

Minutes

Special RTA Board of Trustees Meeting

9:07 a.m., Wednesday, July 3, 2019

Present: Clough (Chair), Lucas (Vice Chair), Bibb, Byrne, Joyce, McCall, Moss, Serrano, Welo

Not present: None

Also Present: Anderson, Astolfi, Becker, Benford, Bennett, Brooks-Williams, Burney, Castelucci, Caver, Ciesla, Cranford, Dangelo, Davis, Fields, Garofoli, Gautam, Gillan-Shafron, Gray, Jaszczak, Johnson, Kirkland, Laule, Lewis, Metcalf, Moore, Penning, Pinkney-Butts, Schipper, Sutula, Togher, Tucker, Vukmanic, Winn, Young, Zeller

Mayor Clough called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. The secretary called the roll and reported that nine (9) board members were present.

The Secretary advised that notice of this meeting has been posted more than twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting, that the usual notification has been given 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 have been complied with.

Executive Session Requested

9:09 a.m. - Mayor Clough asked for a motion to go into executive session to consider the appointment, employment and compensation of a public employee or official. It was moved by Ms. Moss, seconded by Mayor Welo. There were nine (9) ayes and none opposed.

There may be action to consider the selection of a candidate after the executive session.

9:48 a.m. - It was moved by Mr. Bibb, seconded by Mr. Serrano to come out of executive session. There were nine (9) ayes and none opposed.

Discussion

Mayor Clough stated that there was an extensive process to determine the next CEO/General Manager of RTA. The Board has interviewed with some great candidates. He asked for a motion to consider one of the candidates.

Ms. Moss made a motion to give Mayor Clough authority to enter into contract negotiations with India Birdsong to become the new CEO/General Manager of GCRTA. It was seconded by Mayor Welo.

Mayor Clough said the board felt they needed to do a national search. They hired a company that specializes in attracting candidates that have the experience that RTA was looking for. They do a lot of vetting before they present candidates that would be a good fit. The board has the opportunity to look at the candidates and add candidates or go with the original slate. It is a detailed process. It was the goal of the board to find someone that would be best at leading the RTA at this point and time and would be the best fit for RTA. They extended the time period for the hiring process beyond the original target date of March to ensure they heard from the public and other interested parties about the job description to ensure they met the criteria. The job description included input from the board, public and other interested parties and was one of the reasons they were deliberate in taking the time to come up with a candidate they felt would be best to lead the agency.

Ms. Moss chaired the search committee and Mayor Welo chaired the committee to select the search firm. They conducted in-person interviews. They had a two-day session with the two finalist, who gave presentations to the board and met one-on-one with the board and other interested parties. There was also an additional session with the two candidates. The board did their due diligence. She spoke of how wonderful Ms. Birdsong is and encouraged everyone to welcome Ms. Birdsong. Mr. Bibb said this was his first time he was involved in this type of process. The choice was difficult. There were amazing candidates from across the country who were dedicated to coming to Cleveland. They did their best job to vet the best candidate. It was a great learning experience for him. He asked that everyone work with the agency leadership and community to make the transition. Mr. Joyce said this was also his first time being involved in this process, which was exhaustive and thorough. Due to privacy issues, the process can be difficult. They are excited to have this candidate touch all facets of the community and do a deeper dive into Cleveland. Mayor Welo said Ms. Birdsong is innovative and personable. She's come up through the ranks having worked in planning and operation. She will listen to the riders and community. The process was exhausting, but it was the most important decision and vote made by the board.

Roll Call

The roll was called. Rev. Lucas said Ms. Birdsong is an excellent candidate, but there was one process that he believed was not done completely, so he ask to abstain. There were eight (8) ayes and one (1) abstention from Rev. Lucas. After the roll call, Rev. Lucas ask if he could change his vote.

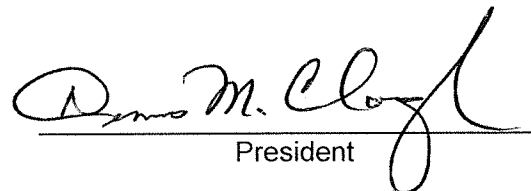
The roll was called again. There were nine (9) ayes and none opposed. Mayor Clough added that the candidates were excited about coming to Cleveland to be considered.

Dr. Caver, Interim CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer stated that he choose not to apply for the position. Mayor Clough thanked Dr. Caver for stepping up and doing a great job as the interim.

Public Comment

1. Mr. Rodriguez – He asked when he can meet with the new CEO to express his concerns and to welcome her. Ms. Moss said the public will have an opportunity to meet with Ms. Birdsong before she starts.
2. Rev. Pam Pinkney-Butts – Mr. Calabrese and Mr. Dixon sacrificed a lot. She doesn't want their work to be minimized. She ask that Ms. Birdsong continue working with the faith community as Mr. Calabrese did in the past with writing letters of support. Ms. Birdsong will be under the vision of Mayor Frank G. Jackson and the City of Cleveland and the people who have sacrificed for the love of RTA.

This meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.



President

Attest: 

Interim CEO, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer