# MEETING MINUTES

GCRTA Board of Trustees Meeting

May 19, 2026

**Board Members:** Mayor Koomar (President), Ms. Pacetti (Vice President) Ms. Elder, Mayor Gallo, Ms. Harper, Mr. Love, Ms. McPherson, Mr. Sleasman, Mayor Weiss, Ms. Smith Whigham

**Staff/Other:** Jack Barnett, Jr., Shawn Becker, India Birdsong Terry, Nick Biggar, Casey Blaze, Janet Burney, Floun'say Caver, Brent Charnigo, William Cogar, Nick Davidson, Shashelia Degraffinried, Traci Ext, Scott Ferraro, George Fields, Michael Gettings, Bob Fleig, Joel Freilich, Anthony Garofoli, Rajan Gautam, Fiona Gibbons, Orlando Hudson, Sharon Jenkins, Eric Johnson, Chief Deirdre Jones, Lawrence Jupina, Carl Kirkland, Ida Marshall, Sheila Miller, Joshua Miranda, Bryan Moore, Charles Morgan, Holly Mothes, Mike Schipper, Heather Schnear, Kay Sutula, Wendy Talley, John Togher, Natoya Walker-Minor, Carolyn Young

**Public:** 12

I. Call to Order

Mayor Koomar called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m.

II. Roll Call

A quorum was present.

III. Certification regarding Notice of Meeting

It was advised that the notice of this meeting had been posted more than twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting, that the usual notification had been given to the news media and other interested persons, and that all requirements of the Ohio Revised Code and Rules and Bylaws of this Board regarding notice of meeting had been complied with.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Sleasman moved, and Mr. Love seconded to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2026, Board Meeting. The motion carried.

V. Public Comments – Agenda and Non-Agenda Items

Members of the public addressed the Board regarding both agenda and non-agenda items. Public comments submitted through the webform will appear in their original form and have not been edited for grammar or content. GCRTA reserves the right not to publish any explicit language, derogatory remarks, or personal attacks against individuals.

1. Maurice Rhoades (in-person)

Mr. Rhoades described customer service issues he allegedly encountered with a bus operator on multiple occasions during April and May. Further details were provided to members of staff to investigate further.

2. Kevin Hinkle (in-person)

Mr. Hinkle advocated for public comments to be made in person regarding suggested changes to the Nos. 15, 48, and 50 routes. ask police what we need to do whenever the elevators are out of order on the rail lines, they should post the sign. And announce the train our person need to announce. When elevators are out of order to people with disability. We still have equipment on the buses that can stay broken for months, not get repaired.

3. Desiree Dial (in-person)

Ms. Dial described issues with bus operators not lowering the rail, new drivers being disrespectful and customers smoking.

She did compliment GCRTA staff that attended the recent public hearings, indicating that they were friendly, respectful, used plain English and presented the material that was easy to understand.

4. Loh (in-person)

5. Carren Woods (in-person)

Ms. Woods thanked staff for their service.

6. Arthur Rader (in-person)

Mr. Rader stated that he was the senior vice president of transit at arrived and expressed interest in understanding why his firm was not selected for the ticket vending machine contract on the day's agenda.

CEO Terry advised Mr. Rader that Shawn Becker, Director of Procurement, would follow up with him.

7. Airric Stewart (phone)

Mr. Stewart questioned if Mr. Garofoli could provide the numbers where the tracks need to be updated to accommodate the new rail cars and at what cost. He also questioned whether Mr. Biggar could provide the exact number of customers were surveyed. He also questioned to the number CEO Terry referred to when mentioning the B- score.

CEO Terry stated that the score is 82 out of 100 for the B minus and staff is happy to direct the public to the GCRTA website where that information will be posted.

8. Airric Stewart (webform)

RTA has a responsibility to the socioeconomic well-being of the public through the implementation of public transit. What are the names of the decisionmakers who are

responsible for reading the inquiries and suggestions for April 13, 15, and 16 on service reduction from the public? The suggestions on the 50 and number 15 route adjustments that were suggested by me should be given some detailed response by leadership as to why they will be accepted or not accepted. A detailed response from decisionmakers and leadership should also be given on the number 48A and adjusted 15A reimplementation suggestions by me. Why has the phone service been reduced during the Board of Trustees meetings? What is the cost to maintain it currently and prior to 2024? Why do your customer service people not have correct information as to where bus stop locations are? This most recently has been a problem with Dana and Jacyntha (or Janitha). I'm not sure about the second person's name spelling. India Terry has received three pay raises between 2019 and 2025. Was the budget problem known before her last raise? The policy of misleading the public needs to end immediately at this taxpayer-funded agency. Thorough studies should be made available to the public that give the actual numbers that your percentage conclusions are based on. Respect the accurate assessment of the facts. Deceive, deny, divert, delay, should not be a policy.

VI. Board Governance Committee Report

Ms. Pacetti stated that a document was distributed with informal guidance for communications among Board members and between Board members and management consistent with discussions during the Board retreat earlier this year. She welcomed comments on the document by the end of the month.

VII. Operational Planning & Infrastructure Committee Report

No committee report

VIII. Organizational, Services & Performance Monitoring Committee Report

No committee report.

IX. Audit, Safety Compliance and Real Estate Committee Report

No committee report.

X. External and Stakeholder Relations and Advocacy Committee Report

No committee report

XI. Committee of the Whole

No committee report.

XII. Civilian Oversight Committee (COC) Report

No committee report.

XIII. Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Ms. Elder stated that the next full CAC meeting is scheduled for July 10 and an ADA Subcommittee Meeting will be held on April 24.

XIV. Compensation Committee

Mayor Weiss stated that the Compensation Committee has completed the review of the 2025 performance review and evaluation for India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager, Chief Executive Officer. The Committee conducted a detailed performance evaluation, including feedback and comments submitted by Board Trustees.

Consistent with the annual evaluation process, the Committee reviewed external salary market data for Ms. Terry's position. Due to the current budgetary constraints in management directives issued by the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority on November 14, 2025, restricting any increase in base salary and compensation for non-bargaining employees in 2026 based on 2025 performance, the Committee recommends that Ms. Terry will not receive a base salary increase for 2026.

Additionally, Ms. Terry has agreed to waive any performance bonus for 2025, which she might otherwise have been received per the terms of her employment agreement. The Committee emphasized that these decisions are based on current financial constraints of GCRTA and is not reflective of Ms. Terry's 2025 or overall performance.

XV. Ad-Hoc Nominating Committee

No committee report.

XVI. Introduction of New Employees/Promotions

Ida Marshall, Senior Manager of Talent Acquisition, provided an update on new hires and promotions, emphasizing the essential nature of these additions, particularly in operations.

XVII. Introduction of Resolutions

A. 2026-26 – APPROPRIATING THE GREATER CLEVELAND TRANSIT AUTHORITY'S EXPENDITURES OR OUTLAYS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ("FY") 2027 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET

CEO Terry stated that there has been robust debate. And discussion about priority projects in a very positive light. I think we all understand that there are several items that we want to make sure continue to be getting that TLC to make riders experience that much better. And this is reflective of that effort and continuing to be good stewards of public dollars.

Mr. Sleasman moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mayor Weiss. The motion was approved with abstentions by Ms. Elder and Ms. Whigham.

B. 2026-27 -- RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF SALES TAX SUPPORTED BONDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF (I) PAYING A PORTION OF THE COSTS OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE AUTHORITY'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, IN THE APPROXIMATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF $35,000,000; (II) AUTHORIZING A SIXTH AMENDMENT TO THE TRUST AGREEMENT WITH ARGENT INSTITUTIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS SUCCESSOR TRUSTEE TO THE HUNTINGTON NATIONAL BANK; (III) AUTHORIZING A PLEDGE OF AND LIEN ON THE SALES TAX REVENUES TO SECURE THE AUTHORITY'S INDEBTEDNESS; AND (IV) OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO SUCH SALE OF SALES TAX SUPPORTED BONDS.

CEO Terry explained that the debt issuance is largely to mitigate the impact of another resolution on the agenda, which proposes to reduce the contribution to capital from 10% to 5%. This debt issuance is needed to mitigate any negative impact on the capital program.

Ms. Pacetti moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. McPherson. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. 2026-28 -- AMENDING CHAPTER 460 OF THE CODIFIED RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE GREATER CLEVELAND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Ms. Pacetti moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. Elder. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. 2026-29 – ADOPTING CHAPTER 852 PROTECTION OF TRANSIT SYSTEM ASSETS, EMPLOYEES, AND PASSENGERS OF THE CODIFIED RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE GREATER CLEVELAND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Ms. Whigham moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. McPherson. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. 2026-30 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-056 WITH AMERICAN BUS & ACCESSORIES, INC. FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWENTY-SIX (26) PARATRANSIT VEHICLES, AS SPECIFIED, FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $3,989,791 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, FLEET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mayor Koomar moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. Pacetti. The motion was approved unanimously.

F. 2026-31 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-035 WITH UKG KRONOS SYSTEMS, LLC TO PROVIDE ANNUAL SaaS SUBSCRIPTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR A THREE-YEAR PERIOD IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $497,822.02, BASED ON AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $161,060.54 FOR YEAR ONE, $165,892.35 FOR YEAR TWO, AND $170,869.13 FOR YEAR THREE (GENERAL FUND, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mayor Koomar moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Sleasman. The motion was approved unanimously.

G. 2026-32 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-063 WITH MASABI LLC TO PROVIDE EZFARE MOBILE TICKETING SERVICES IN A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $3,342,740 FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS AND TEN MONTHS (GENERAL FUND, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mr. Love moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Sleasman. The motion was approved unanimously.

H. 2026-33 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2025-135 WITH SIGMA USA CORP TO PROVIDE TICKET VENDING MACHINES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $5,910,422 FOR THE BASE CONTRACT, AND AN OPTION FOR OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $549,345, AND AN OPTION FOR FARE MEDIA IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $130,000, FOR A

TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $6,589,767 ( (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mr. Sleasman moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. Whigham. The motion was approved unanimously.

I. 2026-34 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-003 WITH SWIFTLY, INC. TO PURCHASE THE SWIFTLY TRANSIT DATA PLATFORM IN A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $1,330,259.66 FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS, WITH A ONE-YEAR OPTION IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $469,821.71, AND AN 81-DAY OPTION IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $109,474.89, FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $1,909,556.26 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Ms. Pacetti moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Sleasman. The motion was approved unanimously.

J. 2026-35 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-006 WITH TK ELEVATOR CORPORATION TO PROVIDE ELEVATOR AND ESCALATOR MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $3,120,000 FOR A THREE-YEAR BASE PERIOD, WITH TWO, ONE-YEAR OPTIONS IN AMOUNTS NOT TO EXCEED $1,100,000 AND $1,120,000, RESPECTIVELY, FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $5,340,000 FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS (GENERAL FUND, CENTRAL FACILITIES MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mr. Love moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. Whigham. The motion was approved unanimously.

K. 2026-36 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-010 WITH RAILWORKS TRACK SERVICES, LLC FOR PROJECT 52Z – RECONSTRUCTION OF THE WATERFRONT TRANSIT LINE - OVERLOOK IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $1,192,000 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, ENGINEERING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mr. Sleasman moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mayor Weiss. The motion was approved unanimously.

L. 2026-37 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-020 WITH NORTHEAST OHIO TRENCHING SERVICE, INC. FOR PROJECT 19.79 – SHAKER SQUARE SUBSTATION S4 BUILDING REPAIRS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $715,000 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, ENGINEERING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mayor Koomar moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Sleasman. The motion was approved unanimously.

M. 2026-38 – AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-022 WITH EDGAR TRENT CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, LLC FOR TRUNK LINE FIBER OPTIC NETWORK CONSTRUCTION IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $848,605.00 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, ENGINEERING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mr. Sleasman moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Ms. Whigham. The motion was

approved unanimously.

XVIII. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Rajan Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer, presented the Secretary-Treasurer's report. The annual inflation rate rose to 3.8% in April 2026. Consumer sentiment decreased 10% in April and the preliminary results for May show it is unchanged. Consumer sentiment has decreased 3.2% year over year.

Ridership through April 2026 was 0.8% lower compared to 2025 and 27% lower compared to pre-COVID. Passenger fares correlate closely to ridership data. April fare revenue was 3.8% below April 2025 and on a year-to-date basis, is 6% lower.

When compared to pre-COVID levels, 3.1 million lower or roughly 25%. Sales tax was $20.8 million based on economic activity in February. It is 2.5% higher than May 2025 levels and on a year-to-date basis, we are 4.6% higher when compared to 2025 levels.

Long-term debt outstanding as of the end of 2025 was $13.9 million. The average investment yield on a year-to-date basis is 3.63%. Total cash and investments are $334.8 million, of which $27.8 million is the unrestricted general fund cash balance, which satisfies the Board policy to maintain a 30-day reserve.

XIX. General Manager, CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager and CEO, began the report by thanking the Board for their confidence in her leadership at GCRTA.

GCRTA successfully secured a $10M grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to fund the upcoming Blue Line track reconstruction program.

CEO Terry advised that the Authority had an internal spring town hall which is a semiannual meeting to let staff know what is happening with GCRTA.

CEO Terry was featured through Newsmakers, which is a forum for public officials on YouTube hosted by former Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish.

Members of staff attended an event at the City Club of Cleveland which commemorated the work of Robert Edwards, which focused on the architecture of the Great Migration to the north and Midwest and transit's role.

Staff attended the groundbreaking ceremony in Brook Park for the new Cleveland Browns stadium hosted by the Haslam Group on April 30. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2029. GCRTA maintains its partnership and collaboration to make sure we can help bring transit to that environment.

Moving to the next subject, CEO Terry advised that Miceli's Dairy Products was able to begin a major expansion driven by a transit-oriented development (TOD)-adjacent project. About one year ago, GCRTA sold a small property for under $10,000 that was necessary for Miceli to expand, which will result in up to 250 new employees. They are breaking ground on a new silos and cold-storage location. That expansion might have been significantly more difficult without the land.

CEO Terry advised that she has been nominated to join the Board of University Hospital.

CEO Terry explained the grand opening of Woodhill Station East, which is located directly across the street from public transit. This is another connection to TOD and is a boon making sure there is equity in transportation.

CEO Terry stated that account-based ticketing fare capping initiative launches on June 1, 2026, with public unveilings at Tower City, West 117th, and Windermere stations.

Sharon Jenkins presented GCRTA's brand refresh campaign, focused on digital and structural updates rolling out through the summer across transit facilities.

Dr. Caver, Chief Operating Officer, provided a briefing regarding GCRTA's strategy when multiple events are held simultaneously in the downtown central business district. On May 9, a Cleveland Cavaliers playoff game, Cleveland Guardians game and a concert at Huntington Bank Field all occurred the same evening. This congestion was compounded by storms and the events running late.

GCRTA services these venues for one hour after the event concludes. However, on this day, GCRTA serviced the rail system for two hours following the event and the last train did not leave downtown until 2 a.m. Service Quality increased service for this event – including opening the Waterfront Line, which is currently closed due to construction.

Moving on with the report, CEO Terry acknowledged new Trustee Emily Harper, who was appointed by the City of Cleveland and serves a term through March 2028. Ms. Harper stated that she was very appreciative of the rich data that is representative of a holistic rider experience and was looking forward to learning more and being part of the discussions.

In memoriam, CEO Terry advised that former Board Trustee William W. Patmon, Jr. recently passed away. He served on the GCRTA Board of Trustees from 2009 to 2011.

Concluding the report, CEO Terry noted that former Trustee Rev. Charles Lucas will be memorialized with a plaque at the Shaker Square intersection later this summer or fall.

XX. President's Report

No items.

XXI. Old Business

No items.

XXII. New Business

No items.

XXIII. Upcoming Meetings

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2026.

XXIV. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Koomar and seconded by Mr. Sleasman; the motion was approved by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Attest: _____
Secretary-Treasurer

_____
President