



OPTA Board of Director Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2024

OFFICERS

Howard Stewart, SEAT

Andy Volenik, Delaware Co Transit

Bob Ruzinsky, Dayton RTA

Mary Habig, NCAT

Melissa Leckrone, Perry Co JFS

Blair Taseff, TESCO

Kevin Hardesty, GILLIG

President

Vice-President

Secretary-Treasurer

Vice-President Small Urban/Rural Systems

Vice-President Mobility Manager Members

Vice-President Associate Members

Vice-President Associate Members

Emeritus Representatives

India Birdsong, Greater Cleveland RTA

Kirt Conrad, Stark Area RTA

Darryl Haley, Southwest Ohio RTA

Patrick Harris, Central Ohio TA

Laura Koprowski, Toledo Area RTA

Dawn Distler, METRO RTA

Claudia Amrhein, PARTA

OPTA Staff

Matt Carle, Executive Director

Andy Bowers, Government Relations

Presenter Attendees

N/A

Howard Stewart, *SEAT*

Mr. Howard Stewart called the meeting of the OPTA Board of Directors to order on November 18th, 2024 at 4PM. Mr. Stewart then asked for everyone to introduce themselves as the meeting had more individuals than usual thanks to the conference. He then introduced a motion to approve the September board meeting minutes and turned the meeting over to Matt Carle for an Executive Director report.

Matt Carle, OPTA

Mr. Carle stated he has two updates to share with OPTA: first, an election update and second, OPTA's budget requests.

First, Mr. Carle stated Republicans had a strong showing not only in Ohio but across the country. Now that Mr. Trump was elected, Sen. J.D. Vance will have to vacate his Senate seat and Gov. DeWine will have the opportunity to appoint someone in his place. He stated that the person appointed will be expected to raise a large sum of money in order to be re-elected. Mr. Carle then went through the races federally and at the state level. Of particular note, he stated that in the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate now have a super Republican

majority. None of these results were surprising according to Mr. Carle and Ohio remains a deeply red state, which will be something to consider as OPTA approaches budget season next year.

Next, Mr. Carle pivoted to a government affairs update. He stated OPTA has already organized meetings with ODOT and the Governor's Office to discuss public transit in the transportation budget. Additionally, there are significant leadership changes in the House and Senate. In particular, the new Senate President, Rob McColley, has not been supportive of public transit in the past and even voted against public transit. However, Sen. Bill Reineke, a friend of public transit, will be on the Transportation Committee and is in leadership. Mr. Carle urged everyone to leverage existing relationships with members to educate them on the importance of public transit.

Finally, Mr. Carle stated the current House Speaker, Jason Stephens, has indicated he will not be running for another Speaker term, leaving only former Senate President Matt Huffman, in the race. Sen. Huffman has previously been a friend of public transit and would be a good leader from OPTA's perspective.

Chuck Dyer, ODOT

Mr. Dyer reminded everyone that ODOT welcomed a new Director, Pam Vest Boratyn, who was previously the Chief of Staff at ODOT. Additionally, Mr. Dyer reminded everyone to fill out their applications for the State FY 26. Finally, he stated ODOT just released a list of urban project winners and congratulated TARTA for their project submission.

Howard Stewart, SEAT

Mr. Stewart thanked Mr. Carle and Mr. Dyer for their updates and turned the meeting over to Mr. Bob Ruzinsky for a financial update.

Bob Ruzinsky, Dayton RTA

Mr. Ruzinsky stated that the OPTA financials were in a strong position. OPTA has collected nearly all of their membership dues for 2024 and is on track to meet their conference planning goals. Overall, OPTA will end the year with almost \$400,000 in assets.

Howard Stewart, SEAT

Mr. Stewart thanked Mr. Ruzinsky for his update and asked for any updates from leadership committees. There were no updates. Mr. Stewart then moved to the 2025 Slate of Officers for approval. The 2025 Slate of Officers is everyone who was currently serving in the 2024 year with the addition of Dane Patterson, as a third VP of Associate Members. He then asked for a motion to approve the slate, which was unanimously voted and agreed upon. Finally, he stated the calendar of proposed meeting dates for 2025 were located on OPTA's website. The meeting adjourned at 4:34PM.