

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Port Authority of Allegheny County d/b/a Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) was held on Friday, October 27, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. at PRT's Administration Offices, 345 Sixth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15222-2527, pursuant to due public notice given as required by law.

The following members were in attendance in person: Jeffrey Letwin, Chair, Jennifer Liptak, John Tague; Lori Mizgorski, Ann Ogoreuc, Michelle Zmijanac and Joseph Totten. The following members were in attendance virtually: Senator Jim Brewster, Representative Nick Pisciotto and Stephanie Turman. Board Solicitor Sandy Garfinkel attended in person.

The Chair called the October 27, 2023 Regular Meeting to order and asked the audience to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and for a moment of silence for those affected by gun violence.

A recommendation was made for approval of the minutes of the September 29, 2023 Regular Meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed.

Mr. Letwin called on Pittsburgh Regional Transit CEO Katharine Kelleman for a report.

Ms. Kelleman asked for a moment of silence for the following retirees who passed away in September: Operator Brenda Dourado, Service Person Marvin Strader, Accounts Payable Specialist Frances Sabbath, and Substation Maintainer Robert Stewart. And also, the loss of a bus driver from SEPTA in Philadelphia who was shot and killed the previous day. Also noting that today marks the five-year anniversary of the Tree of Life shooting in Squirrel Hill, the deadliest attack on the Jewish community this country has ever seen.

Ms. Kelleman then addressed the people in attendance at the meeting who wished to speak regarding the recent service changes. She thanked them for being at the meeting to share their experience.

Ms. Kelleman added that she knows that change is difficult, however, PRT is encouraged by the broader public response and knows riders are adjusting to the new system. Ms. Kelleman noted that with the quick turnaround for the November Board meeting she hopes to be able to provide some data on how the changes have been going from PRT's point of view.

Next, Ms. Kelleman recognized four members of PRT's Customer Service team for their hard work, diligence, and for delivering exceptional customer service.

"The goal of customer service is to arm riders with the information they need to get where they're going, provide an outlet for feedback, and to help as much as possible while providing the type of personal care, attention, and respect our riders deserve."

“These four employees have been deemed to be the top performers for using their time efficiently, having the fewest number of cash handling errors, having quality calls and in-person interactions, and the most commendations.”

The employees recognized were Dianne Cantwell, Dawn Schmitt, Jarrod Carson and Robert Monks.

Next Ms. Kelleman addressed a handful of complaints PRT has received that after a bus services a stop, drivers are ignoring riders who knock on the doors to let them on either while they’re sitting in traffic or at the next light. Ms. Kelleman encouraged riders to recognize that once a bus serves a stop and has pulled away from the curb, it is unsafe to let people on in traffic or at the light and PRT trains its operators to refrain from doing it.

Next, Ms. Kelleman discussed PRT’s Ready2Ride (our mobile ticketing application) Program that PRT has been working on for quite some time. “We’re excited to announce ReadyCash for riders who have a smartphone but no bank account, which the Federal Reserve estimates about six percent of the population. ReadyCash allows riders to receive our lowest fares and free transfers even if you’re using cash to pay your fare.” She explained that riders may simply download the Ready2Ride app, create an account and can use cash to add money to their account at a participating retailer or ticket vending machine.

Ms. Kelleman concluded her report by stating that a mechanic, Keith Miller, who works at our Main Shop in Manchester, was diagnosed with non-alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver nearly two years ago. He was put on the organ transplant list, but he’s now in desperate need of a new liver.

She asked everyone to please help us spread the word for Keith and his family by sharing any posts you see on social media. Even just sharing a post is incredibly helpful and could literally save a life.

That concluded the report of the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chair next called on Ms. Zmijanac for a report of the Performance Oversight Committee.

Ms. Zmijanac reported that the Performance Oversight Committee met the prior week and had four resolutions for the Board consideration.

The Committee first reviewed four procurement items and determined the bids to be in accordance with PRT’s procurement policies and procedures and the prices to be fair and reasonable.

The Performance Oversight Committee recommended awarding of bids listed in the resolution for the total amount of approximately \$1.9 million dollars.

On behalf of the Performance Oversight Committee, Ms. Zmijanac respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

Next, Ms. Zmijanac reported that PRT requires a group of firms to provide temporary technical and clerical support services, as needed, for employee absences, vacancies and additional workload.

In November 2019, PRT entered into agreements with a pool of firms to provide these services, on an as-needed basis, with a not-to-exceed amount of \$1,000,000, for an initial term of three years with the option to extend the agreements up to two additional option years, at the sole discretion of PRT.

In September 2022, the Board authorized PRT to exercise the first option year of the agreements with no increase to the total not-to-exceed amount.

Now the Performance Oversight Committee is recommending extending the term of the agreements for the second option year with the following firms: Infojini, Inc., Diskriter, Inc., Global Solutions Group, Inc., and Atrium Staffing LLC to November 30, 2024, with no increase in the previously authorized to not-to-exceed amount.

On behalf of the Performance Oversight Committee, Ms. Zmijanac respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

Next, Ms. Zmijanac reported that PRT requires a pool of law firms to provide legal services on an as-needed basis and the pool will consist of up to five law firms in various fields of law.

An RFP was prepared and publicly advertised and the firms identified on Exhibit A in their respective fields of law have been determined to be the highest rated proposals for the performance of the services.

The Performance Oversight recommended authorizing PRT to enter into agreements with the firms identified on Exhibit A to provide services for an initial five-year period effective January 1, 2024 with the option to extend the term of the agreements up to an additional three years at the sole discretion of PRT. The Committee also recommends that the law firm of McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC serve as solicitor to PRT's Board due to McNees being the highest rated proposer. And finally, the Committee recommends that the law firm of Campbell Durrant, PC serve as PRT's primary labor counsel due to Campbell being the highest rated proposer.

On behalf of the Performance Oversight Committee, Ms. Zmijanac respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

Ms. Zmijanac presented the final resolution seeking authorization for PRT to amend agreements for general planning services.

She reported that in July, 2021 PRT's Board authorized the award of agreements with HDR, Inc. and Michael Baker International, Inc., to provide these services in the three categories of place-based planning, network planning and organizational planning.

The original not-to-exceed amount of the agreements was developed based on the projected costs of anticipated work to be completed. Due to additional projects, including the work connected to PRT's Strategic Plan, an increase in the previously authorized not-to-exceed amount is needed.

The Performance Oversight Committee recommended increasing the total not-to-exceed amount of agreements by \$2,000,000 to allow for contractors to perform services through the current term.

On behalf of the Performance Oversight Committee, Ms. Zmijanac respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

That concluded the report of the Performance Oversight Committee.

The Chair called on Mr. Tague for a report of the Stakeholder Relations Committee.

Mr. Tague reported that the Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee met the prior week and had a few items for the Board.

First, the Committee received a presentation pertaining to the Bus Line Redesign Project overview. It was reported that the scope of the 21-month project will include a comprehensive redesign of the entire bus network and is a priority project from the agency's NEXTransit long-range plan. Many transit agencies undergo redesigns at regular intervals, and this is an opportunity to study post-pandemic travel patterns and take advantage of opportune timing to promote ridership, equity and inclusivity; provide better access to frequent transit; and create a simpler bus network.

This will include data analysis of population demographics and trends, cellphone travel data, the performance of the existing network, planned capital projects, and will include a heavy public engagement component. A total of 24 pop-up community events will be held around the county as well as meetings to seek operator and union input at all five transit divisions. There will also be online engagement with a survey and public meetings on November 14 and 16.

This project is expected to wrap in up spring of 2025 with a proposed new bus network design, with implementation plans to follow.

Next, Mr. Tague updated the Board on the Allegheny County Transit Council and Committee for Accessible Transportation.

The Allegheny County Transit Council met on October 25 and staff provided the Council with an update on some ongoing planning and engineering projects and then spoke with the group about the service change presentation process. Staff also presented the bus line redesign project overview to the Council. Their next scheduled meeting is November 15.

The Committee on Accessible Transportation did not meet in October and their next scheduled meeting is November 2.

That concluded the report of the Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee.

The Chair called on Ms. Ann Ogoreuc for a report of the Finance Committee.

Ms. Ogoreuc reported that the Finance Committee met on Thursday, October 19 and had one item to report.

The September financial results were presented at last week's meeting by Acting Chief Financial Officer, Donminika Brown.

It was reported that Total Operating Income for the month of September was below budget by \$276,803 due to lower ACCESS Shared Ride Revenue and slightly lower Passenger Revenue. Total Expenses for the month of September were below budget by \$3.7 million primarily due to lower Wages and Benefits from vacant positions although every expense category was below budget for the month. Total Subsidy for the month is \$361,325 above budget due to a timing issue with State Operating Assistance.

Through the first quarter of FY 2024, Total Operating Income was above budget due to higher Interest Income and Passenger Revenue. Total Expenses through the first quarter were \$13.9 million below budget with Salary and Benefit savings due to vacant positions accounting for \$4.5 million of this variance. Total Subsidy through the first quarter was \$598,619 above budget due to higher State Operating Assistance.

It was also reported that PRT invoiced \$11.7 million against the CRRSAA federal stimulus program and ended the month of September with approximately \$310.6 million in cash reserves which was an increase from August due to \$56.8 million in State Operating Assistance.

That concluded the report of the Finance Committee.

The Chair next called on Ms. Liptak for the report of the Technology Committee.

Ms. Liptak reported that Technology Committee met on October 19, and had three resolutions for the Board's consideration.

The Committee first reviewed two bids. The first was for a time-only extension to the rail automatic passenger counter project, with the second being for support services of the SYSAID {pronounced "sis-aid"} which is PRT's helpdesk software.

The Committee determined the bids to be in accordance with PRT's procurement policies and procedures and the prices to be fair and reasonable.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, Ms. Liptak respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

The Committee then reviewed a resolution to extend and amend an agreement for PRT's hosted interactive voice response services in our Customer Services area.

The initial five-year contract in 2017 included three optional one-year extensions and this would be the second.

The Technology Committee recommended amending the agreement with Enghouse Transportation, LLC to extend the agreement for one year, and authorizing an increase in the total not-to-exceed amount from \$1,269,567 to \$1,402,243.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, Ms. Liptak respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

The final resolution reviewed is to authorize PRT to enter into agreement for the provision of Oracle Peoplesoft Training Services which is software used for all Human Resource and Finance functions at the agency.

The Technology Committee recommended awarding a contract for Oracle Peoplesoft Training Services to SpearMC Consulting, Inc., with the total not-to-exceed amount of \$200,000 for an initial three-year period.

On behalf of the Technology Committee, Ms. Liptak respectfully requested approval of the resolution. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that the resolution be approved as presented.

That concluded the report of the Technology Committee.

There was no new business to report.

Under public comment\*, there were a number of people who addressed the board pertaining to the October 1 services changes and the impact of these changes. Speakers stated that they are seeing more crowding, more unreliability and more rider pass ups at stops than ever before. It was noted at the meeting by a number of speakers that these cuts have disproportionately harmed vulnerable riders, including the disabled, senior citizens and riders without Connect Cards.

The speakers who made the foregoing comments collectively included: Deb Goycochea; Betty Alexander, Chelsea Cavlovic, Gina Anderson; Lanette Berkley, Morgan Cikowski, Teaira Collins, Alisa Grishman, Christina Hansen; Toneka Haruna; Jonathan Franks and Marlene Univerdorben.

Ms. Nicole Gallagher, a PPT organizer, stated that she would like a better explanation of who will be performing onboard fare collection on the BRT. She noted that imposing penalties for not paying fares is unreasonable and she fears that it will become a form of racial profiling.

Ms. Amy Zaiss spoke about the unreliability on the rail system from Beechview and poor communication when a railcar is not going to show.

Ms. Bernadette Mosey urged the Board to reverse the decision regarding the transition of First Transit in Bethel Park. She stated that there are a number of disabled and elderly riders who have been negatively impacted by this transition. PRT needs to listen to what the citizens are saying.

The Chair announced the next Regular meeting of the Board will be Thursday, November 16, 2023.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

\*Full testimonies can be found on PRT's website at [www.ridePRT.org](http://www.ridePRT.org).