

**MINUTES**  
**WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

**February 13, 2020**

**12:03 p.m.**

**Board Members Present**

Roberta Abdul-Salaam  
Robert L. Ashe III  
Jim Durrett  
William 'Bill' Floyd  
Roderick A. Frierson  
Freda B. Hardage  
Alicia M. Ivey  
John "Al" Pond  
Rita A. Scott  
W. Thomas Worthy

**Staff Members Present**

Jeffery A. Parker  
Rhonda Allen  
Cynthia Beasley  
Luz Borrero  
Collie Greenwood  
Melissa Mullinax  
Elizabeth O'Neill  
Franklin Rucker  
Heather Alhadeff  
Marsha Anderson Bomar  
Virgil Fludd  
Dean Mallis  
Santiago Osorio  
Kirk Talbott  
Emil Tzanov  
George Wright  
Tom Young (Interim)

Also in attendance Executive Director Paula Nash; Sr. Directors Lyle Harris (Contractor), Jennifer Jinadu-Wright and Colleen Kiernan; Erica Pines and Jacob Vallo; Directors Rhonda Allen, David Emory, Debbie Frank, Jonathan Hunt, Steve McClure and Shelley Peart; Manager Stephany Fisher; Manager MARTA Board of Directors Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Manager Executive Office Administration Tyrene Huff; Sr. Executive Administrator Keri Lee. Also in attendance Adrien Carter, Abebe Girmay, Courtne Middlebrooks, Terry Ponder and LaTonya Pope.

Others in attendance were Robert Highsmith of Holland & Knight; Senator Brandon Beach of Georgia State Senate; B.J. Martin of Pond & Company; Keith Parker of Clayton County Citizens Advisory Group; Khalid A. Safiya; Jim Schmidt of HNTB and Bernie Tokerz of GRTA.

**Approval of the Minutes of the January 9, 2019 Work Session Minutes**

On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Mr. Pond, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 9 to 0, with 9 members present.

**Chair's Report**

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*Upcoming Meetings*

Thursday, February 20, 2020

- External Relations Committee – 9:00 am

Tuesday, March 25, 2020

- Board Ethics Training – 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, February 27, 2020

- Planning & Capital Programs Committee – 9:30 a.m.
- Operations & Safety Committee – (immediately following Planning)
- Business Management Committee – (immediately following Operations)

Thursday, March 12, 2020

- Work Session – 12:00 noon
- Board – 1:30pm

Mrs. Hardage spoke on the matter of Mr. Pond potentially being a conflict of interest with Pond & Company. A third-party outside council that was selected by Mr. Floyd, Mr. Ashe and Dr. Edmond at the request of the Chair had the same recommendations as Mr. Highsmith. A conflict of interest was not found in this matter.

Ms. O'Neill said now that the opinion has been received from a third-party council, Mr. Parker will be authorized to enter into the contract for the station rehabilitation services with Pond & Company.

Mrs. Hardage acknowledged Mr. Pond for his professionalism throughout the investigative process. She said it is with great hope if any other concerns regarding MARTA Board members arise, it is important that all parties show the level of professionalism as Mr. Pond. This issue has been put to rest.

**General Manager/CEO Report**

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Mr. Parker announced that Rhonda Allen has been promoted to Chief Customer Experience Officer. This is a position to ensure that the voice of MARTA's customers are heard. Ms. Allen's knowledge of the organization, passion around the Authority's customers and special events showed that she was a perfect fit for this new role. Mr. Parker thanked Ms. Allen for her willingness to bring the voice of customers into the organization.

Mr. Durrett said he has worked with Ms. Allen since 2010. It is exciting that she has been elevated to this new role and he is confident she will do an outstanding job.

Ms. Allen thanked the MARTA Board and staff for the opportunity to serve as the Chief Customer Experience Officer.

### **Riders' Advisory Council**

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Ms. Allen presented a brief overview of MARTA's Riders' Advisory Council (RAC).

#### *Goal*

To provide nonbinding, informed input to leadership as MARTA plans activities and develops policies and procedures that directly impact customers while addressing:

- Rail Operations
- CX Technology
- Capital Programs
- Bus Operations

#### *Composition of the Council - 25-member council composed of:*

- 5 members representing each partnering jurisdiction
- 5 at-large members
- Bus, Mobility, Streetcar and rail riders
- Members of community-based organizations
- Members of business and educational communities
- Riders who transfer between MARTA and regional bus service provider
- Bilingual riders
- Diversity/Demographics
- Frequent and special event riders
- Members of transit affinity groups
- Managed by CXO and staff
- Community involvement
- Members with experience riding transit in other locales

#### *Ineligible to Sit on RAC:*

- MARTA employees
- Elected Officials
- Those with active MARTA contracts
- Younger than 18 years of age

*RAC Terms*

- Staggered 2-year terms
  - Initially, 17 members will be selected to a 2-year team and 8 members will be selected to a 1-year team (2 per jurisdiction)
  - Years 2 and beyond, all members will serve a 2-year term (no consecutive terms allowed; 1-year gap)

*RAC Operations*

- Monthly Meetings
  - Chaired by CXO with active participation by executive team members
  - Members expected to attend at least 75% of all meetings
  - Meetings will be held at HQ or other locations accessible by transit
  
- Agendas set by MARTA CXO
  - Education on MARTA governance and operations
  - Presentations on proposed initiatives
  - Tours of MARTA operating facilities
  - Opportunities for members to share experiences

*Outreach/Recruitment Campaign*

- Newspaper
- Twitter
- Social Network
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Instagram

*Selection Process*

- Application Review
  - Members of the Executive Management Team
- Recommendations
  - CXO submits letters of nomination to the GM/CEO
- Final Approval
  - GM/CEO presents to the MARTA Board of Directors

*What's Next*

- MARTA Public Announcement
  - February 13<sup>th</sup>
- Applications available online and at select MARTA facilities
  - February 14<sup>th</sup> – March 14<sup>th</sup>

- Review of applications and initial selections
- Recommendation to the Board
- Press release announcing the council members
- Initial Riders' Advisory Council Meeting
  - May 06<sup>th</sup>

### **Valentine's Day Efforts**

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Jennifer Jinadu-Wright presented a briefing reaching patrons via Valentine's Day Efforts.

As a way to launch the exciting initiatives of the Authority's new Chief Customer Experience Officer as well as the new Riders' Advisory Council (RAC), a street team will travel throughout the system to hand out Valentine's Cards and candy to MARTA riders during morning and evening commutes.

The Valentine's Card will advertise the new Chief Customer Experience Officer and provide a link for patrons to join the RAC.

#### *Five Points*

- An event will be held to
  - Meet and greet the Chief Customer Experience Officer
  - Display a MARTA Prize Wheel
  - Take picture in a Photobooth/Green Screen
  - Receive custom MARTA magnets, created by local artists

#### *#FAFATL*

- ATLTVHEAD (Interactive artist)
  - Known for livestreams on the Atlanta BeltLine
  - Take selfies with customers for social media
  - ATLTVHEAD will pass out paper hearts to customers that can be exchanged at his Valentine's message booth for a special V-Day message
  - Garrett Motes will perform live jazz music

#### *Social Media*

- Promotes places to go on Valentine's Day while riding MARTA's system

### **CMAR Contract Follow-Up**

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Mr. Parker said he is available to discuss any further questions regarding the CMAR Contract.

**Senator Brandon Beach New Video**

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Senator Beach presented a video showing public transit improvements.

Senator Beach said I am proud to see different transit agencies working together. Sixteen years ago, as a DOT Board member, no agencies talked to each other. ARC did not talk to GRTA, GRTA did not talk to MARTA and MARTA did not talk to GDOT. Those days are over. There is communication and relationships among each other to focus on the customer's experience. I applaud MARTA for selecting Ms. Allen to oversee the customer's experience. It is important that the Authority know that my team and I represent the State and I am an advocate to improve transit and public transportation.

Mr. Ashe acknowledged Senator Beach for his dedication to public service. He said Senator Beach has been a long-time friend to MARTA, before transit became cool. Being a lawyer, I often speak in Latin terms and "Sic Vos Non Vobis" come to mind when thinking of Senator Beach. This Latin phrase translate to, "thus you labor, but not for yourself". The phrase is about altruism and the commitment to public service and doing the Lord's work on behalf of others. It is easy to do the right thing, when the right thing is popular. However, Senator Beach has made a career out of doing the right thing whether it is popular or not.

Senator Beach expressed appreciation and thanked Mrs. Kiernon and Mr. Shumaker for suggesting to re-make the transit video. He also thanked MARTA for the dedication of being a public servant to the community.

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**Other Remarks**

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Mr. Parker introduced AGM of Bus Operation, Santiago Osorio to the MARTA Board and staff. Mr. Osorio joins MARTA from Houston Metro and we are excited to expand our team.

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On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Mr. Ashe the Board unanimously agreed by a vote of 12 to 0, with 13\* members present to go into Executive Session at 12:40 p.m. to discuss personnel, real estate and litigation.

On motion by Ms. Abdul-Salaam seconded by Mr. Worthy, the Board unanimously agreed by a vote of 12 to 0, with 13\* members present to adjourn the Executive Session at 1:51 p.m.

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**Adjournment**

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The Work Session of the MARTA Board of Directors adjourned at 1:51 p.m.