



BCRTA Board of Trustees Minutes

Butler County Regional Transit Authority

2/19/2025 8:00 AMEST

@ BCRTA Board Room: 3045 Moser Court, Hamilton, OH 45011

Attendance

Present:

Members: Nick Bauer, Yasmen Brown-Jones, James Foster, Perry Gordon, Christopher Lawson (remote), Dannel Shepard, Corey Watt, Kathy Wyenandt, Brian Zets (remote)

Guests: Whitney Harris

BCRTA Staff: Russell Auwae (remote), Shawn Cowan, Matt Dutkevicz, Mark Franklin (remote), Katie McKnight, Luke Morgan, Sarah Schwartz, Alicia Shotwell (remote), Meagan Varney, Dee Weidner, Paul Williams, Christine Yannitty (remote)

Absent:

Members: David Fehr

I. Call to Order & Roll

Vice President Gordon called the meeting to order at 8:07 AM. Ms. Schwartz took a call of the roll. A quorum of the Board was present.

 [BCRTA Notice of Public Meeting 02-19-25.docx](#)

A. Consideration of Absences

Mr. Dutkevicz announced that Trustee Fehr has requested to be excused. Trustee Watt made a motion to approve the absence. Trustee Shepard second. The absence was excused.

 [Board Attendance January Meeting.xlsx](#)

II. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the Agenda

B. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

 [BCRTA Board of Trustees Minutes January 2025.pdf](#)

 [BCRTA Board of Trustees Minutes-January 2025](#)

Approval of the Consent Agenda:

Motion moved by James Foster and motion seconded by Kathy Wyenandt. All others voted in favor of the Consent Agenda.

III. Comments from Citizens

Ms. Harris provided comments to the Board. Written comments are provided as Appendix A to these minutes.

IV. Treasurer's Report

 [12 Dec 24.pdf](#)

Financials as of December 2024, compared to the Annual Budget were included in the board packet. Ms. Weidner mentioned that no final year-end entries had been made, so these statements did not include the final numbers to be audited. Revenues of \$12.3M ended the year over budget as expected. The increase in drivers and resulting increase in service to meet previously unmet demand brought fares to 174.5% of budget. The City of Middletown's contracted service ended the year over budget due to the new CincyLink route. The STAR account continues to do well with interest as we maintain a high balance in the account. Previously awarded CDBG money that was not allocated to the previous year was picked up in 2024, resulting in the over-budget for Agency Funding. Federal Funding ended the year over budget due to drawing 50% funding once the 100% funding was expended.

Expenses of \$10.0M ended the year just slightly under budget. Wages at 110.7% of budget are the result of the increase in drivers' starting wage, market adjustments, and annual increases. Fringes saw a boost from the November PTO sale and many new hires starting benefits after their waiting period. Fringes ended the year close to budget at 93.1%, but this statement does not reflect the year-end Net Pension or OPEB adjustment. The effect of implementing GASB 96 for the treatment of Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA) was seen in the Materials & Supplies expense as well as the Contingency. Expenses normally found under Materials & Supplies were moved to the balance sheet leaving this account under-budget, and interest expense paid on the newly created liabilities is reflected in the Contingency line. No demand for WiFi on the fixed route buses left Utilities under budgeted amounts and health pool fees were also below expected amounts resulting in an under-budget in Insurance.

The Transaction logs for the months of December were included in the packet presenting all cash transactions for the period. No unusual transactions occurred during this timeframe.

The balance sheet for December 2024 was presented with normal balances for assets, as well as liabilities and equity. No year-end adjustments had been made to this statement. Ms. Weidner pointed out the high balances in both Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable were due to the timing of a payment to our construction contractor and the Federal draw against the same amount. After further research, the Deferred Inflow from the receipt of \$1M from the Ohio Office of Budget and Management was removed and the funds included as State Capital.

At the end of December, Available Funds were approximately \$11.5M. The receipt of the OBM \$1M award held in the STAR account (a current asset) and now shown in State Capital (an Equity account) still causes a slight 'mismatch' that inflates the Available Funds. Ms. Weidner explained the new set-up of the Cash Reserves statement to better reflect these funds. A new section called Designated for Other Use shows the amount potentially needed for the completion of Chestnut Street Station and the \$1M awarded for the Parking Lot expansion at Moser Ct. Available Funds less funds held to meet Board Reserves required by policy and those Designated for Other Use, leaves Non-Restricted Funds of \$4.4M. Non-restricted funds will be used for future operational needs.

Ms. Weidner also reported that BCRTA earned \$1,075.47 in PNC credit card rewards that were redeemed earlier this year.

Approval of the Treasurer's Report:

Motion moved by Corey Watt and motion seconded by Dannel Shepard. All others voted in favor of approval of the Treasurer's Report.

V. Governance

Mr. Dutkevicz requested those Trustees who had not completed the Conflict of Interest form to please do so.

VI. Action Items

A. Resolution 25-02-01 (Presenters: Meagan Varney, Matthew Dutkevicz)

Authorizing the Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA) Executive Director to Execute a Contract for Payroll and HRIS Software.

 [Board Resolution Cover Letter - HRIS System.docx](#)

 [Board Resolution - HRIS System.docx](#)

Ms. Varney explained that the HRIS and payroll system has not performed as anticipated. The current contract for the current system, which has been frustrating and difficult for all staff to navigate, is coming to a close. An extensive RFP was constructed. A (4) four-hour demonstration was conducted for (3) three bidders. Each bidder's products were able to be seen live. This allowed key staff to evaluate the products and ask questions. References were contacted. Paycor was the awarded bidder and have been very responsive.

Mr. Dutkevicz added that pricing was not the only factor in evaluating. References were heavily weighted in the decision.

Trustee Watt asked for clarification on the price within the Resolution, asking if that was for the total of 5 years. Ms. Varney verified the total amount is for a five-year span.

Adoption of Resolution 25-02-01:

Motion moved by Yasmen Brown-Jones and motion seconded by James Foster. Upon a call of the roll, the votes resulted as follows: Trustee Bauer-Yes, Trustee Brown-Jones-Yes, Trustee Fehr-Absent, Trustee Foster-Yes, Trustee Gordon, Trustee Lawson-Absent, Trustee Shepard-Yes, Trustee Watt-Yes, Trustee Wyenandt-Yes. The Resolution was adopted.

B. Resolution 25-02-02 (Presenters: Matthew Dutkevicz)

Authorizing the Executive Director to Execute a contract for Pre-Owned Office Furnishings.

 [Cover memo - Rentschler Furniture.docx](#)

 [Rentschler Furniture Resolution.docx](#)

Mr. Dutkevicz stated that this resolution is tied to the expansion plans. Furniture is needed to outfit the leased office space in the Rentschler building. Mr. Dutkevicz added that this was not brought to the Board prior because it was originally thought that furniture could be purchased in small bundles from several vendors in smaller monetary amounts. However, in shopping from multiple sources and negotiating for all the furniture that is needed, Mr. Dutkevicz found all the furniture from one source. Purchasing from one source places the total amount over the Executive Director's purchasing authority. All of the furniture is pre-owned but does match and will look nice in the space.

Adoption of Resolution 25-02-02:

Motion moved by Dannel Shepard and motion seconded by Kathy Wyenandt. Upon a call of the roll, the votes resulted as follows: Trustee Bauer-Yes, Trustee Brown-Jones-Yes, Trustee Fehr-Absent, Trustee Foster-Yes, Trustee Gordon, Trustee Lawson-Absent, Trustee Shepard-Yes, Trustee Watt-Yes, Trustee Wyenandt-Yes. The Resolution was adopted.

C. Resolution 25-02-03 (Presenters: Matthew Dutkevicz, Meagan Varney)

Amending BCRTA Resolution 21-03-01 to Authorize Additional Funds for Information Technology Services

 [Board Resolution Cover Letter IT Services Increase.docx](#)

 [Board Resolution - IT Services Increase.docx](#)

Prior to speaking on the Resolution, Trustee Gordon asked for a clarification and correction in the Cover Letter and corresponding Resolution 25-02-03. The written amount of two hundred thousand and forty-five dollars did not match the corresponding amount of (\$245,000.00) for the contract. Ms. Varney acknowledged the mistake, and it will be corrected.

Mr. Dutkevicz stated that BCRTA is in the renewal period with the provider. This is one of BCRTAs best providers. They are a small group, they know BCRTA inside and out.

As these are professional services, the contract amount is estimated and the provider was used more than estimated. This provider is working on the Chestnut Street project, the newly leased Rentschler building property, as well as working at Moser in reconfiguration. This provider acts as BCRTAs help desk too.

Ms. Varney added that this is an on-demand estimate with a price adjustment at the end of the year.

Adoption of Resolution 25-02-03:

Motion moved by Kathy Wyenandt and motion seconded by Dannel Shepard.

Upon a call of the roll, the votes resulted as follows: Trustee Bauer-Yes, Trustee Brown-Jones-Yes, Trustee Fehr-Absent, Trustee Foster-Yes, Trustee Gordon, Trustee Lawson-Absent, Trustee Shepard-Yes, Trustee Watt-Yes, Trustee Wyenandt-Yes. The Resolution was adopted.

D. Resolution 25-02-04

Authorizing the filing of applications with the Federal Transit Administration, an operating administration of the United States Department of Transportation, for federal transportation assistance authorized by 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53; title 23, United States Code, or other federal statutes administered by the Federal Transit Administration.

 [Resolution 25-02-04 FTA Grants Authorizing Resolution.docx](#)

Mr. Dutkevicz stated that this resolution came as a requirement from the FTA and contains the required language set by FTA. It is a standard resolution allowing BCRTA to file for applications with the Federal Transit Administration. BCRTA provides a similar resolution for ODOT on an annual basis. The FTA has not required an annual resolution until now.

Adoption of Resolution 25-02-04:

Motion moved by Corey Watt and motion seconded by James Foster. Upon a call of the roll, the votes resulted as follows: Trustee Bauer-Yes, Trustee Brown-Jones-Yes, Trustee Fehr-Absent, Trustee Foster-Yes, Trustee Gordon, Trustee

Lawson-Absent, Trustee Shepard-Yes, Trustee Watt-Yes, Trustee Wyenandt-Yes.
The Resolution was adopted.

VII. Committee & Staff Reports

- A. Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (Presenters: Chris Lawson, Matthew Dutkevicz)

Mr. Dutkevicz stated he attended OKI this week. The CEO of OKI spent a large amount of time speaking on the executive orders coming from the new administration. OKI is watching very closely as there may need to be removal of guidelines in their project scoring that pertains to racial and income considerations that are part of the scoring process. OKI is awaiting final guidance from their federal agencies.

The Project Prioritization Process was also a topic of discussion This is the process OKI uses to award STBG funds for road and highway projects. OKI is reducing the maximum award from \$8M to \$6M. BCRTA usually does well on these grants. OKI approved the OKI Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan. The plan did mention that for the elderly and disabled populations, that more "through the door" services, nights and weekend service, especially outside of the 275 loop is needed as Uber and Lyft are too expensive.

- B. Maintenance & Infrastructure (Presenters: Paul Williams)

Mr. Williams explained that the Chestnut Street project is 60% completed. Roofing is almost 100%. Mason is almost 100% and continuing on the inside of the building. The weather and outdoor temperature has made construction slower. Mr. Williams added that he is pushing the contractors to hold tight to the schedule. Once the weather breaks, more outside work can be completed. Mr. Williams stated he attended the Butler County Board of Commissioners meeting. He spoke for the Moser Court parking lot expansion project. Public concerns about the expansion were also addressed. The Commissioners did recommend approval of the Moser Court parking lot expansion project. Trustee Watt asked what the concerns were. Mr. Williams answered that neighbors at the tree line asked about light pollution and snow. Mr. Williams spoke to these neighbors, alleviating concerns. City ordinances regarding which way the garage doors will face, was also discussed.

- C. Service & Metrics (Presenters: Luke Morgan)

 [Ridership Chart Updated Feb 2025.xlsx](#)

 [BCRTA Ridership Review Board Update 24YE 2.19.25.xlsx](#)

 [Metrics Report December 2024.docx](#)

Mr. Morgan provided comments regarding the attached December Metrics Report.

D. Marketing & Outreach (Presenters: Shawn Cowan)

Ms. Cowan stated that she and Mr. Dutkevicz had the opportunity to visit the State House for Ohio Loves Transit Week, a statewide advocacy initiative. While there, they met with Representatives and spoke about the services BCRTA offers and the importance of public transit.

Marketing is currently working with Miami University on several projects. A route change survey is currently being conducted and is tied to the opening of the Chestnut Street Multimodal facility. The route proposals are based on the Kinley-Horn study. Miami University has included this survey in newsletters and mailings, in order to saturate the community. This survey will close March 21, 2025.

BCRTA and Miami University are partnering on a new bus wrap. The wrap "Freedom Summer 1964" will celebrate the right to vote.

Ms. Cowan added that the BCRTA Customer Satisfaction Survey is still going on until the end of February. Results will be available shortly.

The EZConnect Call Center, which is part of the regionalization project with Cincinnati Metro launched on January 21, 2025. This gives riders the ability to connect with a customer care agent for support from 6-9pm. This program is going well. The Center is getting 30-40 calls per evening and approximately half are from BCRTA customers. This is step one (1) to the larger launch of the OneSeat Ride pilot program. This program is designed for individuals who receive Paratransit services. These customers will be able to cross county borders without switching vehicles. This pilot is set to launch May 5, 2025.

E. Talent, Benefits, & Recruitment (Presenters: Mary Jane Leveline)

2024 Workplace Strength Survey Results Summary

Mr. Dutkevicz announced that Ms. Leveline was unexpectedly absent. The results of the 2024 Workplace Strength Survey will be shared next month.

Mr. Dutkevicz added that Ms. Leveline did submit BCRTA to the Cincinnati Enquirer Best Workplaces Survey. That is currently going on and BCRTA has already met the minimum response criteria.

F. Procurement (Presenters: Meagan Varney)

Ms. Varney stated that the Chestnut Street furniture is being reviewed. Several vendors have submitted pricing to Ms. Varney and showrooms will begin to be visited. The goal is to have a Resolution for the purchase of Chestnut Street furniture to the Board in March.

The Chestnut Street Bus Wash RFP is very detailed. Mr. Williams is working with Ms. Varney to complete the specifications.

Ms. Varney concluded that the cut-a-way tires resolution should be ready next month.

G. Executive Director's Report (Presenters: Matthew Dutkevicz)

 [Director's Notes-2.docx](#)

 [BCRTA Strategic Plan-9.xlsx](#)

VIII. Executive Session

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code §121.22 G(1) to consider the employment and compensation of a public employee.

Motion to Enter into Executive Session:

Trustee Watt move to go into executive session, pursuant to R.C. 121.22(G)(1), to consider the employment and compensation of a public employee.

Motion moved by Kathy Wyenandt and motion seconded by Corey Watt. Upon a call of the roll, the votes resulted as follows: Trustee Bauer-Yes, Trustee Brown-Jones-Yes, Trustee Fehr-Absent, Trustee Foster-Yes, Trustee Gordon, Trustee Lawson-Absent, Trustee Shepard-Yes, Trustee Watt-Yes, Trustee Wyenandt-Yes.

Executive Session commenced at 9:34 AM. Legal Counsel Brian Zets was retained in Executive Session. Executive Session concluded at 10:35AM and a quorum of the Board was present.

Vice-President Gordon noted the Executive Director's employment agreement had expired in November and had only been extended to the end of February. He remarked that a newly drafted employment agreement document was in-hand with proposed redlines from the Director's previous contract pertaining to remote work, base salary, and benefits. He also noted that all the trustees present had opportunity to review the document. Trustee Wyenandt thanked Mr. Dutkevicz for providing adequate benchmarking data that was helpful in assessing the market conditions. Trustee-Brown Jones noted that the execution of a contract with the director was well overdue. Mr.

Watt noted the contract should be retroactive to the original term date of the previous contract.

Motion to Authorize Vice President Gordon to Execute the New Proposed Contract:

Motion moved by Corey Watt and motion seconded by Yasmen Brown-Jones. Trustee Watt moved to authorize Vice President Gordon to execute the proposed new contract with Executive Director, subject to legal review. Trustee Brown-Jones seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

IX. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn:

Motion moved by Kathy Wyenandt and motion seconded by Dannel Shepard. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:38AM.

Appendix A-Comments from Citizens

Transit Alerts

Both myself (and my mom who is a CincyLink rider) have taken notice that alerts sent out via Transit don't always trigger a push alert. We have both checked out phone settings, and everything is set correctly. It isn't as much of an issue for me, but my mom isn't as tech saavy as I am, so when the bus is late and an alert is posted but doesn't trigger a push, she texts me (and hopes I am available to reply) and asks me to pull up the app or Buztrakr and navigate to where the alerts show. She doesn't know how to do that other than from the push alert from her phone...which doesn't always come. If I am not available to help her out, she has to call Customer Service and hope they offer the correct guidance (which they don't always do). She has also taken the Metro bus to the Forest Park Park and Ride and then transferred to the R3 as an alternative to the CincyLink as an alternative if it is running too far down or if I am not available to look up any posted alerts. However then the issue is that her car is at the West Chester Meijer Park and Ride, and she has to figure out how to get back to her (again she doesn't know how to book an on demand Bgo through the app like I do and I am not always available to "guide" her.)

I have noticed that whether the alert triggers a push depends on who is dispatching. Now, I am not saying that certain dispatchers don't know any less, but I'm suggesting that maybe certain dispatchers' computer/account settings aren't set correctly as they can post alerts, but they don't trigger a push. This is something to look into as know my mom isn't the only one that at times finds this a little more of an inconvenience... (And it may also help the call center and dispatch not get inundated with calls from people upset the bus is late.)

Thank you for your time!