library. She doesn't remember seeing one on employment, but she may have just missed it. She asked if employment brochures were available for Board members to take tonight.

Ms. Jurisch said flyers are provided at the Kent Free Library whenever there is a job fair. She didn't have employment brochures tonight, but she would get them.

Mr. Marvin Woods asked if the mechanics had to be diesel or auto.

Mr. Trautman said he would take anyone and make a mechanic out of them.

Ms. Jurisch noted that Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification is not required.

Mr. Trautman said some of the mechanics are ASE certified but it's not a requirement.

Mr. Brockett said top employment was at 242 according to the presentation, which is down to 200 employees now. He asked if 242 was the goal and what positions needed to be filled.

Ms. Jurisch said she'd like to get to 270 employees and the current openings are for drivers, maintenance, and office positions.

Ms. Karen Beck thanked Ms. Jurisch for the good presentation. She said it clarified the issue that so many employers are having.

Continuing, Ms. Jurisch noted that Transit Drivers Appreciation Day (TDAD), which is a nationally recognized holiday for transit drivers, was celebrated this past Friday. She said a continental breakfast was provided for everyone, as well as a cookout at lunch with Mr. Trautman serving as the grill master. She then shared some pictures from the day.

Ms. Amrhein noted that the EEO Plan is full of data, tables, and tracking that is required to be submitted. The last plan that was submitted at the end of 2017 still has not been approved by the FTA. All this work is completed under a deadline and it's still pending for the previous submission, which is extremely frustrating but important.

Ms. Jurisch said the plan itself is about 60 pages, but she provides close to 300 pages of documents.

Mr. Gynn asked if PARTA had any significant EEO findings or complaints.

Ms. Amrhein said employees have the right to file with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, which also typically goes to EEOC, if they have been terminated or leave. She cannot remember PARTA having a finding against it. They've all been dismissed.

Mr. Gynn thanked PARTA for treating its employees so well.

Ms. Amrhein said Ms. Denise Baba is chomping at the bit to get back out and talk to people about PARTA. Hopefully this spring and summer she'll be able to get out more.

Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Amrhein and said there are three resolutions to consider.

Resolutions

Mr. Gynn presented Resolution #2022-03-01.

#2022-03-01: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF APPLICATIONS WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) FOR FY 2023 TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE GRANTS. THESE GRANTS MAY INCLUDE THE OHIO ELDERLY AND DISABLED TRANSIT FARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, THE URBAN TRANSIT PROGRAM, THE OHIO TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (OTP2), AND THE SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (SECTION 5310).

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to adopt the resolution.

Motion: Marvin Woods

Second: Debbie Davison

Mr. Gynn said this is a routine resolution and asked Ms. Amrhein to discuss.

Ms. Amrhein said this is an annual resolution asking for authorization to apply for the state grant funds listed. It's a template requirement to receive formula and competitive grant funds that become available through the State of Ohio.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Fletcher to call the roll.

Roll Call:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Richard Brockett	<u>X</u>	___	Morgan Tipton	<u>X</u>	___
Marge Bjerregaard	<u>X</u>	___	Jack Murphy	<u>X</u>	___
Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	___	Mike Lewis	EXCUSED	
R. T. Mansfield	EXCUSED		Virginia Harris	<u>X</u>	___
Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	___	Debbie Davison	<u>X</u>	___
Karen Wise	EXCUSED		Jeff Childers	EXCUSED	
Frank Vitale	EXCUSED		David Gynn	<u>X</u>	___

Mr. Gynn said the motion passed unanimously.

Moving on, Mr. Gynn presented Resolution #2022-03-02.

#2022-03-02: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF APPLICATIONS WITH THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA), AN OPERATING ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FOR FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED BY 49 U.S.C. CHAPTER 53, TITLE 23, UNITED STATES CODE, AND OTHER FEDERAL STATUTES ADMINISTERED BY THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA).

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to adopt this resolution.

Motion: Marge Bjerregaard

Second: Karen Beck

Mr. Gynn said both resolutions were discussed and approved by the Administration Committee for forwarding to the Board.

Ms. Amrhein said this is the federal version of that same template resolution that is required to apply for formula and competitive grant funds, such as the Buses and Bus Facilities Program grant that was applied for and awarded. This is an annual resolution that is brought forward each fiscal year.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing none, he asked Ms. Fletcher to call the roll.

Roll Call:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Virginia Harris	<u>X</u>	___	Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	___
Debbie Davison	<u>X</u>	___	Karen Wise	EXCUSED	
Jeff Childers	EXCUSED		Frank Vitale	EXCUSED	
Richard Brockett	<u>X</u>	___	Morgan Tipton	<u>X</u>	___
Marge Bjerregaard	<u>X</u>	___	Jack Murphy	<u>X</u>	___
Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	___	Mike Lewis	EXCUSED	
R. T. Mansfield	EXCUSED		David Gynn	<u>X</u>	___

Mr. Gynn said the motion passed unanimously.

Moving on, Mr. Gynn said the final resolution was #2022-03-03.

#2022-03-03: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER, OR HER DESIGNEE, TO PURCHASE UP TO SEVEN (7) TURTLE TOP LIGHT TRANSIT VEHICLES (LTVs) OF WIDE BODY CONSTRUCTION, OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT, AND SPARE PARTS FROM TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT SALES CORPORATION (TESCO).

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to adopt this resolution.

Motion: Debbie Davison

Second: Jack Murphy

Ms. Amrhein said she will give a brief overview and then have Mr. Trautman provide some details. This is coming to the Board earlier than planned and is asking for authorization to place an order for seven LTVs for a not to exceed amount of \$850,000. There is no guarantee that PARTA will get the LTVs even if they are ordered or that the price will stay as it is now. This is moving quickly with many moving parts. Everyone is competing for the same limited number of chassis in a supply chain gutted world. She asked Mr. Trautman to comment.

Mr. Trautman said that pretty much sums it up. Amazon and a few other major retail outlets are buying all the newer chassis vehicles. Ford is telling the cutaway industry, which includes ambulances and LTVs for transit, that they are only going to produce 10,000 to 15,000 chassis per industry. Forest River, the parent company of about five different manufacturers, usually produces about 20,000 vehicles alone each year. Any vehicles on a cutaway type chassis will be fighting for the same vehicles. PARTA has a five-year contract with Turtle Top, which positions PARTA a little bit better to execute some purchases to get ahead of the queue. There's no guarantee right now that PARTA will get them. Dayton is trying to get 75 vehicles. If PARTA can get all seven buses, it will be a minor miracle. If PARTA can get three out of the seven and put the other four on back order, PARTA will still be further ahead than the agencies that haven't ordered anything yet. The emergency medical side will take priority. Even with Ford making 15,000 chassis, there still may only be about 30% of them that make it to transit. The only way to get in front of this is to be in front of it. It will put PARTA in the right spot as it plays out around 2024 and 2025.

Ms. Tipton said she knows that the Board doesn't normally get resolutions like this unless it's \$500,000 or over but she wondered how much money was involved for seven LTVs.

Mr. Trautman said the resolution states a not to exceed amount of \$850,000. The contract should bring the LTVs in at about \$100,000 but the Producer Price Index (PPI) will add about \$5,000. The manufacturer has supplied a letter stating the price increases in the market, and they are willing to offer supporting documentation from all their after-market suppliers showing what their increases have been. The increases will bump those vehicles up to about \$118,000 each. He is not sure that the \$850,000 will end up covering it in the end. There are other elements at play also. Ford usually provides about a \$5,000 knock off on the chassis for government entities. They indicated they will not be doing that next year, which would bump them from \$118,000 to about \$124,000. If PARTA wants the vehicles, it's going to have to pay for them. On the other side, PARTA does a really good job maintaining the vehicles. A conversation took place with ODOT the other day trying to convince them to put together a priority planning session with the rest of the transits, but it didn't grab traction. Some of the smaller transits will be in trouble because they don't have the resources.

Ms. Tipton said given the supply chain problems that are bumping prices up, it wouldn't be prudent to wait because waiting would mean that some of the LTVs that PARTA has now will be beyond their use and then PARTA won't even be in the queue to get what it needs.

Mr. Trautman agreed and said a Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan is put together predicting when vehicles are bought, how long they will last, and when they will be ready for resale. All the transits out there that are trying to replace vehicles but won't get them and will be sitting there with old equipment that they will be trying to replace. It's going to be a long wave of time before everybody can get their fleets caught back up on the other side of this.

Ms. Tipton thanked Mr. Trautman for the explanation and said it was very helpful.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were other questions or comments.

Mr. Murphy asked if a vehicle's useful life span was set in stone...is it generally after so many years it completely falls apart or are they still maintained?

Mr. Trautman said a lot of that comes down to writing specs, but he writes a hard spec with a lot of stainless in it. There are some 2017 vehicles that were bought off state contract, and because he didn't write the spec, there's a lot of steel on the undercarriage that is not stainless. Those vehicles cannot go any longer. As a matter of fact, they're not even making it to their predicted timeline. Vehicles that have the stainless in areas that he knows need it in Ohio can be pushed longer. PARTA almost always runs its vehicles longer.

Hearing no further questions or comments, Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Fletcher to call the roll.

Roll Call:	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jack Murphy	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Mike Lewis	<u>EXCUSED</u>	<u> </u>	R. T. Mansfield	<u>EXCUSED</u>	<u> </u>
Virginia Harris	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Debbie Davison	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	Karen Wise	<u>EXCUSED</u>	<u> </u>
Jeff Childers	<u>EXCUSED</u>	<u> </u>	Frank Vitale	<u>EXCUSED</u>	<u> </u>
Richard Brockett	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	Morgan Tipton	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>
Marge Bjerregaard	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	David Gynn	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>

Mr. Gynn said the motion passed unanimously.

Moving on, Mr. Gynn asked if there were any comments from the staff.

Ms. Jurisch said there is a golf outing coming up on May 20 at Paradise Lake in Mogadore. PPTAFI has petitioned the state for a name change to "FORE! Transit" so that name will start appearing; however, it has not been technically approved yet. She asked golfers to please consider attending; and nongolfers to please consider volunteering. She said an email will be sent out and online registration is available.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any other comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION, as needed

There was no need for an Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcia Fletcher
Executive Assistant