

**COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 10:00 AM**

**COMMISSIONER PRESENT:** Chairman Flozell Daniels, Commissioner Fred Neal, Jr, Commissioner Mark Raymond, Commissioner Walter Tillery, Commissioner Mostofa Sarwar, Commissioner Laura Bryan, Commission Art Walton, and Commissioner Sharon Wegner

**COMMISSIONER ABSENT:** Commissioner Mostofa Sarwar

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:15 am.
2. **Roll Call:** A quorum was confirmed.
3. **Consideration: Approval of Minutes**  
Minutes were presented and adopted for March 24, 2020, April 28, 2020, May 26, 2020 and June 23, 2020. Commissioner Neal moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to approve the motion.
4. **Consideration: RTA Chairman's Report**  
Chairman Daniels stated that the Board held a Board Retreat on September 19, 2020 and the Board held a discussion regarding the RTA's Budget and COVID-19 and he thanked the staff and operations regarding all the hard work being made.
5. **Consideration: Jefferson Parish Report**  
Commissioner Wegner stated that on October 11, 2020 there will be a new schedule change for JeT and this schedule change should improve on-time performance by 10% on all routes and the schedules will include a new color scheme for all the Westbank routes.  
  
Chairman Daniels stated that it was very important to continue regional conversation with Jefferson Parish.
6. **Consideration: RTA General Counsel's Report**  
Sundiata Haley stated that there is an Executive Session.
7. **Consideration: RTA's Chief Executive Officer's Report**  
The CEO reported that ridership was still being impacted by COVID-19 and the RTA was still running limited service and the majority of the passengers were wearing masks and staff was still cleaning and disinfecting the buses and streetcars.

**COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 10:00 AM**

The CEO reported that New Orleans had been spared from the recent hurricanes and the RTA was helping support the mobility of the evacuees from Lake Charles making sure they can travel back from their hotels and the City's Resource Center.

The CEO reported that staff has worked as a cohesive team to ensure that the RTA was ready to support the City in the event of another hurricane and the Mayor issued a declaration to evacuate. The RTA's role is to pick up patrons from about 18 designated evacuation spots throughout the City of New Orleans and transport them to the Smoothie King Center to make sure they are transported to a safe location.

**8. Consideration of Ferry Operations Update**

Jose Ruiz stated that the Armature was still the main vessel in service for Canal and the Thomas Jefferson was the main vessel for the Lower Algiers.

Jose Ruiz stated that the RTA 1 went to Metal Shark and RTA 2 was being prepared for inspection, including additional drills with the crew that will be operating the boat and the Marketing Department will start promoting GoMobile to use on the ferries.

In response to Chairman Daniels, Jose Ruiz stated that the previous tables that were used to validate the GoMobile Applications were bigger and the battery did not last a long time and the new validators were cell phones and rugged waterproof and weatherproof and connected wireless to the vessels.

Jose Ruiz stated that staff was working on the signal operation on the Chalmette side.

**9. Consideration of DBE Report**

Ms. Keziah Cawthorne gave a report to the Commission. She stated that this year the RTA awarded \$12.6 million dollars of which \$4.6 million went to DBE's and Small Business as prime contractors. The RTA has a total 30% DBE commitment for the year but as of today the agency is at 37%.

**COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 10:00 AM**

Keziah Cawthorne stated that below were the ongoing DBE Projects Participation:

- Canal Street Ferry Terminal Project
- Financial Management Service Project
- Various Insurance Coverage Project
- Website Enhancement Project
- Security Services

Keziah Cawthorne stated that below were the ongoing Small Business Projects:

- On Call Architectural and Engineering Project
- Temporary Staffing Surveyors Project
- Replacement of the Air Compressor Project

In response to Chairman Daniels, Keziah Cawthorne stated that the RTA was part of the LAUCP that includes the DOTD and the Airport.

In response to Chairman Daniels, Keziah Cawthorne stated that currently there is a mixture of DBE Businesses some of whom has done business with the RTA and some are new and the RTA looks at its goals every three years.

Chairman Daniels stated that he would like the RTA to be very proactive and would like to be the best in the state when dealing with DBE's and Small Businesses.

**10. Consideration of Consent Agenda:**

The following items appeared on the consent agenda. Commissioner Raymond moved and Commissioner Tillery seconded to adopt the Consent Agenda Items. **Resolution No. 20-074 was adopted unanimously.**

- A. Infinity – Canal Street Ferry Terminal  
**Resolution No. 20-073 was adopted unanimously.**

In response to Chairman Daniels, Lona Hankins stated that the purpose of the redesign of the terminal when the rail work was removed staff had to go back and redesign that area and that's why staff had to amend the Scope of Work.

**11. Consideration of Financial Statements**

The CFO presented the July 2020 Financial Statement. The Passenger Revenues was down from the pandemic and, to a lesser extent, the Hard Rock Hotel collapse caused ridership to drop by 56.2% below budget through June and by 59.2% compared to the same period last year. Contributing to this

**COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 10:00 AM**

outcome was RTA's No Fare Policy, which was in effect March 29 – May 16. Similarly, actual CNO sales tax collections fell short of projections by 29.1% through the current period and by 28.9% compared to July 2019 year-to-date results.

The CFO stated that Services remain in positive standing due to reduced service from the COVID-19 pandemic. Management Service Fees were under budget 1.2m (2.5%) through July. That result along with lower than projected Professional/Technical Services (i.e., Legal Fees, Consultants, Data Processing Services, etc.) created the positive variance for this expense category through July 2020.

The CFO stated that Materials and Supplies – Diesel fuel prices continue to rise, increasing by \$0.10/gallon to \$1.30/gal since June. Prices remained under budget, however, by an average of \$1.00/gallon for the month and \$0.95/gallon year-to-date. Diesel fuel consumption for July was 27,000 gallons under budget and 300,000 gallons under budget YTD.

The CFO stated that the total year-to-date expenses are \$3 Million under budget as a result of maintaining an 80% service level based upon the decline in ridership.

Chairman Daniels asked for a report at next months meeting regarding RTA's Causality and Liability Insurance from a Safety perspective and how the RTA can reduce the cost.

Alex Wiggins stated that staff can impact these numbers by being very aggressive with our safety culture training, better supervision in the field and staff can bring additional analysis back to the board.

The CFO stated that there was about \$1 Million in this line item of reserves.

The CFO stated that the RTA was ending the year with total revenue and expense with a net of \$13.2 Million before any depth services in part to the CARES Act and has not received the second part of the CARES Act that would increase the net revenue. The RTA will receive \$21.4 Million from the second round of the CARES Act.

**COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 10:00 AM**

Alex Wiggins commended his Executive Team because the RTA was in a unique position with regard to our peers across the country the RTA was operating low technology demand services with the streetcars and the bus service.

Commissioner Raymond thanked Gizelle Banks for all her hard work.

**12. Consideration: Procurement Activity Report**

No presentation was given. The information was included in the meeting packet for review.

**13. Consideration of New Business**

None

**14. Public Comments**

Autumn White wanted to know how can the RTA communicate better with passengers when the system was being shut down. In response to Autumn White, Alex Wiggins stated that the RTA was looking into a better way to communicate with passengers and make the necessary adjustments. Staff was presented with significant catastrophic weather with very short notice so staff needed to move quickly.

Chairman Daniels stated that when the RTA makes improvements in technology interface and the public will get a broader sense of what's happening.

Jim Goodwin stated that the Algiers Association has positive feedback concerning the ferry.

In response to Jim Goodwin, Lona Edwards stated that on the decision to replace or repair the barge the RTA was waiting on the Engineering Firm and staff have given the Engineering Firm additional time because they need more detailed analysis and once all this is complete the NTP would be given.

In response to Jim Goodwin, Alex Wiggins stated that staff was anticipating bringing the new ferry into service during the month of October.

Valerie Jefferson stated that during the hurricane RTA and Transdev took very good care of the operators.

**COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 10:00 AM**

In response to Valerie Jefferson, Alex Wiggins stated that staff was going to put signs on every other seat so people can social distance on the buses and streetcars and the RTA should be able to carry 25 to 30 passengers safely and the RTA does not want to see standing room only on the buses and/or streetcars and if buses and/or streetcars get to standing room only the operators should call dispatch to inform them of the situation so another bus could be placed on the route.

**15. Executive Session**

A motion was made by Commissioner Raymond, seconded by Commissioner Tillery to go into Executive Session.

**16. Adjournment**

Commissioner Tillery moved and Commissioner Raymond seconded to adjourn the Board Meeting of September 22, 2020. The motion was approved unanimously.