

## **AUGUST 29, 2023. Chicago Transit Board Regular Meeting Minutes.**

Noticed for 10:00 AM. Commenced at 10:09 AM.

AGENDA: The posted agenda for the meeting is available at [www.transitchicago.com](http://www.transitchicago.com), "Chicago Transit Board", "Meeting Notices, Agendas, and Minutes", (08/29/2023) (Regular Board Meeting), "Agenda".

ROLL CALL: Directors: Lester L. Barclay (Chairman), Michele Lee, Neema Jha, Johnny Miller, Rosa Ortiz. Director Bernard Jakes was absent. There was a quorum with five (5) members present.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were six public comments. Sativa Volbrecht, Fatima Ayyeh, Brandon McFadden, Emilee Chaclas, Bill Morton, and Trudy Leong appearing in person. Kyle Sussman submitted a public comment in writing to be read into the record during the Transit Board Directors.

Chairman Barclay thanked the public commentators for sharing their thoughts and concerns with the Board of Directors. He requested that President Carter connect with some of them for further dialogue.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

President Carter presented his report which began with him empathizing with the concerns that were raised in the public comments. He stated that the CTA shares their concerns as it relates to the quality of service they are experiencing. He advised that CMAP (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning) would be making a presentation later on in the meeting on their proposed recommendations to the Illinois state legislature regarding funding transit in the region. The funding issues are significant to the overall ability of the CTA to improve its service and to put it in a position to compete as a world-class transit system within our country and around the globe.

President Carter reiterated that he hears the complaints from those who do not have a positive experience riding the CTA and that the CTA is working to improve that. He stated that the CTA needs help and that those who made public comments can play a critical role in that conversation. He thanked the public commentators for their input.

### **MEETING THE MOMENT**

We have reached a milestone of our Meeting the Moment action plan. President Carter then highlighted some of the progress that has been made since the CTA started working on the plan and started restoring service and improving the overall CTA customer experience. On August 11, 2023 the CTA marked the one-year anniversary of the unveiling of the plan.

- Public transit service in a post-pandemic America has been a national issue facing public transit agencies around the country.

- One journalist recently referred to the transit systems return to normal over the past two years as the transit version of long COVID. There are still challenges but there have also been successes which have been realized because of the planning, execution, and hard work of the 10,000 staff persons at every level of the CTA.
- Highlight: We have created the most aggressive and comprehensive recruitment and hiring program in the history of the agency. Since August of 2022, we have held over ten one-stop shopping job fairs and have had over 2,800 attendees.
- Highlight: Year to date the CTA has hired more employees in 2023 than in any previous recent year including 600 newly hired bus operator which is as many bus operators that we have hired in a 12 month period.
- Highlight: We have hired 85 bus mechanics.
- Highlight: We have optimized our service schedules to match our current workforce levels and kept an eye on key performance areas which along with our new hires have combined to produce service delivery improvements.

We still have a lot more to do. We need to bring our service levels back up to where they were pre-pandemic. We need to continue to hire at a rate that will allow us to get to that point.

We will also continue to post our expanded interactive bus and scorecard on-line which highlights and advises our stakeholders of our progress and informs the public about challenges we are facing. Our goal is to be transparent as possible while at the same time providing customers with real information that is easy to understand.

Thank you to customers who have returned to transit. Our ridership has grown consistently throughout 2023 and we are now providing more than 900,000 rides systemwide on an average weekday.

#### TRANSIT EQUITY

Transit equity is a priority for the CTA. Diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and accessibility continue to inform every policy-making decision that President Carter has made in his career. In striving to make the CTA a more equitable agency and workplace, the CTA has brought Denise Barreto on board to serve as our new Chief Equity and Engagement Officer. She comes to us from Cook County government where she served as their inaugural director of equity and inclusion and where she led the development of key racial equity programs and policies. She will also develop new strategies for better outreach through our government and community relations department with our elected officials.

We are also engaged in an effort around a capital project outreach. CTA is currently engaged in several transformational capital projects across our system including the Red and Purple Modernization project, the Red Line extension, the multi-phase Forest Park branch rebuild, the All-Stations Accessibility Program and the Western Brown Line station rehabilitation. These investments are great opportunities for our prime contractors and small and disadvantaged business enterprise communities. They are also great opportunities for individuals who are looking for jobs. The CTA hosted an outreach event on August 8<sup>th</sup> to allow those individuals seeking careers in construction with CTA job opportunities to engage with workforce

agency contractors and union representatives including the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, Hire360, the Operating Engineer's Union and two local electrician unions.

#### AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

Finally, last October President Carter was elected the Chair of the American Public Transportation Association or APTA which represents more than 1,500 public and private sector member organizations. His election was an honor and has allowed him to join the ranks of a very small group of experienced and thoughtful public transit officials who have their own visions for how to best move our industry forward. President Carter's positions in APTA have given him a valuable insight into the considerations that APTA makes to engage, expand, and fund its efforts to study and grow public transit. As Chair he has advocated for increased public transit investments in every community across the country including Chicago.

While serving as the Legislative Chair for APTA he worked with Congress to do billions in emergency COVID federal relief funding for public transit including \$2.2 billion that went to the CTA. He was also involved in implementing the industry's funding strategy when the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act was passed. The CTA applies for funding under that program, and he was proud to say that the CTA received \$200 million dollars to replace the CTA's oldest rail cars, which is to date the single largest award in that program. His role as an APTA leader has allowed him to successfully advocate federal lawmakers for a more robust federal formula program which included a funding increase of more than 30 percent that all transit agencies now enjoy. For the CTA that has meant an increase of almost half a billion dollars over a five-year period.

As he winds down his term as president of APTA, President Carter stated that he has many ideas that have come from his travel experiences as chair of APTA and that he will be bringing them forward as best practices for the CTA when they make practical and financial sense to the agency. He believes that being open to and receiving new ideas across the globe is a critical step to doing what he has committed to the CTA Transit Board which is turning the CTA into a world-class transit system.

Chairman Barclay responded to President Carter's report as follows:

1. He thanked President Carter for sharing some of his experiences as the Chairperson of APTA which broaden the scope for all of us and allow our agency to have its scope broadened. We benefit as an agency and as a city from President Carter's experiences on a world-class stage.
2. He also thanked President Carter's staff for allowing him to participate in a recent meeting and roundtable where we were able to discuss with the press some of the improvements that we are making in the Meeting the Moment program.
3. Chairman Barclay welcomed Denise Barreto as she takes her new role. He is hopeful that they will meet and have a better conversation as we work together on equity and inclusion.
4. He is enjoying his experiences as Chairman. He recently had an opportunity to represent the CTA at the Bud Billiken Parade and received a lot of positive feedback for the CTA.

Other members of the Transit Board made comments following Chairman Barclay about President Carter's report and there was further discussion.

MINUTES: Chairman Barclay asked for a motion to approve the regular Board meeting minutes of July 12, 2023. After being moved by Director Lee and seconded by Director Miller, the minutes were approved with five votes in the affirmative.

PRESENTATION FROM the CHICAGO METROPOLITAN AGENCY FOR PLANNING: Ms. Erin Aleman, Executive Director of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and Laura Wilkison, senior Director and Policy Advisor presented the Plan of Action for Regional Transit or the PART Program. CMAP is the regional planning agency for northeastern Illinois. The agency covers 7 counties, 84 municipalities and the nearly eight and a half million residents who call the Chicago region home.

CMAP was directed by the General Assembly about a year ago to really look at the future funding – and the future funding fiscal cliff – that all our transit agencies are facing here and put together some draft recommendations to the General Assembly. They are focusing on the long-term financial viability of the system and the coordination of CTA, Metra and Pace in a manner that does not compromise safety, security, cleanliness, and efficiency.

Following their presentation Chairman Barclay thanked them and stated that he appreciated their efforts in formulating these recommendations to address funding challenges in our public transportation system in this region. He stressed that he hoped they would keep equity first and foremost in their final recommendations.

Director Michele Lee, Director Rosa Ortiz and Director Neema Jha made several observations and posed several questions for consideration and there were several discussions between the members of the Transit Board and the CMAP presenters.

CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD: Katanya Raby, the newly appointed Chairperson of the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) and Robert Johnson the newly appointed vice-chairperson of the CAB introduced themselves to the Transit Board and gave a summary report on the activities of the CAB. Following their presentation Chairman Barclay welcomed them and congratulated them on their recent appointments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Chairman Barclay confirmed with Kent Ray, the CTA General Counsel, that there was an Executive Session on the agenda. The CTA General Counsel Kent Ray stated that the Board would move into closed session pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, Section 2(c)(11) and 2(c)(21). Director Lee moved that the Board move into executive session for the reasons stated by counsel and the motion was seconded by Director Miller. The vote to move into Executive Session was unanimous.

The Board recessed into Executive Session at 12:00 p.m.

The Board reconvened from Executive Session at 12:23 p.m. at which point Chairman Barclay entertained a motion to return to open session. Director Lee moved, and Director Miller seconded the motion. The vote to return to open session was unanimous.

General Counsel Kent Ray then addressed item 7-A on the agenda after which Chairman Barclay requested a motion to approve the closed session minutes for June 16, 2023. Director Lee moved that the closed session minutes be approved, and Director Miller seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

BOARD MATTERS: Secretary Greenlee advised Chairman Barclay that there were three (3) Board Matters on the agenda. She stated that the first Board Matter was to approve resolution changing the date of the August 20, 2023, Chicago Transit Board meeting from August 23, 2023, to August 29, 2023. The second was to approve a resolution changing the date of the next Chicago Transit Board meeting to September 22, 2023. The third board matter was to approve a resolution adopting the Citizens Advisory Board By-laws.

- Director Lee moved to approve the resolution changing the date of the August 20, 2023, Chicago Transit Board meeting from August 23, 2023, to August 29, 2023, and Director Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed with five yes votes.
- Director Lee moved to approve a resolution changing the date of the next Chicago Transit Board meeting to September 22, 2023, and Director Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed with five yes votes.
- Director Lee moved to approve a resolution adopting the Citizens Advisory Board By-laws, and Director Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed with five yes votes.

COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND SERVICE DELIVERY: Director Johnny Miller gave a report on behalf of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Service Delivery which was a recommendation to adopt an ordinance authorizing an agreement with the University of Chicago for the operation of bus routes 171, 172 and 192. Director Lee moved that the board approve the ordinance authorizing the agreement and the motion was seconded by Director Miller. The vote to approve the ordinance authorizing the agreement passed with five yes votes.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, AUDIT AND BUDGET: In the absence of the Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee interim chair Director Jakes, the report for the committee was given by Chairman Barclay. The committee reviewed the monthly Finance report and approved the July 12, 2023, FAB committee minutes. Chairman Barclay stated that all Committee agenda items, listed on the Board agenda, were presented, reviewed, discussed, and recommended by the Committee, for Board approval. Chairman Barclay stated that all the approved committee items, 6 ordinances and 10 contracts, were placed on the omnibus for approval by the Board. Chairman Barclay concluded his report.

Chairman Barclay then asked for a motion to approve the omnibus.

After being moved by Director Lee and seconded by Director Miller, the motion was approved with five yes votes.

**NOTE: All approved August 29, 2023, Board ordinances are available online, at [www.transitchicago.com](http://www.transitchicago.com), "Chicago Transit Board", "Board Ordinances", Ordinance numbers 023-088-023-101.**

CONSTRUCTION REPORT: Chairman Barclay stated that the Construction Report would be deferred until the next meeting due to time constraints and the possibility of the board not having a quorum.

NEW BUSINESS: Secretary Greenlee stated that there was no new business.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chairman Barclay asked for a motion to adjourn the August 29, 2023, Chicago Transit Board meeting. After being moved by Director Lee and seconded by Director Miller, the motion was approved with five (5) yes votes and the meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Secretary of the CTA Board of Directors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

