

Minutes

RTA External & Stakeholder Relations & Advocacy Committee Meeting

9:00 a.m., June 4, 2019

Committee: McCall (Chair), Lucas (Vice Chair), Bibb, Byrne, Welo

Other Board members: Clough, Joyce, Moss, Serrano

Not present: None

Also Present: Astolfi, Benford, Bitto, Bober, Burney, Catalusci, Caver, Cottrell, Cranford, Dangelo, Davis (C), Davis (J), Dietrich, Farmeric, Feke, Fields, Garofoli, Gautam, Gay, Gibbons, Jaszczak, Jones, Keshtkaran, Kirkland, Laule, Lewis, Lively, Lyons-Statler, Macver, McGervey, Opett, Penning, Ponder, Rosenberger, Schipper, Schultz, Scott, Smith, Statler, Stocking, Sutula, Suty, Tarka, Tarter, Togher, Vukmanic, Washington, Weil, Wilson, Zeller

Chief McCall called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The secretary called the roll and reported that five (5) committee members were present.

GCP Financial & Economic Forecast

Aleshia Washington, vice president of government advocacy for Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) and the primary staff lead on this project, and Nancy Lyons-Statler of WSP, made the presentation. The initial presentation was in February when the scope of service was developed. WSP was selected to do the work. The study is two-fold. First to engage their members on the financial challenges and opportunities of RTA so they can give guidance and recommendations based off their expertise. Second is to ensure they are supporting the overall work RTA is embarking on to set a new vision for the future of the system. WSP brings local and national expertise and experience. They have reached out to RTA to collect data and laid out some initial ways to go about the work.

Nancy Lyons-Statler of WSP is the Cleveland Office lead. WSP is an international firm with a local presence. The project manager is part of the Advisory Services Practice Group and is out of the Washington, DC office. They analyze and access transit operations. Six research questions will be used to approach the study. 1. Ask how RTA compares to peer agencies. They will perform a benchmarking exercise based on similar agencies, how they function, etc. 2. What are the economic and market risks RTA faces? This will be external to RTA, influences within the economy locally and regionally that can influence how RTA is operating. 3. What are the financial issues RTA faces? Funding is always an issue so that will be looked at. 4. What potential efficiencies could increase financial performance, and what strategies could maximize revenue? They will look at the things RTA is doing and through benchmarking and state of the practice, state of the art to see if there are other things that can be leveraged. 5. What are current key performance indicators and what processes and/or other indicators can be implemented? An example would be the operating cost per hour. 6. What are current and potential future local funding mechanisms for transit?

Mr. Bibb asked if this will consist of any scenario planning. She confirmed they would get into that. Chief McCall asked for her to expand on why WSP is doing this type of work. Nancy said

that WSP has six practice sectors. One is transportation and infrastructure. That is 80% of the work they do locally and nationally. Another sector is called advisory services, where they get into working with their clients to improve their future work, opportunities, funding and planning. This sector will focus on this project. The local group understands RTA operations. This helps them to provide a streamlined approach. WSP staff is managed by areas of technical expertise. They have a lot of solid cross communication so it's easy to get to experts. Their projects are locally based. It allows them to be nimble and responsive to getting to the experts. Mr. Serrano asked her to define local funding. She said that any funding that gets beyond FTA sources. Tim added it could include state funding, sales tax and any potential private sources.

Strategic Plan

Maribeth Feke, director of programming & planning, and Josh and Jason of HDR, gave the presentation. HDR is here to speak on developing the Strategic Plan. They have recently met with stakeholders and will continue to meet this week. In October, Dr. Caver outlined a series of pillar studies. The Strategic Plan will top it off as a foundation for the next 10 years. The economic impact study is complete. The rail car study is complete. The fare equity study was presented in April and should be complete by the end of the year. The system redesign study is underway. There was a presentation in February. There will be another presentation in July and October. WSP just presented on their operational analysis. The Strategic Plan will be a compilation of all the pillar studies. The Board approved the contract with HDR in February. The contract and notice to proceed was executed in April. In January 2020, there will be another update. The plan is to adopt the plan April 2020. The old plan sunsets 2020.

The HDR project managers, Josh and Jason reside in Columbus. Josh has a lot of experience with transit. He implemented a system redesign study at COTA. Jason is a foremost expert in technology. Transportation is in the middle of a revolution. Mobility options are flourishing and urban centers around the country are offering new innovations and seamless connectivity. Technology is changing the potential of transportation, providing fast communications and immediate access to new transportation options. In the midst of all this change, RTA has many successes to be proud of. RTA is improving its infrastructure with new rapid stations, is nationally recognized with awards for safety and security, sustainability and fleet management, and is enhancing the customer experience through innovative marketing programs and coordination with local businesses. The RTA fare app is simple and easy to understand. Unfortunately, RTA faces challenges along with transit agencies around the country like decreasing ridership, reduced funding, service challenges, disrupted new mobility business and aging infrastructure. Jobs continue to shift to locations that are difficult to serve with transit. Over the past decade, RTA's annual ridership has continued to decrease, resulting in decreasing fare box revenue, which in turn makes it tougher to maintain state of good repair. Customers have raised their expectations about transportation. RTA's job is becoming more challenging. In order to build public trust and define its future, the time for a SP is now.

HDR will create understanding and build consensus and pull the pillar studies together into a central framework for the future. They will update the vision and goals. They will encourage input from stakeholders and the public and combine best practices. They will assess transit needs. New mobility and transit technology are key aspects of the current revolution. What does that mean for the future of the workforce, service and customers? They will combine the knowledge they have from other agencies and combine it with what is happening at RTA. They will use community and public input and identify priority strategies and apply them to

performance metrics. They will assess transit needs. They will look at state of good repair, funding needs, sustainability, equity, values as an agency and community. They will combine that with the input they are receiving. There will be additional input at the end of the summer. Once the plan is released to the public, they want broad consensus and input from a diversity of community members, neighborhood leaders, business leaders and agency leaders. The plan will be delivered within the year. They are on schedule. There will be preliminary analyses. The pillar study information will be pulled in. There will be draft recommendations. Lastly, the plan is for the strategic plan to be adopted next spring.

They will try to understand the traditional way transit agencies can work and function to serve a greater region and individual neighborhoods, while understanding that in 10 years, there may be a different approach to mobility in those neighborhoods. Some of the basic things they heard in their initial meetings with staff and stakeholders is shared vision. They want to understand what that vision is for the region from RTA and the riders and figuring out who those future consumers are and who the real riders and users are to transform the way the region works.

They asked what the board thoughts are on the big vision they need to achieve to guide the plan. Mayor Clough asked what they anticipate the Board should be providing them. He said the main need is what the board's vision is for the future. The individual visions will be combined into one approach they can use as a unified area of expertise and strategy. He asked for the board to look at their individual personal background and interest as individuals, as professional and leaders combined with their board knowledge. What is needed for the agency to evolve or what needs to stay the same. Mayor Clough asked what are they not prepared to deal with based on what the consultant sees happening in transit. They will meet with each board member individually to get a deeper dive into their vision. Ms. McCall suggested another committee meeting time to have a session with the community. Mayor Welo had her one-on-one with the consultant and was impressed with the technology and that RTA is an agency in motion.

APTA Agreement

Steve Bitto, executive director of marketing and communications made the presentation. Cleveland was selected to host the 2021 Rail Rodeo and Rail Conference. It is one of APTA's largest conferences. Steve will make a brief presentation on the requirements for hosting the rodeo. The committee will be asked to move this to the full board meeting June 18 for approval. APTA likes to have the agreements in place at the current conference, which is from June 22-26 in Toronto this year. A group of RTA employees will go to the Rodeo June 20 to scout the program.

The rodeo is the five-day competition where teams throughout North America will compete. The teams are comprised of mechanics, operators and rail maintainers. The Rodeo is held five days in advance of the conference. The conference is an opportunity to network and could have up to 1,000 attendees. There are general sessions with keynote addresses, educational sessions on rail safety, State of Good Repair, technical tours and networking. The host responsibilities include equipment, staffing, food and personnel. The host is required to provide meals for the rodeo participants such as breakfast and lunch and equipment such as tents, tables, chairs, Wi-Fi compressors and other amenities to run the competition at the operation site and maintenance site. Staff will be responsible for registration, running and security. Sponsorship solicitation is allowed except from APTA members and RTA vendors. RTA will work closely with APTA to develop the program and promoting the event. RTA hosted the transit board

conference several years ago. Staff went to prior conferences to promote the Cleveland conference. RTA will help secure speakers, provide technical tours and provide transportation to tours and complementary fare for attendees.

Staff recommends that the External & Stakeholder Relations & Advocacy Committee recommend to the Board of Trustees, authorizing the Interim General Manager to enter into a host agreement with APTA to host APTA's 2021 International Rail Rodeo and Rail Conference. Ms. Moss asked what the commitment will cost and how much can be raised in sponsorships. Steve said that RTA hosted a bus conference a while back. There could be funds in the budget to underwrite the cost. Dr. Caver added that \$100,000 was budgeted in the past. This could cost \$100K-\$200K, but the plan would be to find sponsors. Chief McCall asked if the economic impact could be presented. Chief said this is one of the highly attended conferences. The workforce of the future gets to share their skills. The bulk of the fundraising is done through APTA, but RTA is responsible for some things. Ms. Moss asked for staff to get last year's budget for voting purposes.

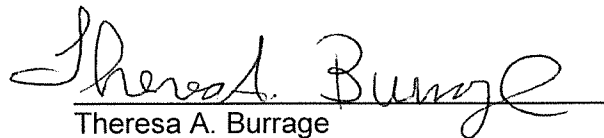
Mayor Welo asked if APTA can share what they raise. Chief said that APTA may not be able to share the amounts depending on the sponsor. Mr. Joyce asked how this could be coordinated with Destination Cleveland. Steve said APTA will work with them on the hotels and RTA will work with them on welcome kits and incentives for them to see the city. The City of Cleveland Special Events committee will also be involved with road closures, etc. Mr. Bibb suggested Destination Cleveland for assistance with fundraising. Mayor Clough asked that the host transit agencies be contacted to see what they contributed. Rev. Lucas said this will help RTA. Chief McCall suggested board engagement, staff engagement and assistance from Clevelanders for Public Transit. It was moved by Rev. Lucas, seconded by Mr. Bibb and approved by unanimous vote.

Dr. Caver added that this conference sits strategically with RTA priorities, which is rail cars and rail infrastructure. The continent leaders in rail cars, rail infrastructure and FTA leaders will be on-site to see the system needs. This will help accelerate RTA's plea for assistance. The size and scale of other legacy systems makes them a priority for legislators. Chief McCall said the lobbyist should be on the ground. This will be a good opportunity to see what can be awarded to RTA during the conference. This was just a report so there will not be any public comment. Comments will be heard when the strategic plan is brought back through this committee.

Chief McCall adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.



Floun'say R. Caver, Ph.D., Interim CEO
General Manager/Secretary/Treasurer



Theresa A. Burrage
Executive Secretary