

**January 14, 2026. Chicago Transit Board Regular Meeting Minutes.**

Noticed for 10:00 a.m. / Commenced at 10:20 a.m.

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", (01/14/2026) (Regular Board Meeting), "Agenda".

There was a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL: Directors: Lester L. Barclay (Chairman), L. Bernard Jakes, Rosa Y. Ortiz, Roberto Requejo, Michael Eaddy and Neema Jha.

There was a quorum with 6 members present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chairman Barclay advanced the agenda to Public Comments. Secretary Greenlee advised that the Board Office received five (5) requests for public comments and received two (2) written comments that were forwarded to the Board.

The written public comments were submitted by John Paul Jones, president of Sustainable Englewood Initiatives.

The public speakers were the following persons:

- Curie High School students: Sofia Aguirre, Lisset Tlatenchi and Mia Gomez
- Steven Fisher
- Patricia Puente Blancas
- Ross Floyd
- Leone Jose Bicchieri
- Bob King Israel

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Acting President Nora Leerhsen gave the President's Report and began by wishing everyone a "Happy New Year!" She thanked all of the operations employees and the teams that successfully executed our New Years Eve service. She had one of the most fun New Years that she has had in a long time out in the field, watching it strike midnight, being at the Control Center, watching the platforms get cleared from [that event]. It is awe-inspiring to see our teamwork "last minute." The city had not only the Navy Pier fireworks but a new event, smack dab in the middle of downtown, and CTA service went off without a hitch. She's very proud of the team that made that happen and grateful for all of the extra work they did to ensure service.

We ended 2025 with 319,000,000 rides. That's a 3.2% growth over 2024, reaching 70% retention of our pre-pandemic ridership. That is despite the fast entrance into the winter season that we had with all of the snow last month (November/December)

We continue to see that investment in service, inspire Ridership – most notably with our Frequent Network. In total the 20 routes now in the Frequent Bus Network served more than 68 million of our bus rides last year. So, over a third (1/3) or 37% of our bus ridership is happening on those core routes. She thanked the CTA Board for supporting the Frequent Bus Network.

She also noted positive upswings in ridership due to investments in service on the following routes: the 53 Cicero and the 93 California Dodge to better serve key destination areas for our riders.

She then highlighted this noticeably transitional time for ridership across the system. She wants our riders and employees to celebrate the funding that the CTA received. The funding affords CTA a measure of certainty in forward planning. She has also continued to meet with other key stakeholders during this transitional period: the County, the Mayor's Office, RTA, and the Governor's Office. Everyone has a unique role during this transitional period to the NITA Board. She will continue to keep the Board apprised of the efforts that are underway to the NITA Board and the transition in 2026.

#### FUN HIGHLIGHTS:

- The CTA is working with the Chicago Bulls to celebrate the jersey retirement of retired superstar Derrick Rose's jersey.
- The Bulls have sponsored 8 wrapped buses.
- The CTA has a banner that will be hung from the rafters to celebrate the achievements of Derrick Rose.
- The CTA has a commemorative Ventra card to commemorate the achievement.
- This week all CTA buses will have a "Go BEARS!" message added to all CTA buses on the front.

#### CTA'S INNOVATIONS STUDIO:

She then highlighted that the CTA is moving forward with a call for partners to submit proposals through the Innovation Studio to launch pro-active specialist programs to engage riders who are in crisis. (i.e. having a health crisis or are having a housing crisis.) The CTA continues to make progress in reaching out to partners. There were 60 people who attended the informational session. The team is reviewing proposals as they come in and will continue to answer questions. The deadline to submit a proposal is February 17, 2026.

#### TRANSIT ORIENTATED DEVELOPMENT:

In the 2025 Budget the Authority outlined a vision for how CTA can institutionalize its role for promoting equitable transit orientated development – partnering with new authorities that will be coming online as a part of NITA but also thinking on all scales about how the CTA can promote more broadly welcoming and inviting spaces on our system. The CTA has posted two new positions that will serve as a leading and coordinating hub for CTA. The CTA has launched a new home for transit orientated development projects on our website with a dedicated landing page that highlights current projects and past major initiatives like:

- The 63<sup>rd</sup> & Ashland Park and Ride
- The 95<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Implementation Plan
- The opportunities related to the Red Purple Modernization Project.

#### FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION and SECURITY INITIATIVES:

On December 8, 2025, the CTA received a request for a surge plan from the FTA. On December 15, 2025, the Authority received a request for a new plan and was given 90 days within which to submit. The CTA is actively working with partners in the Chicago Police Department to submit the updated plan. She will continue to keep the Board updated on the elements in the new plan.

Anytime the CTA has an opportunity to discuss and collaborate on safety – it is a good thing.

She then concluded her remarks.

Chairman Lester Barclay thanked Acting President Leerhsen for her report and commended her and the entire team for their work during the holiday season to support the city and the workers. A lot of that work goes on behind the scenes and is unnoticed. It is important that it is acknowledged. At the same time the beginning of this year has brought challenging issues that focus on safety on our system. Even with overall crime rates trending lower – we still have challenges in this area. Getting this right needs to be our primary focus. Restoring rider confidence and safety is what will be most consequential. It is the foundation upon which everything else is built. To the team: Your commitment during both the high points and the challenges is evident. Thanks for your commitment to this vital work. As Chairman the Board deeply appreciates your efforts and we will stand in your corner throughout the balance of 2026.

Director Eaddy: Acting President Leerhsen – when do you think that the revised plan will be submitted?

RESPONSE: The entire plan needs to be approved by March 19, 2026, so we are aiming to submit early so that in the event there is a need to make modifications to the updated plan we will be able to make those adjustments.

Director Jakes: No new comments. Raised comments in his briefing on yesterday.

Director Ortiz: Keep us posted on the progress with the CTA

Director Requejo: Congrats on the progress that has been made on transit orientated development. He pointed out the distinction between transit orientated development and ETOD – equitable transit orientated development. Regarding the safety plan for the FTA, he appreciates Acting President Leerhsen reaching out to various elected officials and agencies, however, he thinks there needs to be a bigger table and conversation with all those entities and elected officials at the table. Collaboration with all community partners is where we will find the solution.

Director Jha: She echoed the sentiments expressed. We need to do what is right for the city.

MINUTES: Chairman Barclay asked for a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes from December 10, 2025. Director Eaddy moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Director Ortiz. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

CTA's Acting General Counsel Sisavanh Baker stated that the Board would recess into Executive Session pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, Section 2 (c) (1), (2), (11) and (21).

Director Eaddy moved that the Board recess into Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Director Ortiz and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The Board moved into Executive Session at 11:00 a.m.

At 11:24 a.m. Director Eaddy moved that the Board recess from Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Director Ortiz. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

After the Board returned from Executive Session Chairman Barclay requested a motion to approve the closed session minutes from December 10, 2025. Director Eaddy moved, and the motion was seconded by Director Ortiz. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

BOARD MATTERS: Chairman Barclay asked whether there were any Board Matters? Board Secretary Georgette Greenlee responded that there were no Board Matters for consideration.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, AUDIT AND BUDGET: The Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee report was presented by Director Bernard Jakes. The committee reviewed the monthly finance report and approved the December 10, 2025, FAB committee meeting minutes. Director Jakes stated that all Committee agenda items, listed on the Board agenda, were presented, reviewed, discussed, and recommended by the Committee, for Board approval. Director Jakes stated that the committee approved seven (7) ordinances and ten (10) contracts, were placed on the omnibus for approval by the Board. Director Jakes concluded the Finance, Audit and Budget Committee report.

Director Eaddy moved that the omnibus be approved, and the motion was seconded by Director Ortiz. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote of five Board members: Chairman Barclay, Director Jakes, Director Jha, Director Eaddy and Director Ortiz. Director Requejo partially abstained from voting favorably on the omnibus vote in regard to the Finance, Audit and Budget Meeting Agenda Item number 6 concerning the Sales Tax Receipts Revenue Bonds, Series 2026, due to a personal conflict of interest. As to all other items on the omnibus he voted yes.

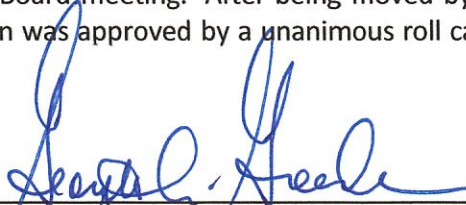
CONSTRUCTION REPORT: The Construction Report by Bill Mooney, CTA's Chief Infrastructure Officer assisted by JuanPablo Prieto, CTA's Director of Diversity Programs was presented and can be found at: <https://www.transitchicago.com/board/presentations/>

There were questions from members of the Board and there was discussion.

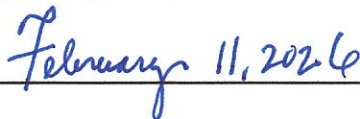
NEW BUSINESS: Secretary Greenlee stated that there was no new business.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chairperson Barclay asked for a motion to adjourn the January 14, 2026, Chicago Transit Board meeting. After being moved by Director Eaddy and seconded by Director Ortiz, the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

APPROVED:

  
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Secretary of the CTA Board of Directors

Date:

  
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