

**PARTA**  
**PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**November 21, 2024**

**Board Members Present:**

Victor Baerman	Mike Lewis, Vice President	Stacey Wilson
Karen Beck	Jack Murphy	Marvin Woods, TPO
Dave Gynn, President	Frank Vitale	

**PARTA Staff & Legal Counsel (Roetzel & Andress) Present:**

Claudia Amrhein	Jamie Madden	Rebeca Schrader
Denise Baba	Justin Mareky, Legal	Brian Trautman
Kelly Jurisch	Sony Richardson-Gilroy	

**Guests Present:**

None

**Board Members Not Present:**

Debbie Davison (1 <sup>st</sup> unexcused absence)	Janice Simmons-Mortimer (2 <sup>nd</sup> excused absence)
Virginia Harris (3 <sup>rd</sup> excused absence)	Karen Wise (2 <sup>nd</sup> excused absence)
R. T. Mansfield (1 <sup>st</sup> unexcused absence)	

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Dave Gynn called the November 21, 2024, PARTA Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He asked for a roll call, after which it was determined that **a quorum was present**.

Mr. Gynn announced to the Board that Mr. Richard Brockett, who had been on the Board for many, many years, passed away, and his funeral services will be Saturday, November 23, 2024, in Garrettsville. Mr. Gynn said Mr. Brockett had been a good friend for a long time. He was very active, not only with PARTA, but with a lot of other organizations throughout Portage County, he will be missed. PARTA did send a gift to the funeral home for the family.

Mr. Gynn asked for a motion to approve the minutes of October 24, 2024, Board meeting. **Mr. Victor Baerman** made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, which was seconded by **Ms. Stacey Wilson**. Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he said the **motion to approve the minutes, as presented, passed unanimously**.

**GUEST COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Gynn noted there were no guests in attendance and asked Ms. Claudia Amrhein to give the General Manager's report.

## **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

Ms. Amrhein thanked Mr. Gynn. Ms. Amrhein said it is good to see everyone tonight, Mr. Gynn in particular, we appreciate your attendance. This is the last meeting of the year, so we have a lot to get through but before we do that, I just wanted to thank Ms. Stacey Wilson and her scouts for coming out on Sunday, November 17, 2024, for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Stuff the Bus event.

We gathered canned and nonperishable food, and Mr. Brian Trautman reported we gathered enough items to take two really full vans to two different food shelves. One to the Rootstown, Atwater, Suffield food shelf and one to the Kent Social Services food shelf. Ms. Amrhein said it was very needed and appreciated within our community. Ms. Stacey Wilson said the scouts love doing this sort of thing. So, they were very happy that you invited them.

Ms. Amrhein said I'd just like to point out this is the second month now that Ms. Sony Richardson-Gilroy has been doing our board report. I hope you like the newer format and that it is a little easier to navigate through the PDF. We are always looking to make improvements where we can so if you have comments, please let us know. And I want to reiterate that there are no meetings in December, no Finance Committee and no Board of Trustees meeting.

Ms. Amrhein asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Amrhein for her very thorough report and moved on to Administration.

## **ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Administration Committee did not meet and moved on to Finance.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Finance Committee met this evening before the Board meeting.

Mr. Mike Lewis reported that the Finance Committee met on November 6, 2024, for a budget meeting as well as earlier today. Mr. Lewis commented that pretty much everybody was here for the earlier report and has either already reviewed or received the Finance Reports and proposed budgets.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions, hearing none he moved on to Operations.

## **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

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

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Gynn said the Personnel Committee did meet and asked Ms. Karen Beck for her report from the October 8, 2024, meeting.

Ms. Beck said the committee met on October 8, 2024, and they completed the General Manager's annual review.

Ms. Beck said they were all in agreement that Ms. Amrhein does an excellent job for *PARTA*. She received an excellent rating in all areas. Ms. Amrhein is professional, considerate, forward-thinking, informative, and is a compassionate decision-maker. Those are all remarks from her review.

Ms. Amrhein's goals for 2025 are to commemorate PARTA's 50th anniversary, to complete a strategic plan and transit development plan, succession planning, including promoting from within, developing Board Members as advocates for PARTA, and continuing to add service back as able.

Ms. Beck said at the end of our meeting, she would like to request to enter into an executive session.

Mr. Gynn said if there are any questions we can hold them for the Executive Session. He thanked Ms. Beck for her report and the other Personnel Committee members, Ms. Janice Simmons-Mortimer and Mr. Marvin Woods.

Mr. Victor Baerman asked when does the Operations Committee meet.

Mr. Gynn confirmed with Mr. Trautman that the Operations Committee has not met yet this year.

Mr. Trautman said it's project dependent. The Operations Committee will only have their meetings when there is a project coming up that needs to be discussed.

Mr. Gynn said we will have an executive meeting at the end of New Business. Hearing no more questions, Mr. Gynn moved on to Old Business.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

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

### **NEW BUSINESS**

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

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2024-11-01.

**#2024-11-01: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR PARTA.**

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

**Motion: Karen Beck**

**Second: Marvin Woods**

Mr. Gynn asked Ms. Rebecca Schrader if she had any comments about the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 PARTA Budget and commended her and her team on the great job of putting this together. Mr. Gynn stated that he's always surprised at how pretty spot-on the budget is by the end of the year.

Ms. Schrader said a lot of time goes into the proposed budget.

Mr. Lewis said if anyone is looking through the proposed 2025 budget later and has any questions, please feel free to give him or better yet, Ms. Schrader a call and we will try to get those answered for you.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions, and hearing none, he asked for a roll call.

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

Mr. Gynn said the **resolution was approved unanimously** and moved on to Resolution #2024-11-02.

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2024-11-02.

**#2024-11-02: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (*PARTA*) BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE KENT CENTRAL GATEWAY (KCG).**

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

**Motion: Stacey Wilson**

**Second: Frank Vitale**

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

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

Mr. Gynn said the **resolution was approved unanimously** and moved on to Resolution #2024-11-03.

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2024-11-03.

**#2024-11-03: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (*PARTA*) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER, OR THEIR DESIGNEE, TO PARTICIPATE IN AND CONTRIBUTE TO RISK POOLING WITH THE OHIO TRANSIT RISK POOL (OTRP).**

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

**Motion: Victor Baerman**

**Second: Mike Lewis**

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions. Mr. Gynn said this is a routine resolution every year and asked if there were any comments.

Ms. Amrhein commented that Ms. Barbara Rhodes spoke briefly last month about the Ohio Transit Risk Pool. A number of transit agencies pool property and casualty risk together and participate collectively to everyone's benefit. Going on the open market to get property and casualty insurance for our operation would be cost prohibitive on our own.

Mr. Gynn said he appreciated Ms. Rhodes' presentation last month also.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any other questions, and hearing none, he called for a roll call.

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

Mr. Gynn said the **resolution was approved unanimously** and moved on to Resolution #2024-11-04.

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2024-11-04.

**#2024-11-04: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (*PARTA*) BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVING EXPENDITURES FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) MANAGED SERVICES WITH QUALITY IP.**

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

**Motion: Marvin Woods**

**Second: Mike Lewis**

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Frank Vitale asked, is this the same company we had last year, and Ms. Amrhein answered yes.

Mr. Baerman asked, how long has Quality IP been working for us.

Mr. Trautman said we have one (1) year left on our contract and that it was a five (5) year contract, so four (4) years.

Mr. Gynn asked Mr. Trautman if he was pleased with Quality IP, and with their service.

Mr. Trautman replied that he is a hard guy to please. We've had our moments but that's the way all managed contracts are. They're good. They do a good job. The tough thing about IT companies is you get used to somebody and then they leave. Here at *PARTA* one of the tough things about that is we have so much of a unique system, with so many IT solutions on the buses, MDTs, and software solutions that we're using, that when you lose that person that you've been working with for a year, year and a half it is hard to have to start over again. So, yes, I'm happy with them. But we have gone through three different IT professionals here and that part is something we're going to talk about when we go out for bid the next time how we're going to approach that.

Mr. Baerman asked, does *PARTA* have an IT person on staff.

Mr. Trautman replied no, part of our IT contract with Quality IP is that they send a tech here one day a week. Our tech, who was here today, said to me before he left that we had his head spinning, because by the time he gets here we have a host of issues for him to take care of. So, no we do not have a dedicated person. We kicked that back and forth, we had that before, and we went away from that. So, we're experiencing both sides of that, and I think on this next contract we'll probably have some discussion about how we put it together for the next period of time.

Mr. Baerman said it just seems like the IT infrastructure here is growing and there's some really cool stuff that comes out and managing that, to your point, you gain experience so maybe for another time.

Mr. Gynn asked for confirmation that this is the last year on a five (5) year contract and Mr. Trautman replied I believe so, yes.

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

Ms. Schrader said this resolution along with the previous one and the next one are annual resolutions because they are more than \$100,000 which requires Board approval.

Mr. Gynn thanked Ms. Schrader for reminding the Board of that and mentioned even though it is part of a contract they are still over \$100,000.

Mr. Gynn called for a roll call.

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

Mr. Gynn said the **resolution was approved unanimously** and moved on to Resolution #2024-11-05.

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2024-11-05.

**#2025-11-05: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (*PARTA*) BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVING EXPENDITURE FOR FOXSTER OPCO, LLC DBA CTS SOFTWARE (“CTS”) FOR SOFTWARE SYSTEM.**

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

**Motion: Karen Beck**

**Second: Stacey Wilson**

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

Ms. Amrhein commented that this is the new system that Mr. Trautman and his team have talked about a number of times. Ms. Amrhein asked Mr. Trautman if he would speak about the new system.

Mr. Trautman said this is CTS, it does all of our scheduling for our demand response services right now. It will be the system that we look at when and in the next year or so, we look at micro transit, they have that solution already in there. So, it's been very successful for us. It's been a little bit of a learning curve for people to get used to from leaving Trapeze to go to CTS, but it does schedule somewhere around 250 to 275 rides per day for us and manages will calls. It does a pretty good job for us, and everybody is pretty happy with it.

Mr. Baerman asked is that software as a service.

Mr. Trautman replied yes, it is in a cloud base. A lot of the software that we've gone to is because we don't want to have to keep investing several tens of thousands of dollars into new server clusters every six to eight years. We're trying to get a lot of our systems in the cloud. That way we don't have to worry about the security on it. That's all on the service provider.

Mr. Gynn remarked that he was glad you're pleased with the service.

Mr. Vitale asked how much we would spend a year with them, approximately.

Ms. Amrhein replied this authorizes up to \$130,000 and asked Mr. Trautman if this includes pass-through items as well.

Mr. Trautman replied yes, actually, our CTS contract is our primary contract holder for all of our operations software. So, they actually have two sub-partners through them. Passio Go!, which is our AVL system. And they also have the OptiBus, which is our operations scheduling and routing system that you saw us doing a presentation on, a couple of board meetings ago, where we showed you the overlays and the route increases and how we were able to optimize the route. All of those software providers are partnered with CTS. So, our payment to CTS covers all of those software systems.

Mr. Vitale asked how much does it cost.

Mr. Trautman replied I think Ms. Amrhein said the resolution is not to exceed \$130,000.

Mr. Gynn said the board is required to approve this. As Ms. Schrader mentioned, any contract that's over \$100,000 requires Board approval.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any more questions, hearing none, he called for a roll call.

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

Mr. Gynn said the **resolution was approved unanimously** and moved on to Resolution #2024-11-06.

Mr. Gynn introduced Resolution #2024-11-06.

**#2024-11-06: A RESOLUTION BY THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A FIVE (5) YEAR CONTRACT BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, TO THE GOODYEAR TIRE & RUBBER COMPANY FOR THE LEASE OF TIRES AND TIRE EQUIPMENT. THIS IS A JOINT PURCHASING VENTURE WITH AKRON METRO.**

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

**Motion: Mike Lewis**

**Second: Victor Baerman**

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Amrhein said this is a new contract for a five (5) year lease and this new lease begins in 2025. Ms. Amrhein asked Mr. Trautman to speak about the contract.

Mr. Trautman said we go out for bid every five years for a tire contract, and it is renewed on a yearly basis. Basically, we have to renew the new blanket agreement with them. So, we don't know how many miles we're going to run, and the contract goes by the per-mile basis, so we do this every year. We've had Goodyear up until this point. I'm glad we are staying with our current vendor. When we have to switch vendors, we have to go through what's called a run-out, which is very difficult for our fleet guys in the back. We've got to keep track of the previous vendors' tires, run them the furthest and longest, and then match them up and push them out. We get to stay with Goodyear and that is actually a good thing for us for the next five years.

Ms. Shrader said this is a joint procurement with Akron Metro. The number of miles is based on the lowest bid, and we had two bidders, Goodyear and Firestone-Bridgestone, and Goodyear had the lowest price.

Mr. Gynn asked if there were any more questions or comments, hearing none, he called for a roll call.

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

Mr. Gynn said the **resolution was approved unanimously**.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Gynn said we need a motion to go into Executive Session.

Ms. Beck, Chair of the Personnel Committee, asked for a motion in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22. We want to enter an Executive Session to consider the appointment, deployment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official.

**Motion: Stacey Wilson**

**Second: Frank Vitale**

Mr. Gynn called for a roll call.

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

Upon a **unanimous vote**, the PARTA Board of Trustees along with Ms. Amrhein, Ms. Kelly Jurisch, and Mr. Justin Markey entered into an Executive Session at 7:24 p.m.

At 7:50 p.m. the PARTA Board of Trustees returned to a public session.

Mr. Gynn said we will need a motion from Ms. Beck, Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Ms. Beck asked for a motion for the 1% bonus and the additional time off as the Board approved for Ms. Amrhein.

**Motion: Marvin Woods**

**Second: Victor Baerman**

Mr. Gynn called for a roll call.

<b>Roll Call:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Victor Baerman	X	_____	Jack Murphy	<b>ABSENT</b>	_____



Karen Beck	X	Janice Semmons-Mortimer	ABSENT
Debbie Davison	ABSENT	Frank Vitale	X
Dave Gynn	X	Stacey Wilson	X
Virginia Harris	ABSENT	Karen Wise	ABSENT
Mike Lewis	X	Marvin Woods	X
R. T. Mansfield	ABSENT		

Mr. Gynn said the **motion was approved unanimously.**

Mr. Gynn said if there is no other business then we will see you all in January and have a wonderful holiday.

Mr. Baerman asked if you all read that article in The Portager on transportation. He stated that he thought that Mr. Trautman did an incredibly good job. He also wanted to compliment Mr. Trautman and said that he was really pleased for the organization [PARTA].

Ms. Amrhein explained that the interview was done over an extended period of time, maybe months. The reporter called several times, asked for more information, and was trying to do a thorough job. Sometimes interviews don't go well, and we come out looking like the bad guys. But it didn't really happen that way, so it was good.

Mr. Gynn said you might be aware that Ms. Amrhein and staff meets quarterly with a Community Advisory Committee to get input from the community and sharing input with some community leaders.

Ms. Amrhein said we just had a Transportation Forum last Friday. We had several hours of training on our new system, how to use it and how to help them educate their clients and show them how to use the EZ Fare Validator. Ms. Amrhein thanked Ms. Jurisch, who facilitated the forum, saying it was well done.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing nothing further, Mr. Gynn entertained a motion to adjourn. **Ms. Karen Beck** made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by **Mr. Marvin Woods**. Mr. Gynn asked all in favor to signify by saying aye. He asked any opposed to signify with the same sign. Hearing no opposition, the **motion to adjourn passed unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sony Richardson-Gilroy  
Executive Assistant