MEETING MINUTES

GCRTA Board of Trustees Meeting

June 16, 2026

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

Staff/Other: Nick Biggar, India Birdsong Terry, Floun'say Caver, Brent Charnigo, Sharon Cottrell, Nick Davidson, Shashelia Degraffinried, Traci Ext, Michael Fesler, George Fields, Bob Fleig, Joel Freilich, Anthony Garofoli, Rajan Gautam, Chief Deirdre Jones, Lawrence Jupina, Carl Kirkland, Jeff Macko, Ida Marshall, Sheila Miller, Charles Morgan, Ruben Morgan, Mike Schipper, Joe Shaffer, Kay Sutula, Wendy Talley, Brian Temming, John Togher, Carolyn Young

Public: 8

I. Call to Order

Mayor Koomar called the meeting to order at 9:45 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 May 19, 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. Speaker 1 (in-person)

The speaker expressed concerns regarding their experiences with paratransit recently, noting that the scheduling is not accurate.

The Board advised that the Director of Service Management would follow up with the speaker.

2. Kevin Hinkle (in-person)

Mr. Hinkle suggested placing a sign to alleviate confusion at the bus stop located at Superior Ave. and 6th Street due to construction in front of the Cleveland Public Library.

3. Loh (in-person)

Everybody is concerned about the quality of service and things have improved, but there are certain things I want to make sure riders will not be blamed for. Recently I have been sending photos if I see anything inside of our service vehicle that is damaged or broken. However, the administrative department thinks that we should have transit police involved to investigate if these damages are vandalism. It may not be intentional vandalism.

That's why I have been trying to address the issue that when we purchase new vehicles, lots of things we use in the vehicles should be built in. Not everybody is trying to vandalize them. That will help mechanics and cleaning crew decrease their workload. My concern is every rider's safety.

4. Airric Stewart (phone)

There was a time when I could listen to the entirety of public comment. At some point the service was reduced. There was no explanation as to why the service was reduced. I repeatedly have asked what was the cost to run the service.

Customer service often they can't answer questions, including not giving bus stop numbers. There should be some explanation as to why that is.

The suggested 15-A, 48A and 50 routes should run 16 hours a day, Monday through Friday and 14 hours a day on Saturdays and Sundays. I would like an explanation as to why no one has given me feedback from the Board of Trustees or the Community Advisory Committee. There's clear evidence that the 50 is more efficient starting at Marymount and still going to the same location on 93rd and will not disrupt the 30-minute service if you drop 48 down to one hour service, bring back in the 48A.

That the 30-minute service is still not disrupted on the north of 131st in miles and you get more people riding. You haven't addressed the multiple businesses at Pinecrest and Shaker Square that would get one bus service for a large population of the ridership. There's been no response as to why you won't give that service.

On things that could be readjusted, how do you expect the public to give healthy input to the efficient service of RTA if you only respond to the public when you feel like it? On matters of importance, you have driven the public into a state of apathy, which is why there are so few people to participate in these public comments and this public hearing that you have every month.

Mayor Koomar stated that the 15A has been reviewed by staff. When new Board members come on, they have met with Mr. Freilich to review and understand the reasons for the system NEXT GEN redesign and how those routes between Marymount and University Circle serve more people and more frequency. The Authority is going through a strategic plan if there is an update to any of the routes, those will be taken under consideration.

5. Airric Stewart (webform)

RTA has a responsibility to the socioeconomic wellbeing of the public through the implementation of public transit. There has been no response from Joel Frelich or anyone in his department about the repeated requests on the cost to run the 15, 50, and 48 bus routes in their current form. This inquiry is referencing annual, quarterly, and monthly costs. There has been no communication to me from the CAC or BOT in reference to the 2 emails sent at 7:48 p.m., July 15, 2025, titled "Touchpoints for the 15A" and "Transfer Points for the 15A and 48A." The evidence is overwhelming. The number 50 can be maintained as an hourly bus 7 days a week better if it starts at Marymount for its furthest southern point. The 48 can then become an hourly bus during the limited service time of the number 50. The 48 and 50 will have the exact same route south of E. 131st and Miles. The more efficient 48A can be reinstalled as an hourly bus on its previous route as a limited service 7-day-a-week bus. It would be better to label the 48A "Kerruish Park" when it commences from E. 93rd heading toward E. 177th and S. Miles. The 48 and 48A will have the same route north of E. 131st and Miles. This will protect the maintenance of the 30-minute service on that route during the time of the 48A being in service. The suggested hourly 15A will give one-bus service to thousands of people to Pinecrest shopping center--approximately 68 businesses and Shaker Square--approximately 26 businesses.

6. Adam Rossi (webform)

If GCRTA wants any chance of getting a tax levy ballot measure to pass, GCRTA needs to make a clearly defined plan for the use of tax levy funds.

I believe that you and I should have the freedom to choose reliable, clean, sustainable public transit options, and for this reason, I thank you for the service you provide to Clevelanders and for pursuing a funding solution in order to make quality service available as an option for us in Cleveland.

Regarding a ballot levy, we can learn about what does and does not work from other cities that have passed transit levies, and one thing is clear: the Cuyahoga County citizens need to know exactly what their tax dollars are buying, and therefore, GCRTA needs to focus time and energy towards developing a clear plan for the use of tax levy funding. Furthermore, that plan cannot be to simply maintain current service. If Cuyahoga County citizens think that what they will gain is simply maintaining current levels of service, a tax levy on the ballot will absolutely fail. The plan must outline what Cuyahoga County citizens will gain: faster public transit; more reliable public transit; walkable communities with more affordable places to live, work, and be entertained.

Transit funding is in dire straits in Cleveland. We need a levy to pass. And we know from other cities like Columbus and Nashville that in order to do that, we need GCRTA to create a plan for the use of tax levy funds. Thank you for your time and consideration.

7. Larry Rodriguez (webform)

I'm a Paratransit rider and fixed route rider. I would like GCRTA to buy less noisy vehicles; buy a piece of wheelchair securement equipment that doesn't make noise; fix and properly maintain vehicles; and train their operators in how to work with people on the autism spectrum.

I want to advocate for a better transit system overall. As a person on the autism spectrum, I find the Paratransit vehicles to be loud and obnoxious. The wheelchair securement equipment makes too much noise. Operators drop the hooks on the floor when they are securing wheelchair users. The vehicles are poorly maintained mechanically. Operators overall are hit or

miss when it comes to understanding people on the spectrum. I get better service on the fixed route service than the Paratransit service. Thank you for your time and consideration.

8. Isaac Shimsky-Agosto

As we approach another summer shutdown of the Blue and Green lines, it would be helpful for RTA to have better signage regarding the replacement buses. Every time there is a shutdown, there are people who need help finding where to board, what stop they should get off, and/or understanding that they don't need to pay. While obviously other riders are always willing to help, it would be useful if this information was more clearly signposted at stations, or included at all on the rider's alert on RTA's website.

VI. Board Governance Committee Report

No committee report.

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

No committee report.

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. 2026-39 – REPEALING CHAPTER 1087 TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT OF THE CODIFIED RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE GREATER CLEVELAND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND ENACTING NEW CHAPTER 1087 TRANSIT-ORIENTED AND JOINT DEVELOPMENT

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

B. 2026-40 -- AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-034 WITH NRG BUSINESS MARKETING LLC FOR FURNISHING THE AUTHORITY'S FULL REQUIREMENTS OF NATURAL GAS SUPPLY FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $8,580,000 WITH TWO, ONE-YEAR OPTIONS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $2,860,000 PER OPTION YEAR, FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $14,300,000 FOR THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD (GENERAL FUND, ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

Mr. Love inquired whether this contract is similar to the previous contract amount. Mr. Togher advised that this contract is with the same vendor, which has changed its name. This contract is approximately $300,000 better than the estimate. The basis rate is lower than the other vendors interviewed, but to compare contract to contract is difficult because the former contract had fewer CNG buses in the system.

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

C. 2026-41 -- AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2025-36 WITH ESKILLZ CORPORATION TO PROVIDE A LEARNING MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $472,717.94 FOR A PERIOD OF THREE-YEARS WITH TWO, ONE-YEAR OPTIONS IN AMOUNTS NOT TO EXCEED $120,742.92 AND $126,176.33, RESPECTIVELY, FOR A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $719,637.19 FOR A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND AND GENERAL FUND, MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

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

D. 2026-42 -- AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NO. 2026-007 WITH ROSS AND WHITE, INC. FOR HAYDEN AND TRISKETT GARAGE BUS WASH SYSTEM REPLACEMENT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $2,825,000 (RTA DEVELOPMENT FUND, ENGINEERING & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BUDGET)

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

XVIII. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Rajan Gautam, Deputy General Manager of Finance and Secretary-Treasurer, presented the Secretary-Treasurer's report.

Ridership through May 2026 was 2.2 million, which was 1.4% higher than May 2025 and 26% lower than pre-COVID levels. May passenger fare revenue was 1.7% higher than May 2025 and year-to-date, fare revenue is 4.5% below 2025. Sales and use tax for June is 2.6% higher than June 2025, and on a year-to-date basis, it is 4.3% higher compared to 2025 total receipts.

Total long-term debt as of the end of 2025 was $13.9 million. The average investment yield is 3.67% and investments total $332.2 million, of which $25.8 million is an unrestricted general fund.

XIX. General Manager, CEO Report

India L. Birdsong Terry, General Manager and CEO, began the report by congratulating Joseph Schaefer, Director of Engineering, who was honored by Crane's Cleveland Business.

The account-based ticketing fare-capping initiative began in June. The customer adoption rate is encouraging.

CEO Terry and staff met with leadership at FirstEnergy Ohio to talk through how to audit and review substations to make sure they are top-notch efficiency and productivity. GCRTA is the largest partner in the area with twenty (20) substations powered by FirstEnergy.

CEO Terry noted recent events including a world soccer match and the pride parade, resulted in over 20,000 passenger trips on the rail system without issue.

CEO Terry made a presentation to the Port of Cleveland Board of Trustees to reintroduce GCRTA and look at ways to work towards TOD together.

Staff met with the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission last week and to discuss the strategic plan.

Concluding the report, CEO Terry noted that Barron's is dedicating their new terminal that retains Greyhound service into Greater Cleveland.

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, July 21, 2026.

XXIV. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Koomar and seconded by Ms. Pacetti; the motion was approved by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 10:21 a.m.

Attest: _____
Secretary-Treasurer

_____
President