

**Agenda**

1. Call to Order Oral  
Roll Call
2. Meeting Minutes Attachment 2a  
Minutes from July 22, 2021, Meeting (Motion Required)
3. Guest Communications (2-minute limit) Oral
4. General Manager's Report Attachment 4
5. Committee Reports Scheduled to Meet 8/26
  - a. Administration Scheduled to Meet 8/24
  - b. Finance Did Not Meet
  - c. Operations Did Not Meet
  - d. Personnel Did Not Meet
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Resolutions - Roll Call Approval Required  
**#2021-08-01: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AMENDING THE PASSENGER POLICY.**  
**#2021-08-02: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE ADDITION OF TWO (2) POSITIONS TO EXEMPT EMPLOYEE JOB CATEGORIES.**
9. Executive Session (Roll Call Approval Required) for the following purpose:  
  - (3) To confer with an attorney concerning disputes that are the subject of pending or imminent court action in accordance with Section 122.22(G)(3) of the Revised Code.
10. Adjournment

**Next Regular Meeting:**

**September 23, 2021 @ 7 p.m.**  
**IN PERSON**

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

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

**July 22, 2021**

**Board Members Present:**

Karen Beck  
Marge Bjerregaard  
Jeff Childers

David Gynn, President  
R. T. Mansfield  
Morgan Tipton

Frank Vitale  
Marvin Woods

**Staff Present:**

Claudia Amrhein  
Marcia Fletcher  
Kelly Jurisch

Justin Markey, Roetzel & Andress  
Clayton Popik

Rebecca Schrader  
Brian Trautman

**Board Members Not Present:**

Richard Brockett (1<sup>st</sup> excused absence)  
Debbie Davison (1<sup>st</sup> excused absence)  
Virginia Harris (1<sup>st</sup> excused absence)

Mike Lewis (1<sup>st</sup> excused absence)  
Jack Murphy (1<sup>st</sup> excused absence)  
Karen Wise (1<sup>st</sup> excused absence)

**Guests Present:**

None.

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Dave Gynn called the July 22, 2021, *PARTA* Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7 p.m. and thanked everyone for coming. He then asked Ms. Marcia Fletcher to call the roll.

Ms. Fletcher then called the roll, and **a quorum was participating.**

Mr. Gynn said the minutes from the June 24, 2021, meeting were distributed and asked for a motion to accept. Ms. Marge Bjerregaard made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, which was seconded by Ms. Karen Beck. He asked if there was any discussion or questions. Hearing none, he asked all those in favor to signify by saying aye. He asked those who were opposed to signify with the same sign. Hearing no opposition, he said the **motion to approve the minutes, as presented, passed unanimously.**

**GUEST COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Gynn said there were no Guest Communications.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Gynn then asked Ms. Claudia Amrhein to present her report.

Ms. Amrhein thanked Mr. Gynn and expressed appreciation for everyone's efforts to make a quorum tonight. She reported that yesterday payment was received from RLB Phoenix for the third quarter and parking.

Mr. Jeff Childers asked how much was received from RLB Phoenix.

Ms. Amrhein said payment was received for the outstanding amount due for the third quarter rent plus parking. She noted that was the only thing she did not cover in her Board report. She indicated there will be a brief discussion about the Triennial Review by Ms. Kelly Jurisch, who took the lead on this review, later in the meeting.

Mr. Gynn complimented Ms. Amrhein and her staff for having no findings on all 21 items in the Triennial Review. He then moved on to the committee reports.

### **ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Administration Committee did not meet but he would present Ms. Karen Wise's report in her absence. He said the Administration Committee submits the following slate of officers: for President, Dave Gynn; for Vice President, Mike Lewis; and for Temporary Presiding Officer, Karen Wise. If any Board members wish to make any additional nominations, they can do that after New Business before the election of officers. Ms. Wise gave the report at the last meeting and has received no interest from anybody else to either nominate themselves or to nominate anybody else.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Finance Committee met and he asked Mr. Jeff Childers to give the report this month since he served as chair.

Mr. Childers said the committee met on Tuesday, July 20, and discussed *PARTA's* finances, which are doing very well thanks in large part to the administration's efforts and the fact that the federal government has been doling out money and appears to be willing to continue. Starting with revenues, KSU Revenues was down, as expected. Sales Tax Revenues was up, which is a very good thing. Total Expenses were \$717,751 for June while Total Revenues were \$771,037, for a surplus of \$53,286. The Restricted funds total \$3,941,619 to cover local match for several projects – Bus Storage Facility, 4 Diesel Buses, 3 CNG Trolleys, 6 Light Transportation Vehicles (small buses), and almost \$2,400,000 for Future Capital Projects. CARES funds came and went and around \$5 million will be received through ARPA funds.

Moving on to the Kent Central Gateway (KCG), Mr. Childers said for the fourth month in a row parking increased. In June, 7,084 cars parked in the deck, at a Cost Per Car (entry) of \$5.66. The Revenue Per Car (exit) was \$5.40. Year-to-date is showing a profit of \$18,952. The administration spent \$44,000 on pay raises to virtually all employees increasing the hourly rate by \$1.50 to retain employees.

Ms. Amrhein clarified that county drivers received an additional \$1.50 an hour and current employees received a \$500 bonus.

Mr. Childers said the committee considered two (2) resolutions, which were both being recommended to the Board for approval. He thanked Mr. Marvin Woods and Ms. Karen Beck for attending and serving as alternates at the Finance Committee meeting to meet a quorum. He thanked Ms. Rebecca Schrader for her tremendous job in putting the numbers together.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions for Mr. Childers or Ms. Schrader.

Mr. R. T. Mansfield congratulated Ms. Schrader on the Triennial Review.

Ms. Schrader said the Triennial Review was not just finance. It consists of 21 different areas, which will be discussed later. On another matter, *PARTA* had a clean financial audit from the state auditors, which will be presented next month.

Mr. Gynn asked how many years in a row *PARTA* had a clean audit with no findings.

Ms. Schrader said 19 years.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, he thanked Ms. Beck and Mr. Woods for serving as alternates on the Finance Committee. He reiterated that any Board member can attend any committee meeting. He also commended the rapid turnaround of the Finance Committee meeting minutes.

### **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Operations Committee did not meet.

### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Personnel Committee was not scheduled to meet.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Gynn asked if there was any Old Business. Hearing none, he moved on to New Business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Gynn said there were two (2) resolutions under New Business.

#### **Resolutions**

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2021-07-01.

**#2021-07-01: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (*PARTA*) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER, OR HER DESIGNEE, TO NEGOTIATE, ENTER INTO, AND SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH CAVANAUGH BUILDING CORPORATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DRIVER TRAINING PAD.**

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to accept the resolution, which was recommended by the Finance Committee.

**Motion: Morgan Tipton**

**Second: R. T. Mansfield**

Mr. Gynn asked if there was any discussion or if Ms. Amrhein had anything to add.

Ms. Amrhein said *PARTA* went through the process of working with the team of architects and engineers at Bowen to design and bid out the driver training pad. This is the last project in the master plan to complete what was laid out about 11 years ago for building out the campus. This will enable *PARTA* to train drivers to get their CDLs and do their maneuvers on the property rather than across the street at KSU, which has never been a guarantee. They have been generous, but it is good to have it on *PARTA*'s own property. Mr. Brian Trautman can address any specific questions.

Mr. Gynn asked when it is anticipated to be finished.

Mr. Trautman said that is tough to answer. He explained to the Finance Committee that right now supplies are pivotal. The difficult part of this project is the water retention system that goes beneath the concrete. Because *PARTA* has used all its available space for water retention with the pond and the retention basin, an underground water retention filtration system must be put in place below the concrete. This system will capture all the rainwater that hits the surface on the concrete, run it through the filtration

system, and then offshoot it into Potter Creek to the east. He is hoping to see this all done before temperatures drop below 64 degrees. In this situation, he said, there are two (2) construction projects going on at the same time, so space becomes a highly sought-after commodity. His intention is that both projects will be done by the first of the year.

Mr. Mansfield said pound and discharge water collection systems are a great idea. It was used in Brady Lake when the Seven Seventeen Credit Union was built. They have an impounded meter discharge that works beautifully and there were no problems with it whatsoever.

Mr. Trautman said he likes it and it is the first time PARTA has had to use it because it does not have a catch basin to filter out the water. Clean outs were added on both ends to jet the water out down the road. It will be a durable system.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any other 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>
Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	_____	Mike Lewis	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
R. T. Mansfield	<u>X</u>	_____	Virginia Harris	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	_____	Debbie Davison	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
<b>Karen Wise</b>	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>		Jeff Childers	<u>X</u>	_____
Frank Vitale	<u>X</u>	_____	<b>Richard Brockett</b>	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
Morgan Tipton	<u>X</u>	_____	Marge Bjerregaard	<u>X</u>	_____
<b>Jack Murphy</b>	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>		David Gynn	<u>X</u>	_____

Mr. Gynn said the motion passed. He then introduced Resolution #2021-07-02.

**#2021-07-02: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER, OR HER DESIGNEE, TO APPLY FOR FEDERAL CONGESTION MITIGATION/AIR QUALITY FUNDS PROGRAMMED BY THE AKRON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (AMATS) FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2026 TO PURCHASE UP TO THREE (3) CLEAN DIESEL VEHICLES.**

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

**Motion: Marvin Woods**

**Second: Karen Beck**

Mr. Gynn asked if there was any discussion.

Ms. Amrhein said this resolution is asking for authority to apply for grant funding through the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) program to replace three (3) older diesel buses in 2026 with newer clean diesel buses. Going with clean diesel will maintain a balance within the fleet and will score better under CMAQ criteria. There should be other opportunities to apply for CNG. A resolution needs to be included with the application stating that the Board is aware that PARTA is applying and that it is responsible for the 20% match. This will be off the new contract with GILLIG because they're buses instead of trolleys.

Mr. Trautman said the build sheets are being reviewed and everything should be locked in for the next five (5) years on that contract for 35' clean diesel buses with the option to change them over to either CNG or hybrid.

Mr. Gynn asked what the probability was of this grant funding being approved.

Ms. Amrhein said pretty good because this is handled through the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) and PARTA and METRO are the transit authorities applying for funds. Other entities can apply for CMAQ for different projects, but AMATS likes to set aside some for transit.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were other 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>
Marge Bjerregaard	<u>X</u>	_____	Jack Murphy	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	_____	Mike Lewis	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
R. T. Mansfield	<u>X</u>	_____	Virginia Harris	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	_____	Debbie Davison	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
<b>Karen Wise</b>	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>		Jeff Childers	<u>X</u>	_____
Frank Vitale	<u>X</u>	_____	<b>Richard Brockett</b>	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
Morgan Tipton	<u>X</u>	_____	David Gynn	<u>X</u>	_____

Mr. Gynn said the resolution passed. He then moved on to the election of Board Officers.

**Election of Board Officers**

Mr. Gynn said the Administration Committee submits the following slate of officers:

- David Gynn, President
- Mike Lewis, Vice President
- Karen Wise, Temporary Presiding Officer

For the record, officer elections will be conducted via a roll call, voice vote, rather than by written ballot as outlined in the By-Laws Section III. He asked if there was any discussion or objection to going away from what the By-Laws require. Hearing no objections, he called for a single motion to adopt the slate of officers as nominated by the committee and conduct a single election of the slate, rather than the process outlined in the By-Laws.

**Motion: R. T. Mansfield**

**Second: Marge Bjerregaard**

Mr. Childers asked if the nominations should be closed first.

Mr. Gynn said the motion is to close nominations and cast a ballot.

Mr. Justin Markey suggested withdrawing the original motion and then asking for any further nominations first. If there were none, then the nominations could be closed, and the motion made again to approve the slate.

Mr. R. T. Mansfield withdrew the motion and Ms. Marge Bjerregaard withdrew the second.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to close nominations.

**Motion: Karen Beck**

**Second: Marvin Woods**

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

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

Mr. Gynn said the motion passed. The next motion is to accept and elect the slate of officers.

**Motion: R. T. Mansfield**                      **Second: Marge Bjerregaard**

Mr. Gynn asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, he asked 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>
<b>Richard Brockett</b>	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>		Morgan Tipton	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>
Marge Bjerregaard	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>	Jack Murphy	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
Karen Beck	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>	Mike Lewis	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
R. T. Mansfield	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>	Virginia Harris	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
Marvin Woods	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>	Debbie Davison	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>	
<b>Karen Wise</b>	<b><u>EXCUSED</u></b>		Jeff Childers	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>
Frank Vitale	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>	David Gynn	<u>X</u>	<u>    </u>

Mr. Gynn said the slate of officers has been duly elected. He thanked the Board for their vote of confidence and said the officers will continue in their positions, with the new term starting immediately. He reminded everybody about the importance of the work of the committees. He said he is going to email everybody a reminder about the committees and ask them to sign up for which committee they would prefer, indicating first and second choice. He noted that Board members should sign up for committees that they can attend. He said Board members should not sign up for the Finance Committee if they are never able to attend a daytime meeting because that is when they meet. There are four (4) committees with three (3) members each. In the next week or so he will make those committee assignments. If a Board member does not want to be on a committee, they should also let him know.

Ms. Beck said she knows when the Finance Committee meets but not the other committees.

Mr. Gynn said generally, the Administration Committee and the Operations Committee meet at 6:30 p.m. prior to the 7 p.m. Board meeting. If there is a large agenda, the meeting may start at 6 p.m. prior to the Board meeting. The Personnel Committee meets about three (3) times a year at the call of the committee usually in October/November. The primary purpose of the Personnel Committee is to review the progress of the General Manager and, when necessary, to develop a new contract.

Moving on, Mr. Gynn asked Mr. Markey if he had anything to add.

Mr. Markey indicated he had nothing to add.

Mr. Gynn then asked Ms. Jurisch to discuss the Triennial Review.

Ms. Jurisch said triennial reviews are conducted by the FTA every three (3) years. They are policy reviews, not audits. The FTA does not like to call them audits, but essentially that is what it is. There are some areas of the review that they focus more highly on depending on the year. In the past, there has been a high focus on legal, financial management, maintenance, civil rights, Drug Free Workplace, ADA, transit asset management, procurement, and safety. Triennial reviews are all hands-on deck. Senior staff

put in a lot of time into a triennial review. There is no way for anyone to do it alone. The 2020/2021 Triennial Review literally spanned three (3) years. In 2019, she and Ms. Schrader attended a conference in Columbus to learn about what the 2020 Triennial Review would cover. Two (2) days were spent learning about what the FTA wanted in 21 different areas. The nice thing about attending the conference is the opportunity to build a relationship with the auditors. In 2020, notice was received that PARTA had two (2) months to prepare information and submit it to them by January 10, 2020. Due to COVID-19, the review was pushed back. On September 10, 2020, the FTA notified PARTA that all reviews would be conducted remotely, and the review period was extended to cover more in 2020 and specifically up until the remote meeting. PARTA had to be prepared to cover the CARES Act and the new safety plan that was passed. The team spent countless hours preparing for this review not only once but twice. When documentation is submitted to the FTA, it is for what they call a desk review. The 21 areas are categorized and submitted electronically. More than 200 files were submitted electronically through a drop box setting. Some of the files may have been a one-page document like the organizational chart. Other documents might have included a procurement, which was 200+ pages. Literally, thousands of pages of documents were provided. The remote interviews lasted two (2) days - April 19 and 20. The whole week was dedicated to follow up questions. It was wrapped up on May 6 with an exit conference. From there, the lead auditor reached out to her for assistance in preparing the final report, which was included with the Board packet. PARTA is ecstatic about receiving the Achievement of Excellence award from them for this clean review. It was a very daunting process but also a unique one. She said she would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Frank Vitale asked how deficiencies would impact PARTA and if there were cases where PARTA wouldn't agree with a deficiency.

Ms. Jurisch said the deficiencies would have to be corrected in a time frame provided by the FTA. If PARTA failed to correct them, the FTA could technically hold funding. FTA regulations must be followed. It is pretty cut and dried. They look for key words because they do not have time to go through thousands of pages. Preparation is key. Documentation is meticulous at PARTA.

Ms. Schrader said that is why a couple policies were brought to the Board a few months ago that needed to be updated. For example, the one policy she was working on didn't have the actual name of what they were looking for, so it was added.

Mr. Trautman said sometimes the language needs to be in their clarification terms, which is not a problem because Ms. Jurisch and Ms. Amrhein are experts at that. In all his time at PARTA, there has never been anything that PARTA was not doing right. It just may not have been said right. A lot of transits call and ask for information on how PARTA passes.

Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Jurisch for leading the team and the whole team's effort. He said as a Board member, it feels good to be sitting on this side knowing that PARTA is doing everything right. He noted that it is a good refresher for Board members to read through the whole report, which outlines the basic requirements.

Mr. Mansfield thanked Ms. Jurisch for developing such a fluency in bureaucratic speak.

Ms. Morgan Tipton reminded everyone that in the PARTA Press last week, there was a call for Board members and others to volunteer for the Portage County Fair. There is a sign-up sheet in the building.

Ms. Jurisch said yes, there is a sign-up sheet. She thanked Ms. Tipton for bringing that up. She said sign ups can also be done via email to Ms. Denise Baba. Volunteers are provided with a ticket to the fair for the day. She noted that staff members are typically scheduled at the same time as Board members to assist with any questions.



Mr. Gynn said several Board members have volunteered in the past and it is very interesting. He shared a story about someone he met at the fair while volunteering whose mother would not ride the bus until she had no choice. Once she took her scheduled ride on the bus, she could not be happier. She loved the people and would continue to ride the bus.

Ms. Beck commented that she stopped at *PARTA* for the thank you event for employees and it was so nice. She said there were so many ways that employees were being thanked.

Mr. Gynn said *PARTA* is a good place to work. Hearing no other comments, he asked for a motion to adjourn.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Marge Bjerregaard made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Marvin Woods. 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 7:44 p.m.


Respectfully submitted,



Marcia Fletcher  
Executive Assistant

**PARTA**  
**2000 Summit Road**  
**Kent, Ohio 44240**

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

**TO:** PARTA Board of Trustees   
**FROM:** Claudia B. Amrhein, General Manager  
**DATE:** August 2021

**Committee Meetings and Resolutions.** The August meeting agenda includes resolutions to update the Passenger Policy and to amend the authorized positions included in exempt job categories. In addition, we intend to hold an executive session for the purpose stated on this month's agenda.

**The finance committee** will meet on Tuesday August 24, at 11:30 a.m. to review July financial reports. Lunch will be provided.

**The administration committee** will meet on Thursday, August 26, at 6:30 p.m. to review Resolutions #2021-08-01 and -02. As always, all board members are welcome to attend committee meetings.

**#2021-08-01 A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AMENDING THE PASSENGER POLICY.**

**Updating the Passenger Policy.** The Passenger Policy establishes rules and expectations for passengers riding PARTA's fixed route and Dial-A-Ride (DART) services. From the policy, we establish procedures and guidelines to give bus operators and supervisors the tools they need to ensure the comfort and safety of all while riding public transit. We prepared the updates after hearing from drivers at a recent meeting about the increase in cart and stroller usage and conflicting methods for managing passengers who board with multiple bags and things that exceed their ability to control.

After accepted by the board, the revisions will take effect after notice of adoption is published once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in the Record Courier.

**#2021-08-02 A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE ADDITION OF TWO (2) POSITIONS TO EXEMPT EMPLOYEE JOB CATEGORIES.**

Resolution #2021-08-02 recommends the addition of two (2) authorized positions to the exempt job categories table. A memo from Chief of Staff Kelly Jurisch outlining this recommendation is enclosed in this packet.

**Board Committees and Upcoming Meeting Schedule.** President Dave Gynn finalized new standing committee assignments for members and chairs following the July annual meeting. An updated list is included in this packet.

During the August meeting, President Gynn will request volunteers to serve on an ad-hoc committee to review the Board of Trustees By-Laws. This committee will meet as determined by its members and recommend revisions for full board consideration.

In September, President Gynn and I recommend not holding the regular board meeting because we do not have any resolutions to bring forward. In addition, activities are ramping up considerably with the

return of the Portage County Fair, KSU fall semester beginning, and in-person meetings, conferences, and travel resuming in September for the OPTA and OTRP annual meetings.

The finance committee may meet as scheduled and the by-laws review committee may schedule a meeting if the members desire to do so. The meetings must be held in-person, as the ability to conduct public meetings virtually expired on July 1.

**Auditor of State Issues Clean Financial Audit.** I am pleased to report that the Ohio Auditor of State recognized *PARTA*'s excellent financial reporting following successful completion of the 2020 financial audit. This represents the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive clean financial audit. Keeping the numbers straight year after year is a team effort coordinated through Finance Director Rebecca Schrader that relies on every department as well as the Finance Committee's regular monthly oversight.

**Facilities, Maintenance, and Gateway Updates.** Our maintenance team keeps a very busy schedule during summertime. Chief Operating Officer Brian Trautman prepared an overview of some of the work that occurs, much of which happens "behind the scenes" and can go unnoticed but is essential to keep everything running smoothly. The memo from Brian is included in this packet along with some photos of the work and projects he describes.

**Transit Service Update.** KSU campus service resumes next week, and county fixed route service reductions established in June will continue into autumn. Included in this packet is a memo from Planning Director Clayton Popik describing planned service beginning August 22.

**Service Reports. Ridership. (Coronavirus closures began March 2020).** Total county fixed route and DART ridership decreased by 27.92% through July, as compared to July 2020 with total county service performing 106,485 trips as compared to 147,722 trips performed through July 2020.

County fixed route service has decreased by approximately 32.31% as compared to last year, with 83,647 trips completed through July as compared to 123,575 trips completed through July 2020.

DART service has decreased by 5.42% through July as compared to July 2020, with 22,838 trips completed as compared to 24,147 trips completed through July 2020.

Overall ridership, including campus service, decreased by 60.05%, with campus down by 87.14%. Total system ridership totaled 133,019 as compared to 332,932 through July 2020.

**On-Time Compliance. ADA Complementary Paratransit Service.** ADA on-time compliance improved to 96.41% in July as compared to 90.43% in June. Of 697 trips, 25 were performed late, with the latest running 18 minutes behind due to a route schedule.

**General Public (non-ADA) DART.** On-time performance for general public, non-ADA trips remained flat at 86.66% for July, as compared to 85.15% in June 2021.

**Vehicle Preventative Maintenance (PM).** On-time compliance with established PM inspection schedules was 99% in July as compared to 100% in June 2021.

**Parking Deck.** The number of cars utilizing the deck increased by 10% in July as compared to June, and 108% as compared to July 2020, with 7,762 cars in July as compared to 3,730 in July 2020.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. If you have any questions prior to the Board meeting, please feel free to contact me by calling (330) 676-6315, or by e-mail at [Amrhein.c16@partaonline.org](mailto:Amrhein.c16@partaonline.org).

## 2021-2022 PARTA BOARD

### Members

Dave Gynn, President  
Mike Lewis, Vice President  
Karen Wise, Temporary Presiding Officer

Karen Beck  
Marge Bjerregaard  
Richard Brockett  
Jeff Childers  
Debbie Davison  
Virginia Harris  
R. T. Mansfield  
Jack Murphy  
Morgan Tipton  
Frank Vitale  
Marvin Woods

## **BOARD COMMITTEES**

### ADMINISTRATION

Karen Wise – **Chair**  
Jack Murphy  
Morgan Tipton

### FINANCE

Mike Lewis - **Chair**  
Jeff Childers  
Virginia Harris

### OPERATIONS

R.T. Mansfield - **Chair**  
Debbie Davison  
Marvin Woods

### PERSONNEL

Karen Beck – **Chair**  
Marge Bjerregaard  
Dave Gynn

\*\* In accordance with the PARTA By-Laws, the current President shall be an *ex-officio* member of each committee.

**PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
(PARTA)**

**BY-LAWS**

**Board of Trustees**

**I) Location of the Main Office**

The principal office of PARTA shall be located at 2000 Summit Road, Kent, Ohio.

**II) Members**

- A) **Appointment and Qualifications:** Members of the Board of Trustees shall be appointed by the political subdivisions creating the authority, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code §306.30, et seq. and the ordinances or resolutions of the participating political subdivisions, as amended from time to time, and shall serve in accordance therewith.
- B) **Terms:** Members shall serve staggered three (3) year terms beginning July 1 of the year appointed, except that any person appointed to fill a vacancy shall be appointed to only the unexpired term.
- C) **Oath:** As required by Ohio Revised Code §306.33, each member of the Board of Trustees, before entering upon the Trustee's official duties, shall take and subscribe to an oath or affirmation that the Trustee will honestly, faithfully, and impartially perform the duties of office and that the Trustee will not be personally interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract let by the regional transit authority. The oath will be administered by the Secretary/Treasurer of the Board or his/her designee. A sample oath is attached to these By-Laws as an Addendum.
- D) **Compensation:** Members shall serve without compensation but may receive reimbursement for actual necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.
- E) **Resignation, Removal:** A Trustee may resign by submitting a written resignation to the appointing authority. The appointing authority may, at any time, remove a member for misfeasance, nonfeasance or malfeasance in office. The Board of PARTA may recommend removal of a Trustee for non-excused absences of three (3) meetings during a Board year. Cognizant of schedule conflicts, the Board shall require advanced notice of an absence and a valid reason for the absence. The President will notify the appointing authority if a Trustee has failed to meet the attendance requirements or has otherwise failed to fulfill the duties of a Trustee.
- F) **Ethics and Conflict of Interest:** A Trustee will neither solicit nor accept gifts, gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to sub agreements. Business meals of minimal value are excluded. Also excluded are unsolicited gifts of nominal intrinsic value.

No Trustee shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. Each Trustee shall comply with all conflict of interest laws under Ohio law, including Ohio Revised Code §2921 and §102. Such a conflict may arise when any of the following has financial or other interest in the firm selected for award:

- (1) The Trustee;
- (2) Any member of his/her immediate family;
- (3) His or her partner; or

(4) An organization that employs, or is about to employ, any of the above.

G) **Voting:** A majority of the Board of Trustees constitutes a quorum, the affirmative vote of which is necessary for any action taken by the authority. No vacancy in the Board shall impair the rights of a quorum to exercise all rights and perform the duties of the authority.

### III) **Officers**

A) **Officers:** The officers of PARTA shall be President, Vice President and Temporary Presiding Officer.

B) **Terms of Office:** The term of office for the President, Vice President and Temporary Presiding Officer shall be one (1) year and until the successor takes office.

C) **Election:** Officers shall be elected annually at the regular meeting of the Board in the month of July of each year, which shall be the Annual Meeting of the Board, and shall take office at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting to preside at the next meeting of the Board. Election of Officers shall take place by written ballot unless otherwise specified by the Board. A tie vote will be settled by a flip of a coin.

D) **Nomination:** The current Board President will appoint a Nominating Committee in March to report back to the full Board in May. The nominations for Officers shall be open on or before the last meeting before the Annual Meeting. Nominations shall remain open up to the Annual Meeting and the President shall invite additional nominations prior to the calling for a vote prior to the election of Officers. Nominations for President shall be closed and voted on prior to the closing of nominations for Vice President and Temporary Presiding Officer.

E) **Resignation:** Any Officer may resign as Officer by giving written notice of resignation to the President of the Board, or the President may resign by written notice to the Vice President. The resignation shall be effective as of the date stated in such resignation, or if there is no such date stated, then as of the date of its receipt by the proper Officer. Notice of the resignation shall be transmitted at the next meeting of the Board by the Officer receiving such resignation, but no such resignation shall require acceptance by the Board.

F) **Removal:** All Officers shall serve at the pleasure of the Board and shall be subject to removal by the Board at any time.

G) **Vacancies:** Vacancies in any Officer's position shall be filled by the Board for the remainder of the term.

H) **Duties of Officers:** The Officers shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

#### 1) **President:**

- (a) Convene Board meetings and preside over them.
- (b) Represent PARTA at various meetings.
- (c) Sign documents or take action on behalf of PARTA as directed by the Board or by law, unless another Officer or employee is directed to take such action.
- (d) Appoint Chairs and members of Standing Committees and appoint Ad Hoc Committees.
- (e) Serve as ex-officio member of all committees.

- 2) **Vice President:**
  - (a) Convene Board meetings and preside over them in the absence of the President, or at any time when the President may vacate the chair.
  - (b) Perform all duties of the President when the President is absent or unable to perform.
  - (c) Assist the President in all duties, as appropriate.
- 3) **Temporary Presiding Officer:** At any meeting at which both the President and the Vice President are absent or unavailable to preside, the Temporary Presiding Officer shall serve as Presiding Officer. Any meeting at which the President, the Vice President and the Temporary Presiding Officer are absent or unable to preside, the Board, by a majority of those present, may elect a member of the Board to serve as Presiding Officer for that meeting.

#### IV) Employees, Advisors

- A) **General Manager:** The Board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the General Manager, who shall not be a member of the Board. The duties of the General Manager shall include:
  - 1) Serve as Chief Executive Officer to carry out all policies of PARTA.
  - 2) Attend all meetings of the Board, keep the Board informed of the condition and activities of PARTA and recommend policies to the Board.
  - 3) Employ, supervise and discharge employees to such positions as may be authorized by the Board, under the terms and conditions authorized by the Board.
  - 4) Fill the duties of Secretary/Treasurer, as provided by Ohio Revised Code §306.33 and §306.42, either directly or by directing an employee(s) to assist in performing those duties.
  - 5) Coordinate transit development, maintain and develop facilities, maintain liaison with governmental units and with social service agencies, and develop and implement public relations program.
  - 6) Represent PARTA in contract negotiations and in other contexts as the Chief Executive Officer.
  - 7) The General Manager has the authority and may contract for services necessary for the purposes of PARTA as subject to Ohio Revised Code §306.43.
  - 8) Exercise any other duties necessary for the day-to-day operations of PARTA.
- B) **Secretary/Treasurer:** The General Manager shall fill the statutory duties of Secretary/Treasurer and shall be the fiscal officer and custodian of PARTA's funds and records, as required under Ohio Revised Code §306.33 and §306.42, either directly or by directing an employee(s) to assist in the performance of those duties.
  - 1) Before receiving any monies, the General Manager and employee(s) designated by the General Manager shall each give a surety bond to PARTA, to be conditioned on the faithful performance of the duties of the office of Secretary/Treasurer, to be executed by sureties satisfactory to PARTA. The amount of the bond shall be determined by the Board of Trustees. The cost of such bond shall be paid by PARTA.

- 2) The Board may also require any other employee to provide a surety bond, under conditions and amounts as determined by the Board. The cost of such bond, if any, shall be paid for by PARTA.
  - 3) The General Manager (Secretary/Treasurer), or employee(s) designated by the General Manager, will deposit funds to the account of PARTA in one or more such depositories as are qualified to receive deposits of PARTA; make disbursements in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Board, maintain accurate records of all transactions; and perform other fiscal duties.
  - 4) The General Manager (Secretary/Treasurer) shall designate an employee to serve as Secretary to the Board. Under the direction of the General Manager, the Secretary shall record and attest the minutes of the proceedings of the Board; maintain all minutes, resolutions, and records of the Board; and handle correspondence of the Board as requested by the President. If the Secretary is absent from any meeting, the presiding member may designate a person as Acting Secretary to record and attest the minutes of the meeting and attest any resolution(s) adopted at such meeting.
- C) **Other Employees:** The Board will authorize employment positions necessary to carry out the work of PARTA, and the terms and conditions of employment. Employees will be appointed and supervised by the General Manager, according to the policies approved by the Board.
- D) **Consultants and Contract Services:** The Board may contract for services necessary for the purposes of PARTA.

#### V) Meetings

- A) **Place of Meeting:** All meetings of the Board shall be held at its principal office, or at such other place as designated by the President at a preceding meeting or designated in the notice of the meeting.
- B) **Regular Meetings:** Meetings of the Board shall be held at least once each quarter and may be held monthly, as scheduled by the Board. The date, time and place of all regular meetings for the following fiscal year will be determined at the first meeting in July of each year.
- C) **Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the President, the Vice President, or any three (3) members of the Board, providing the notice required in Section (V)(D)(2). The Officer, or members calling the meeting, shall give notice to the other members of the Board of the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting. Such notice may be given in person or by telephone (or facsimile transmission or E-mail) at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Notice to other Board members may also be given by letter mailed by first class mail at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Notice of any meeting need not be given to any member of the Board if such notice is waived by the member in writing before, during or after such meeting. A special meeting will only consider business related to the purpose stated in the meeting notice.
- D) **Public Notice of Meetings:**
- 1) **General Notice:** PARTA is a public body for purposes of the open meeting law. All meetings of the Board, and of any committee or subcommittee, except as provided in Section (V)(E)(2), shall be open to the public. Any person may determine the time and place of regularly scheduled meetings, and the time, place and purpose of special meetings, by consulting the meeting minutes of the Board, available on the PARTA website, or by inquiry to the administrative office of PARTA.



- 2) **Notice to News Media:** The time, place and purpose of all special meetings shall be posted on *PARTA*'s website and social media accounts as early as practicable. Additionally, *PARTA* shall provide at least 24 hours' notice of all special meetings to the news media that have requested notification, except in the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code §121.22. In the event of an emergency, the member(s) calling the meeting shall notify the news media that have requested notification immediately of the time, place and purpose of the meeting.
  - 3) **Special Notice:** Any person may obtain reasonable advance notification of all meetings, upon request and payment of a reasonable fee. Notice shall be provided by mailing the agenda of meetings. The fee shall be designated by the General Manager and shall be sufficient to cover the cost of mailing and copies of such notices.
- E) **Public Meetings:**
- 1) **Open Meetings:** All meetings of the Board shall be open to the public in accordance with Ohio Revised Code §121.22. Any formal action must be adopted in an open meeting. Board members shall be present in person at the meeting to be considered present or to vote at the meeting, and for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present, as defined in Section (V)(F)(1).
  - 2) **Executive Sessions:** The Board may hold an executive session only at a regular or special meeting and only after a majority of a quorum determines by roll call vote to hold such a session and only for the purpose of consideration of matters permitted by law under Ohio Revised Code §121.22(G). The motion and vote to hold an executive session shall state which one or more of the permitted matters under Ohio Revised Code §121.22(G) are to be considered at the executive session.
- F) **Action:**
- 1) **Quorum:** A majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business.
  - 2) **Method of Action:** Action of the Board shall be by resolution or motion. An affirmative vote of a majority of those Board members present shall be necessary for any action taken by the Board, unless a greater number is required by law or these By-Laws. Members must be present to vote. A resolution, rule or formal action of any kind is invalid unless adopted in an open meeting of the Board in accordance with Ohio Revised Code §121.22.
  - 3) **Resolutions:** Resolutions shall be in writing. They shall be numbered with the year, month and consecutive numbers for each month (such as "No. 1996-07-03"). They shall be signed by the member who presided at the meeting and attested by the Secretary.
- G) **Minutes:** The minutes of any meeting will be recorded, and approved minutes will be filed, maintained and open to public inspection. Minutes will include the date and place of the meeting, the names of the members and guests present, a summary of matters said and done, and a record of each vote taken. Minutes will only reflect the general subject matter of discussions in executive sessions.
- H) **Conduct of Meeting:** Meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

- 1) **Rules of Procedure:** Unless otherwise provided, meetings of the Board shall be conducted under the general principles of Robert's Rules of Order.
- 2) **Order of Business:** The business of regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be transacted in the following order, unless otherwise necessary to conduct business:
  - Call to Order
  - Roll Call
  - Meeting Minutes (Approval of minutes of preceding meetings)
  - Guest Communications
  - General Manager's Report
  - Committee Reports
  - Old Business
  - New Business
  - Resolutions
  - Executive Session, as needed
  - Adjournment
- 3) **Public Attendance and Participation:** The Board may, from time to time, issue or revise guidelines for public attendance, participation and conduct during meetings.

## VI) Committees

- A) **Standing Committees:** The President shall appoint members of the Board to the following Standing Committees as committee members or alternates and designate one of the members as Committee Chair. Any Board member can serve as an alternate. Board members shall be notified when they need to attend the committee meetings but are welcome to attend voluntarily. At the beginning of the meeting, the Chair of the committee will name the alternate that will be serving as a committee member, should other committee members not be present at the start of the meeting. The President shall be an ex-officio member of each committee.
  - 1) **Finance:** Review and recommend budget, recommend fiscal policies, and review monthly financial status.
  - 2) **Administration:** Review and recommend policies, review and recommend salary and benefit plans, screen bids for program contracts, and nominate candidates for the offices of President, Vice President and Temporary Presiding Officer.
  - 3) **Personnel:** Screen candidates for General Manager, review annual performance of General Manager, develop annual goals for the General Manager, and work to negotiate contracts for the General Manager.
  - 4) **Operations:** Evaluate and recommend building needs, maintenance, safety, space utilization, evaluate programs and service priorities for transit, parking, fuel station and other operational activities and plan new programs and services.
- B) **Quorum:** A majority of the members of a Standing Committee shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business. In order to form a quorum, the Chair of a Standing Committee may designate any other Board member to that Standing Committee for that particular meeting.
- C) **Other Committees:** The President may, from time to time, create additional Ad Hoc committees and appoint members and a Committee Chair for each committee.

- D) **Committee Meetings:** In the absence of a Committee Chair, a Temporary Chair shall be elected by majority vote of the members present.

**VII) Execution of Instruments**

- A) **Deeds, Leases, Contracts:** Deeds, leases, contracts, and all other documents, except those referred to below, shall be signed by the Officer specified in any pertinent statute under the Ohio Revised Code. If no statutory requirement exists, such instruments shall be signed by the President, but the Board may, from time to time, designate one or more of its members or any other employee or Officer to execute an instrument on behalf of PARTA.
- B) **Expenditures:** Checks, drafts, notes, bonds, and other instruments representing payment of money shall require two (2) signatures. The Board shall designate three (3) people as authorized signers.
- C) **Bidding:** All purchases will be conducted according to relevant provisions of State and Federal law and competitive bidding will be used as required.

**VIII) Construction and Amendment**

- A) **Construction and Severability:** These By-Laws shall be construed, if possible, in a manner consistent with the laws of the State of Ohio and the United States. If any provision shall be deemed in conflict with any law, such provision shall be void, but each provision shall be deemed separable from every other provision and its invalidity shall not affect any other.
- B) **Amendment:** These By-Laws may be amended or supplemented by majority vote of the Board of Trustees. The Board members shall be given prior written notice of any proposed amendment prior to the meeting at which it shall be considered.

Approved by Board, 06/27/96  
Amended by Board, 06/24/97  
Amended by Board, 06/28/07  
Amended by Board, 06/24/10  
Amended by Board, 07/26/18

**ADDENDUM**

**SAMPLE OATH**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby swear or affirm, that I will honestly, faithfully and impartially perform the duties of my office, and that I will not be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract let by the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

State of Ohio :  
: SS  
County of Portage :

Sworn to and subscribed before me at Kent, Ohio, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

August 18, 2021

TO: Claudia Amrhein, GM 

FROM: Brian Trautman, Chief Operating Officer

RE: Facilities, Maintenance, and Gateway Updates

As you know, summertime is when we in operations and maintenance get busy catching up and renewing. This year has been one of the most difficult in my career to navigate. We have had buses pushed out almost a year for delivery, had to beat the new vehicle chip shortage and get our cutaway replacements ordered and built, and venture into state-of-the-art streetcar acquisition, all the while preparing for the upcoming winter and trying to find parts!

Vehicle maintenance has been busy with fleet upgrades and replacement schedule management. In early July, Foreman Eric Waddell and I went to California to inspect the four (4) completed clean diesel buses. We approved the delivery to PARTA, and two weeks ago, the four (4) buses, which had been slated to be delivered in November of 2020, finally arrived. The buses have been upfitted with fare collection systems, AVL systems, radios, and emergency kits. We expect these buses to be put into service in the next two weeks to replace 12-year-old buses that have completed life cycles and will be sold at auction.

Last week, Eric and I inspected six (6) Light Transit Vehicles at Turtletop in Indiana. Again, this inspection went well with some minor repairs and/or adjustments to be made prior to delivery. These buses should arrive at PARTA before the end of August and will retire six (6) old LTV buses from the fleet.

We left Indiana and drove to Camden, Wisconsin for a plant tour and a preproduction meeting with Hometown Trolley. During this visit I showed Eric how to perform a Buy America Audit review, Acquire the Purchasers Requirement documents, and the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards certificate (all Federal requirements on rolling stock procurements). We were able to really get into the plant and have discussions with employees on the production line to discuss the specifics of the streetcar build. The three (3) PARTA streetcars will go into production in September of 2021. Expected delivery should be end of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2022. Parts suppliers are the only unknown, as COVID has delayed parts manufacturing.

The Kent Central Gateway is back on track, and I am pleased to see our numbers improving at an excellent pace. We have freshened up some painting on the outside of the building to renew the PARTA "green" color. We have repaired accident damage in the west stair tower that was hit by a vehicle earlier this summer. Passes are almost sold out! We are completely sold out of rooftop passes and most residential passes as well.

Last week the main campus received a resealing of all the older blacktop surfaces. Camera and access control systems on both campuses have been replaced or upgraded. The construction of the driver training pad began this week. The fitness center and mezzanine construction is scheduled to begin the first week of September, with preliminary paperwork already started.

The fair is right around the corner, KSU fall semester begins and we continue to prep for winter. The snow removal equipment is getting looked over and ready to go. We have ordered and received most of our salt for the winter and all oil separators have been cleaned and pumped.

One noteworthy item to mention: we have had an excellent response from the drivers on the recent pay increase and our handling of the last year and a half. Thought you would like to hear it!



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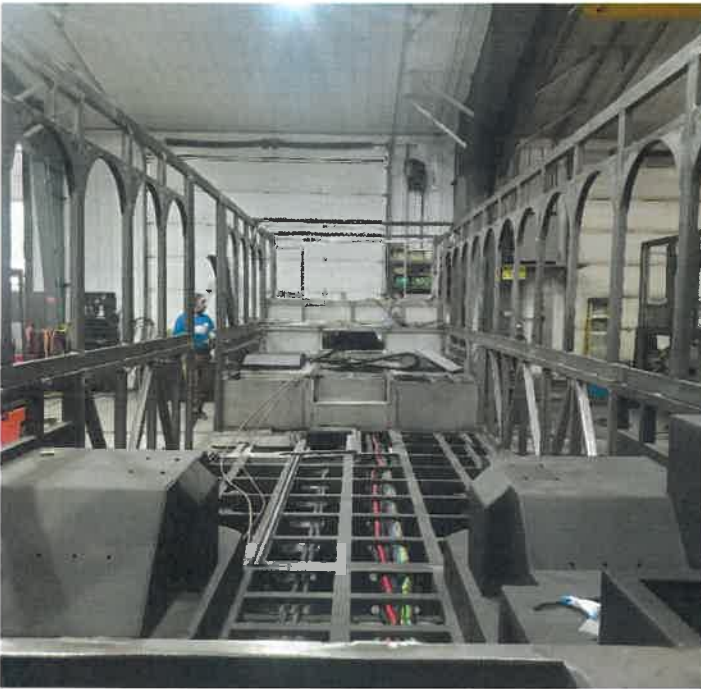
PARTA - 2021 Trolleys

Accepted by:

X \_\_\_\_\_

**Graphic Colors & Placement are representative; the final product may vary.**  
Installations will ONLY be scheduled upon signed approval of design & invoice.  
Workmanship of install is guaranteed for 6 months. Client understands that vehicle  
graphics are meant to be viewed from 5-10 feet away; graphics will not be perfect. Vinyl  
installations may result in small imperfections as this can be normal, such as: color  
variations, bubbles, wrinkles, seams, alignment and patches. We do not warranty wrap  
install due to rust, loose paint, dents, or any other customer vehicle surface imperfec-  
tions due to wear & tear or age. Client understands that when washing vehicle it is  
recommended that it be hand washed and not pressure washed. ALL SALES ARE FINAL.

# TROLLEY BUILD







KENT CENTRAL GATEWAY



**PARTA MEMO**

**To: Claudia Amrhein, General Manager**

**From: Clayton Popik, Director of Planning** 

**CC: All Senior Staff, Carlell Howard, Kylie Calcei**

**Date: August 5, 2021**

**RE: August 2021 Service Update – Off-campus reductions remain/On-campus fall service update**

---

Effective August 22, 2021, the fall sign-up will begin. This will continue the off-campus service reductions established in June and begin the fall semester service for on-campus.

**County Service**

1. The reduced service plan established in June 2021 will continue, with no changes, through the August 2021 sign-up.

**Campus Service**

1. 51 – Campus Loop: This route will run with two (2) buses every 14 minutes.
2. 53 – Reverse Loop: This route will remain in suspension.
3. 55 – Allerton: This route will remain in suspension.
4. 57 – Stadium Loop: No Changes.
5. 58 – Summit East/Front Campus: This route will run with four (4) buses every 9 minutes.
6. 59 – Stadium Night Loop: This route will run with two (2) buses on Sunday evenings and one (1) bus Monday through Thursday to provide afterhours service along the Summit St. corridor and flex service on-campus.
7. Student Accessibility Transportation Services (SATS): Two (2) buses have been allocated for the on-campus demand response service. These times will be allocated by Operations as needed based on demand.
8. A total of six (6) buses will be utilized on-campus with a projected total of 17,934.98 service hours to be provided in FY2022. There are opportunities to provide additional service as the student workforce increases.



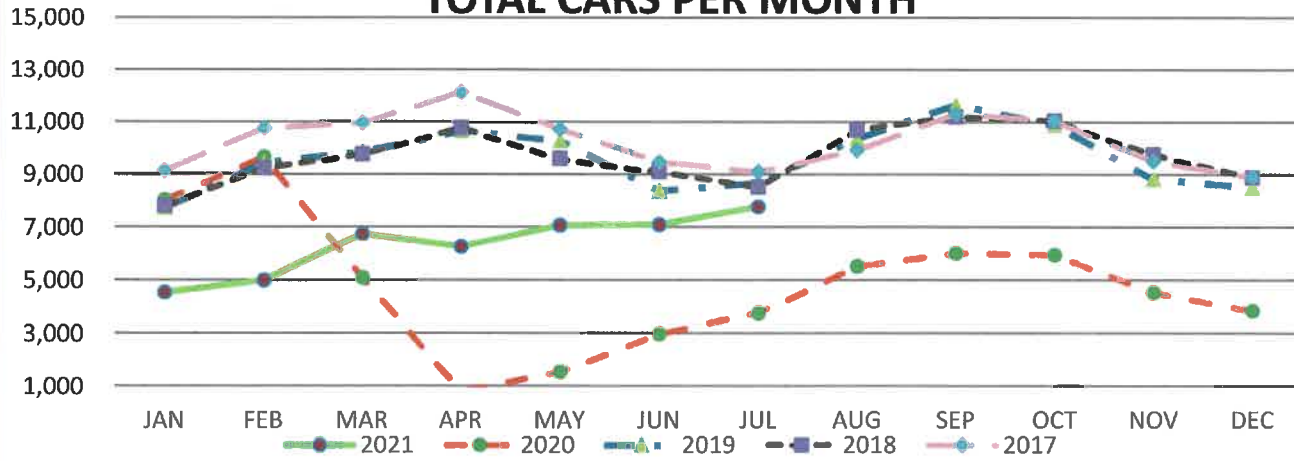
# KENT CENTRAL GATEWAY PARKING SUMMARY - July 2021

6 Month Lookback						
	Monthly	Transient	Total	Cars/Day	Last	Last Year
Feb-21	3,238	1,744	4,982	178	10%	-48%
Mar-21	4,181	2,557	6,738	217	35%	33%
Apr-21	3,703	2,546	6,249	208	-7%	696%
May-21	3,445	3,622	7,067	228	13%	360%
Jun-21	3,474	3,610	7,084	236	0%	139%
Jul-21	3,537	4,225	7,762	250	10%	108%

## Annual Comparison

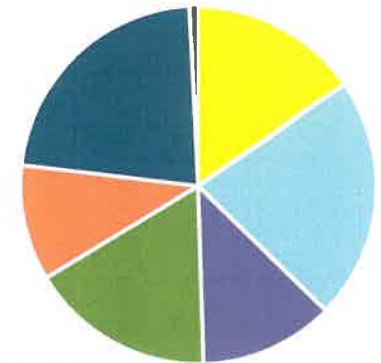
	2021	2020	2019
JAN	4,534	8,024	7,707
FEB	4,982	9,642	9,424
MAR	6,738	5,082	9,836
APR	6,249	785	10,639
MAY	7,067	1,535	10,268
JUN	7,084	2,961	8,371
JUL	7,762	3,730	8,672
AUG		5,502	10,352
SEP		5,996	11,657
OCT		5,938	10,888
NOV		4,538	8,812
DEC		3,828	8,505
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44,416</b>	<b>57,561</b>	<b>118,373</b>
	39.9%	-50.0%	

## TOTAL CARS PER MONTH

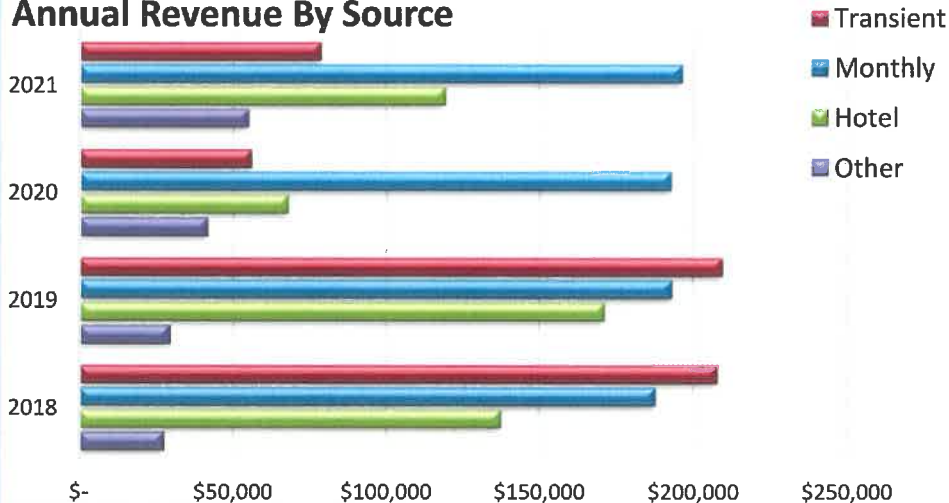


## # Rate Types Collected

- \$1.00
- \$2.00
- \$3.00
- \$4.00
- \$5.00
- \$6 - \$9
- \$10 - \$15
- >15

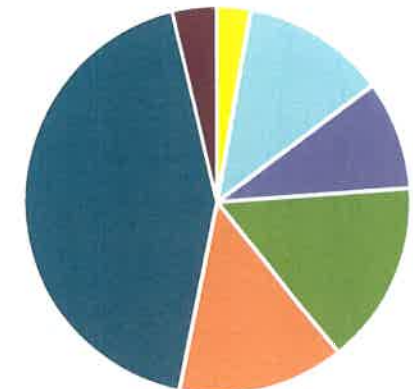


## Annual Revenue By Source



## \$ Rate Types Collected

- \$1.00
- \$2.00
- \$3.00
- \$4.00
- \$5.00
- \$6 - \$9
- \$10 - \$15
- >15



**RESOLUTION #2021-08-01**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AMENDING THE PASSENGER POLICY.**

**WHEREAS, PARTA's** Passenger Policy provides a means of communicating policies and important information with PARTA drivers and passengers; and

**WHEREAS,** the Passenger Policy was last updated and approved by the Board on December 20, 2012; and

**WHEREAS, PARTA** has identified a need to amend the Passenger Policy; and

**WHEREAS,** the proposed revisions affect the following sections: Refusal of Transportation, Strollers and Carts, and Seating; and

**WHEREAS,** it is PARTA's desire to amend the Passenger Policy.

**NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED** by the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) Board of Trustees that:

The Passenger Policy, as revised and attached, be accepted and adopted by the Board of Trustees effective August 26, 2021.

**CERTIFICATION:**

The undersigned duly qualified Board President, acting on behalf of the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA), certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Board of Trustees held on August 26, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
David Gynn, President  
Board of Trustees

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attested



# PASSENGER POLICY

## Passenger Policy

For the comfort and safety of *PARTA* passengers, we have established the following policy to provide everyone with a clear expectation for their behavior while on a *PARTA* vehicle or within a *PARTA* facility.

*PARTA* has multiple “vehicle” types, which may include Small Transit Vehicles (STV), Large Transit Vehicles (LTV), Buses, Trolleys, Cars or Trucks. For the purpose of this policy, the term “vehicle” may refer to any vehicle *PARTA* uses in passenger transportation.

### 1. Passenger Age

Passengers under the age of 10 years must be accompanied by a parent or adult.

### 2. Fare

Passengers must pay fare upon boarding the vehicle unless prior billing arrangements have been made. Exact change, valid ticket or pass is required. See *PARTA*'s fare policy for current fare guidelines.

### 3. Smoking

In accordance with Chapter 3974 of the Ohio Revised Code, smoking is not permitted within transit vehicles, bus shelters, or terminals. Please report violations to 866-599-OHIO.

### 4. Litter, Graffiti and Vandalism

Passengers are responsible to take their belongings and trash with them when exiting the vehicle.

Passengers discovered to have vandalized *PARTA* property, ~~which~~ including graffiti on *PARTA*'s vehicles or within *PARTA*'s facilities may be subject to suspension of service and to the penalties set forth in the Ohio Revised Code 306.99 (B).

### 5. Audio Devices

Passengers may not play an audio device unless using a headset and keeping the volume low so that others are not disturbed.

### 6. Communicating with the Vehicle Operator

Because maintaining the vehicle operator's attention on the road is of utmost importance, passengers should refrain from speaking to the operator while the vehicle is in motion.

### 7. Refusal of Transportation

The vehicle operator has the authority to refuse transportation to a passenger who may raise a direct threat to themselves, other passengers, or the vehicle operator. Passengers who appear to be under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, or whose behavior or language appears abusive, offensive, or disorderly will be asked to exit the vehicle at the next safe location or not be permitted to board. This behavior may also result in a suspension of *PARTA* services.

Passengers are required to be fully dressed when boarding and riding the bus or while at PARTA facilities. All passengers must wear clothing covering the upper and lower part of their torso (such as tops and pants) and shoes. The vehicle operator has the authority to refuse transportation to a passenger whose clothing is not appropriate and/or offensive.

During a pandemic, or as required, passengers must comply with wearing a facial covering. Passengers who do not comply with this requirement will not be allowed to ride the bus.

## 8. Packages

PARTA will accommodate a reasonable amount of packages provided they do not disrupt or delay transportation for other passengers or cause a direct threat to the passengers or the vehicle operator. Passengers must maintain control over their packages and should not place any items in the aisles. PARTA is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Prohibited items which are never permitted on a PARTA vehicle are hazardous substances or packages, such as:

- Car batteries
- Gasoline

PARTA will not permit passengers to board any vehicle with hazardous materials in quantities which exceed the regulations outlines by the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

## 9. Strollers and Carts

- Vehicle operators and/or Supervisors will have the discretionary authority to determine if a personal utility cart (cart) or stroller is too big to be transported and if freight is too big or dangerous to be transported. Passengers are limited to two small carry-on bags/items that can be reasonably carried on their laps when seated and/or stowed safely under, or in front of, their seat. Large bags of recycled cans are not allowed on transit vehicles at any time. Carts, strollers, or other utility carts are allowed if they:
  - Strollers Are no greater than 30 inches tall-wide, 18 inches wide and by 148 inches deep, inches long as permitted onboard PARTA vehicles.
  - Can easily/quickly negotiate vehicle door entrances and turns for any reason.
  - Do not contain loads that exceed the height and designated capacity of the device.
  - Do not have items that are wet, leaking, or considered hazardous for any reason.
- Passengers are also limited only to items that can be boarded in a single trip onto the vehicle without assistance from another person. Multiple trips to load bags, carts, strollers, or cargo are not allowed. Loads that require multiple people to maneuver bags, carts, strollers, or cargo on/off the vehicle are also not allowed.
- Passengers must stay with their carts, strollers, or cargo during the entire trip and hold onto their belongings firmly. Items will only be allowed to be placed on the front wheel well of a bus if the passenger sits adjacent to the item and has a firm grasp on it for the duration of the trip. Multiple items will not be allowed to be stacked in these areas.
- The interior area near any door shall always be free of carts, strollers, cargo, or other items, as this area is considered a main emergency exit. Loading items through the rear door of a vehicle, due to the front being full, is not permitted. Vehicle operators and/or Supervisors shall ask passengers in the front to move further back to make room for these passengers to board through the front door only.
- While operating a walker, cart, or other device, bags and other items must remain in control of the passenger at all times. The amount of cargo carried or attached to these

devices is limited to what the passenger can place securely on his/her lap when seated and must not create a scenario where the device exceeds the maximum cart dimensions above. Packages must be removed and placed on the passenger's lap if blocking the aisle and/or if requested by the vehicle operator. Items or devices allowed on the vehicle should be of such a size and nature that moving them to another area of the vehicle would continue compliance with this procedure.

- F. No more than three (3) different passengers with carts, strollers, or other cargo will be allowed on the bus or trolley at one time. Passengers with carts, strollers, and cargo trying to board when the bus or trolley is already at capacity will be required to wait for the next scheduled bus (fixed route only).
- G. Passengers with carts, strollers, or other cargo should sit in designated "priority" seating areas when available on vehicles and when space is available. Vehicle operators and/or Supervisors shall request that these passengers move to other areas, if they are seated in the senior/disabled (priority) section of the vehicles, in order to make room for wheelchair and other elderly or disabled passengers.
- H. Once on board the vehicle, a child may remain seated in the stroller as long as the child is strapped in the stroller and the stroller is secured in the securement area. If the securement area is not available, the child must be removed from the stroller and held in the lap of the adult passenger or in a seat alongside the adult passenger. Passengers with disabilities using mobility devices have priority in the securement area. (This rule does not apply to ADA Accessible strollers.) Folding strollers must be folded and placed under or between seats, unless the stroller is too full to do so or if the stroller is occupied and secured per above.

Operators shall not permit any greater quantity of freight or baggage in vehicles than can be safely and conveniently carried without causing discomfort or unreasonable annoyance to passengers. In no event shall aisles, doors, steps or emergency exits be blocked.

#### 10. Seating (Fixed Route Only)

- Priority seating by the doors of vehicles is reserved for seniors and disabled passengers.
- PARTA requests passengers to relinquish their seat to seniors and people with disabilities if the seat is located in a wheelchair or priority seating area of the vehicles. These seats and areas may be designated by blue signs.

#### 11. Bicycles (Fixed Route Only)

Most of PARTA's vehicles are equipped with exterior bicycle racks. If the vehicle is not equipped the passenger may board the vehicle with the bicycle as long as the bicycle does not create a direct threat to the passengers or vehicle operator and the bicycle does not block the aisle.

If the vehicles becomes crowded a passenger with a bicycle on board will be asked to exit.

#### 12. Food and beverages

Passengers should have all drinks and food contained in spill-proof containers.

Passengers are responsible to take their belongings and trash with them when exiting the vehicle.



### 13. Service Animals

Service animals are always welcome. The passenger must have the service animal fully under control at all times so as not to disrupt other passengers or the schedule. Service animals may not occupy a seat. ~~Drivers~~ Vehicle operators cannot and will not assume any responsibility for service animals.

Service animals are trained to perform a task or tasks required to assist a passenger due to a disability. Passengers will be asked to exit the vehicle if their service animal is not controlled or creates a direct threat to other passengers or the vehicle operator.

### 14. Non-Service Animals (Pets)

Pets are required to be transported in a per carrier. The combined weight of the pet and carrier cannot exceed 20 pounds and cannot create a direct threat to passengers or to the vehicle bus operator. The carrier and pet must remain out of the aisle way and be in control of the passenger at all times.

#### ~~Priority Seating~~

~~Seniors and customers with disabilities have propriety use of the Priority Seats, the first section of seats, on the bus. The operator has the authority to ensure those seats are available for these passengers.~~

### 15. Non-Discrimination

Your rights under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial assistance.

Your rights under Americans with Disability Act (ADA) of 1990.

ADA prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities.

Complaints can be filed with:

PARTA  
2000 Summit Rd.  
Kent, OH 44240  
877-743-3782

Or with:


The Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590  
866-377-8624

### 16. Penalty

Violation of the rules established by PARTA to provide safe and reliable transportation on its vehicles or within its facilities may be subject to suspension of service and to the penalties set forth in the Ohio Revised Code 306.99 (B).

# PARTA

TO: Claudia Amrhein, General Manager

FROM: Kelly Jurisch, Chief of Staff 

DATE: August 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Administration Committee Meeting – Request to amend authorized positions

The current pay structure table defines *PARTA*'s authorized positions and wage and salary ranges for full and part-time non-bargaining unit employees, excluding student employees. Initially established in 2002, the structure has been revised from time to time to adopt changes in position titles and to address position placement within the structure. Resolution #2021-08-02 is a request to revise the *authorized positions* within the pay structure *job categories*. At this time, due to the changing economy, I do not believe it is in our best interest to update pay grades and ranges, as things are fluctuating rapidly. We have enough space from minimum to maximum within the pay grades to bring in employees and adjust current wages to stay competitive within the ever-changing market.

To simplify the review of the proposed revisions, I have prepared a summary of the proposed changes to add authorized positions within the exempt employee job categories. There are two changes to the current job categories, to add authorized positions within these categories of "A. Executive/Senior Level Officials and Managers, Grade 2" and "B. First/Mid-Level Officials and Managers, Grade 3". At the end of 2019, after the retirement of Frank Hairston and with increasing need for consistent communication on social media platforms and our website, we promoted Denise Baba to Public Advocacy Advisor. Although this position wasn't on the job category chart, we did have the part-time position she was in of Community Outreach Liaison on the chart (which is currently vacant).

In July of this year, the Safety and Security Manager position became available. In light of this past year, with the pandemic and the cyber-attack, plus the new FTA regulations of our Public Safety Plan, we have decided it would be best to bring in someone of a higher skill set. We are in the process of creating a Director of Risk Management position (and intend to leave the Safety and Security Manager role vacant at this time). If these revisions are recommended for approval by the Administration Committee, Resolution #2021-08-02 will be presented to the full Board at its meeting immediately following the Administration Committee meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

**RESOLUTION #2021-08-02**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE ADDITION OF TWO (2) POSITIONS TO EXEMPT EMPLOYEE JOB CATEGORIES.**

**WHEREAS**, the *PARTA* Board of Trustees adopted an initial pay structure for employees in 2001 and thereafter approved further amendments in July 2002, October 2003, April 2005, March 2008, July 2011, June 2014, March 2015, and May 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, reviewing and updating authorized positions within each job category is necessary from time-to-time to adjust to employment trends, regulatory requirements, and changing workforce composition while continually focusing on employee recruitment, retention, and succession planning; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief of Staff requests, and the General Manager recommends, adding the positions of Director of Risk Management and Public Advocacy Advisor to exempt employee job categories; and

**WHEREAS**, the addition of authorized positions will not impact pay grade designation, pay scales, or the 2021 approved budget.

**NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED** by the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (*PARTA*) Board of Trustees that:

The addition of two (2) authorized positions to exempt employee job categories, as revised and attached, be accepted and adopted by the Board of Trustees effective August 26, 2021.

**CERTIFICATION:**

The undersigned duly qualified Board President, acting on behalf of the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (*PARTA*), certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Board of Trustees held on August 26, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
David Gynn, President  
Board of Trustees

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attested

**PARTA JOB CATEGORIES, AUTHORIZED POSITIONS and PAY GRADE DESIGNATION  
for EXEMPT EMPLOYEES**

**A. Executive/Senior Level Officials and Managers**

- Grade 1      Assistant General Manager, Chief of Staff, Chief Operations Officer
- Grade 2      Director of Operations, Director of Maintenance, Director of Human Resources, Director of Finance, Director of Marketing, Director of Planning, Director of Information Technology; **Director of Risk Management**

**B. First/Mid-Level Officials and Managers**

- Grade 3      Operations Manager, Maintenance Manager, Human Resources Manager, Controller, Mobility Manager, Network Systems Administration Manager; **Public Advocacy Advisor**
- Grade 4      Assistant Operations Manager, Chief Accountant, Procurement and Grants Manager, Deck Manager
- Grade 5      Safety and Security Manager

**C. Lead/Supervisory Level, Operatives and Administrative Support**

- Grade 6      Lead Scheduler, Executive Assistant, Administrative Assistant

Adopted by Board of Trustees  
1<sup>st</sup> Revision  
2<sup>nd</sup> Revision  
3<sup>rd</sup> Revision  
4<sup>th</sup> Revision *Proposed*

Resolution #2011-12-05  
Resolution #2014-06-02  
Resolution #2015-03-01  
Resolution # 2019-05-04  
Resolution # 2021-08-02

December 15, 2011  
June 26, 2014  
March 26, 2015  
May 23, 2019  
August 26, 2021

# The Portager Ravenna Area Chamber of Commerce announced Raven Award winners for 2019 and 2020



NATALIE WOLFORD · JULY 21, 2021 · 1 MIN READ

The Raven Awards for 2019 and 2020 will be celebrated at a ceremony on Sept. 1 at the Ravenna Football Stadium from 6-8 p.m. The awards honor local businesses, business owners and residents, giving special recognition for new businesses.

The awards have been a tradition for over a decade, but the chamber's executive director Ryann Kuchenbecker said a Ravenna High School scholarship category has been added.

"There is so much success within Ravenna, and we are here to celebrate by honoring our community as a whole."

Here are the winners:

## 2020

RHS Scholarship: Hali Matulka, Katherine Miller, Margaret Remley, Amelia Walton

New Business: Pinnacle Treatment Center, Ravenna Nutrition, War Horse Ink, 2illXcuts

New Renovation: Children's Advantage Family Center, It's All Fine Consignment, M&J Medical Supply

New Construction: PARTA

Volunteer of the Year: Pat Dennison

Citizen of the Year: Dennis Honkala

Honorary Award: Theodore G. Manfrass

Lifetime Achievement Award: Rick Coe

## 2019

RHS Scholarship: Lauren Calhoun, Reilly Full, Nick Rainone

New Business: Canine Couture, Chipotle, Popped!, Chestnut Convenient Store, Vance's Carriage House Creamery

New Renovation: St-Gobain Performance Plastics, Stepping Stone Community Services, Maplewood Career Center

New Construction: Allen Aircraft Products, Chipotle, The Wilds at Harvest Rose, Independence of Portage

Volunteer of the Year: Portage Community Chapel

Citizen of the Year: Ray & Ann Harner

Honorary Award: Mike Tontimonia

Lifetime Achievement Award: Joe & Regina Coia

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# Masking guidelines don't yet affect Portage

**Bob Gaetjens**

Ravenna Record-Courier

USA TODAY NETWORK

With the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's latest recommendation that people wear masks indoors in high COVID-19 area of transmissibility, Portage County does not immediately need to implement any changes.

That's because, according to the CDC's map of infection incidence, Portage County's infection rate is "moderate," according to the data available for July 19-25.

The CDC's recommendation that both vaccinated and unvaccinated people wear masks indoors and at crowded outdoor events applies only to areas with "substantial" or "high" infection rates per 100,000 residents. The county's "moderate" rate of infection is 40.62 cases per 100,000 people. At 50 cases per 100,000, the county would reach "substantial" infection level and be subject to additional masking recommendations, according to the CDC.

**See MASKS, Page 3A**

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**Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Commissioner, administers a vaccine during a mass vaccination clinic hosted by AxessPointe at PARTA's Summit Street facility just east of Kent State University earlier this spring. LISA SCALFARO/RECORD-COURIER**

## Masks

Continued from Page 1A

However, Kent City Health Commissioner Joan Seidel suggested planning for the future, which likely will include spread of the new Delta variant of COVID-19, would be prudent.

"Just knowing that the Delta variant is here and spreading, I sent a email to our unified command team," she said. "I feel like things are shifting. I think we need to prepare. We have seen a small increase right now, and I can imagine that will continue to increase in the days and weeks ahead."

Across the country, she said the Delta variant now accounts for 80% to 85% of COVID-19 cases, but Ohio is currently at 3%.

"Currently, those areas in the 'substantial' or 'high' transmission areas have been documented as being in the lower levels of vaccine uptake," she said. "There is a correlation there."

According to the state, Portage County's current vaccination rate is about 48%, within a percentage point of the rate for the state.

The Portage County Health District

was unable to comment Wednesday on the new CDC recommendations.

Portage Development Board president Brad Ehrhart said seeking vaccination seems to be the key to protection against the virus.

"If that's going to be our first line of defense, it will be interesting to see if businesses can mandate vaccinations," he said. "It's a tough one. I've heard of some hospitals that are starting to mandate it."

However, he said workforce shortages may make it difficult for companies to require vaccinations if they want to quickly fill positions.

He said it's possible market forces, such as those applied by health insurance companies over time, could move companies toward vaccination, but mandates of vaccinations are difficult because of the inherent conflict between individual liberties and the health and safety of society as a whole.

Further complicating the question of mandating vaccination is the fact that none of the COVID-19 vaccines have received full approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

*Reporter Bob Gaetjens can be reached at 330-541-9440, bgaetjens@record-pub.com or @bobgaetjens\_rc.*



# The Portager

## Kent approves downtown holiday ice rink, opening Nov. 24 on Erie Street

WENDY DIALESANDRO · AUGUST 5, 2021 · 2 MIN READ

Kent's town and gown leadership are solidifying plans for an outdoor ice rink slated to open in downtown Kent this winter.

City Council unanimously approved a special event application partnering with Kent State for a 40-foot-by-70-foot rink on Erie Street between the Kent State hotel and the PARTA parking deck. To make it all happen, Erie Street will be closed from Oct. 15 until March 1. The rink itself will be open from Nov. 24 through Feb. 28.

Kent State is working with Ice Rink Events of Ohio to prepare a foundation for the rink, and is installing new power service to keep the ice... icy. That upgraded service will be permanent, allowing the city to potentially use it for events year round, said Doug Pearson, Kent State Associate VP of Facilities and Operations

The city of Kent's part is gathering concrete barricades, lights, tables and benches and planters. Yes, planters.

"Pine trees are going to be donated from Davey Tree, and we're going to set them in planters and decorate them like Christmas trees," Pearson said. "We have six of those that we're going to place around the rink for decorations."

Kent State will manage the rink, including staffing skate rentals and maintaining the ice. Though Kent City Council members have enthusiastically volunteered to drive the Zamboni, that job will also be assigned to a student employee, Pearson said.

Plans are for the rink to be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. Security, both during operational hours and when the rink is not in use, is still under discussion. Pearson said he hopes to have a security plan in place by mid-September.

"In addition, we are installing a camera to watch the rink 24/7," he said.

Other details, such as entrance fees and Covid protocols, are also undetermined. Health guidance is constantly evolving.

"We're full speed ahead, and we expect it to open on Nov. 24," Pearson said, adding that the original date was Nov. 25, but they wanted to open the day before Thanksgiving. "We're excited about the event. It's in partnership between Kent State University and the city of Kent, and it will provide student recreational activities and jobs, and people to downtown Kent."

The holiday ice rink, as Kent City Council calls it, was the idea of Kent State President Todd Diacon, who saw similar installations, and viewed them as a positive student activity and a way to bring people downtown.

"It started a year and a half ago, and we had made plans a year ago, and then Covid hit hard, and then we postponed till this year, and this is the year we're going to try to make it happen," Pearson said.

# The Portager

## PARTA introduces trolley buses to their fleet for Summer 2022

ANNIE ZWISLER · AUGUST 16, 2021 · 3 MIN READ



A trolley manufactured by Hometown Trolley in Coral Gables, Florida. Image via Hometown Trolley

Portage County residents will be driving in style Summer 2022 as PARTA introduces three trolley buses to its fleet. The trolleys will replace buses that are no longer in service and will bring a modern twist to the downtown Kent and Ravenna area.

The trolleys operate similar to any standard PARTA bus, but the windows can be detached for an open-air bus ride during the summer. The trolley routes will include a mix of county and campus, giving more people an opportunity to ride in a trolley.

PARTA officials initially delayed the roll-out of the trolleys because of transit shut-downs in response to Covid-19, but they were able to view prototypes. They contracted [Hometown Trolley](#),

one of the largest trolley manufacturers in the U.S., located in Crandon, Wisconsin, to supply the vehicles.

The trolley buses will function like transit buses, but having the open window viewing option will offer a different view of the city to residents and tourists. This opportunity can lead to having “choice ridership,” or allowing patrons to choose between a bus or trolley for their tourist experience.

“‘Choice ridership’ is a big deal,” said Brian Troutman, PARTA Chief Operating Officer said. “Getting on a trolley and circulating the downtown area. It opens it up a lot. Everyone wants to get on a trolley.”

Kent also has a historical connection to trolleys: “Trolleys were in Kent at one point in 1937. ... It’s cool we are coming full circle.”



The fixed-rail Interurban Trolley connected Akron, Kent and Ravenna from the 1910s until 1932. Photo courtesy of the Kent Historical Society

*Scroll to the bottom of this article to see even more historical trolley photos, courtesy of the [Kent Historical Society](#).*

The trolleys satisfy our nostalgia while also meeting the need for more environmentally friendly transportation. The vehicles are fuel agnostic, so operators can switch between clean diesel, hybrid electric and compressed natural gas. This transition can make the transit system more competitive for grant funding so that one day even more trolleys could be added to the fleet.

“These new trolleys introduce a combination of modern technology and an old school nostalgic look,” Troutman said.

Because of Covid-19, many people are still wary of travelling with others in a closed space. PARTA hopes to remedy this concern on their new trolleys by redoing the air induction system to generate positive air flow, rather than have the air remain stagnant on the bus, and allow for passengers to feel safe and remain healthy while using their services.

The pandemic has also affected the hiring of drivers for PARTA. Claudia Amrhein, general manager and CEO of PARTA, hopes the trolleys will attract drivers from all over the county because of the routes they will run.

“We are hoping the intro of these trolleys will be a catalyst for economic recovery and that the trolleys will attract student drivers and county drivers,” Amrhein said.

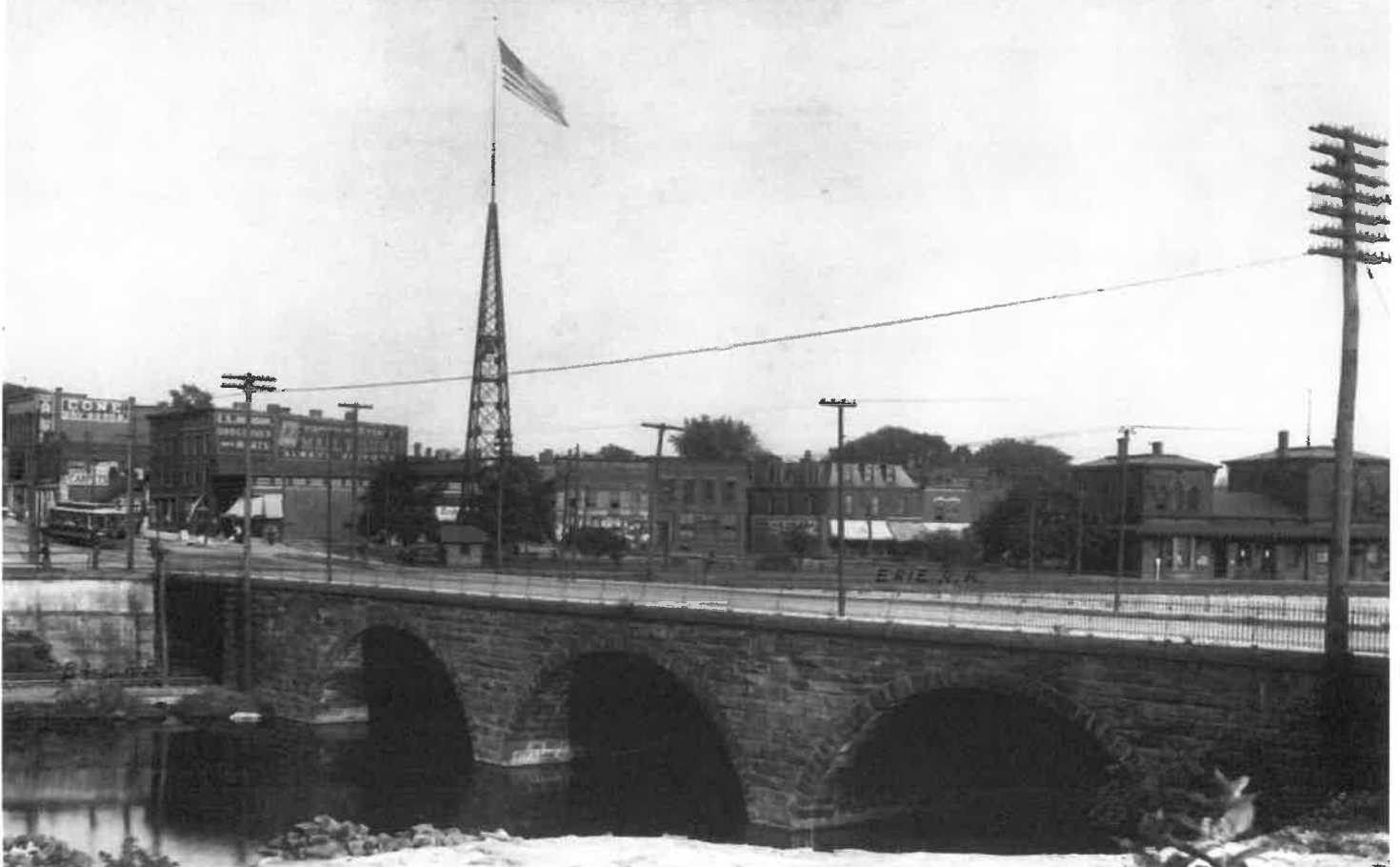
The standard bus fare will apply to the trolleys. Portage County will be served by the fixed county routes, a \$1 ticket or \$0.50 for half fare. These routes include Interurban West/East, Suburban North/South and Raven West/East.



Photo courtesy of the Kent Historical Society



An Interurban Trolley travels through Brady Lake. Photo courtesy of the Kent Historical Society



A trolley travels down Main Street in Kent in 1909. Photo courtesy of the Kent Historical Society



A trolley crossing the gorge. Photo courtesy of the Kent Historical Society



A snowed-in trolley in Kent. Photo courtesy of the Kent Historical Society



Photo courtesy of the Kent Historical Society  
Annie Zwisler is a Portager contributor. She can be reached at [annie@theportager.com](mailto:annie@theportager.com).