



OPTA Board of Director Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2023

OFFICERS

Claudia Amrhein, <u>PARTA</u>	President
Howard Stewart, SEAT	Vice-President
Dawn Distler, METRO RTA	Secretary-Treasurer
Chasilyn Carter, Lancaster Fairfield Transit	Vice-President Small Urban/Rural Systems
Shannon Webster, Greene CATS	Vice-President Mobility Manager Members
Blair Taseff, TESCO	Vice-President Associate Members
Kevin Hardesty, GILLIG	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
Bob Ruzinsky, Greater Dayton RTA

OPTA Staff

Matt Carle, Executive Director
Elle Crader, Executive Administrator

Presenter Attendees

Andy Bowers, Andy Bowers & Associates
Chuck Dyer, Ohio Department of Transportation

Administrative Attendees

Denise Baba, PARTA
Marcia Fletcher, PARTA

Additional: 41 Go To Meeting Attendees and 45 in person attendees.

Claudia Amrhein, PARTA

Ms. Claudia Amrhein called the meeting of the OPTA Board of Directors to order at 10:35 a.m. on June 13, 2023. She indicated that the meeting minutes for March were distributed on the OPTA Member Portal. She asked for a motion to accept the March minutes to which the group motioned and seconded the motion to which all those in favor voted "aye." Ms. Amrhein then asked Mr. Matt Carle to deliver the Executive Director report.

Matt Carle, OPTA

Mr. Carle began by thanking Ms. Amrhein and reminded the group of the transition to Govenda. He stated that Govenda offered a great platform but that financially it did not make sense for OPTA to spend nearly \$1,000 per meeting to have the platform accessible. Instead, meeting materials were posted to a special location behind the OPTA Member Portal.

Next, Mr. Carle discussed the Ohio Needs Transit Conference & OPTA Expo 2023, which will be held from Sept. 18-20th at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. He stated the ticketing platform had gone live and was accessible from the OPTA website by clicking the conference tab.

Tickets were to remain the same as last year, \$250 for OPTA members and \$350 for non OPTA members. He stated that the run of the conference was to be very similar to last year, with the board meeting occurring on the 18th and the OPTA Excellence Awards luncheon on the 19th. Mr. Carle stated that the nominations for the OPTA Excellence Awards were now open and that OPTA was accepting nominations for all categories.

Then, Mr. Carle asked the group to help solicit sponsors for the conference. Sponsorships from \$1,500-\$15,000 are available for purchase on the OPTA website. Mr. Carle stated that hotel blocks were again set aside for conference attendees, with the Hilton offering \$122/night and the Hyatt offering \$165/night. Both hotels are connected to the venue and links to reserve a room are available on our website. Mr. Carle stated that a new attraction was coming to the conference this year- the ODOT Vehicle Fair, which was free for all to attend and would be an opportunity for staffers in procurement to come and place vehicle orders.

Mr. Carle then thanked ODOT for their continued partnership with OPTA for the conference. Mr. Carle then turned it over to Mr. Andy Bowers for a government affairs update.

Andy Bowers, OPTA

Mr. Bowers stated that the Ohio Senate was currently working on an omnibus package for the budget and expected it to be moved out of the Senate and through both chambers in the coming days. He stated that both he and Mr. Carle have been in conversations with the House Speaker where the Speaker indicated they were not likely to meet the June 30th deadline to pass the budget. Mr. Bowers stated that most of public transit's funding was in the transportation budget which had already passed and therefore this would not impact public transit. However, Mr. Bowers stated he would be on the lookout to ensure nothing was added to the omnibus amendment that would impact public transit.

Mr. Bowers stated the other item taking up energy in the legislature was Issue 1, which was to be on the ballot in August in a special election. The resolution would change the law for constitutional amendments from a current simple majority, to requiring a 60% "yes" vote. Mr. Bowers stated it is unknown if this would impact local bond amendments, third frontier programming, and more. He stated that this proposal was initiated by pro-life groups but that it would impact all topics, not just abortion. Mr. Bowers stated he and Mr. Carle will continue monitoring the situation and provide OPTA with updates.

Next, Mr. Bowers stated there was an amendment potentially coming to the fall ballot that would legalize marijuana. The movement is currently collecting signatures. This movement could impact employers and employer drug testing. When employees consume marijuana, it can stay in the system for 30 days, which can impact drug tests even if an employee was not consuming marijuana while on the job. Thus, this issue is of concern for employers, and they will continue monitoring the movement.

Next, Mr. Bowers discussed other measures currently being considered in the legislature: CDL credits and eminent domain bills that could impact OPTA members. Mr. Bowers said he and Mr. Carle were monitoring the potential legislation and would keep OPTA members apprised.

Pause for lunch.

Claudia Amrhein, PARTA

Ms. Amrhein welcomed Mr. Billy Wingfield of Access2Care who sponsored the lunch and was present to give a presentation.

Billy Wingfield, Access2Care

Mr. Wingfield gave a presentation about the operations and products of Access2Care. Slide deck available upon request.

Claudia Amrhein, PARTA

Ms. Amrhein thanked Mr. Wingfield for his presentation and turned the meeting over to Mr. Chuck Dyer for an ODOT update.

Chuck Dyer, ODOT

Mr. Dyer stated that ODOT is contracting with NEORide to fund a position that will assist in the rural systems. The position will allow for rural systems to have boots on the ground and advocate while giving technical support to rural systems. The position will be responsible for coordinating quarterly roundtables with ODOT and rural systems and building out other networking opportunities. This position will be helping rural systems negotiate through challenges and difficult situations and also help writing grants.

Next, Mr. Dyer stated that ODOT has two individuals leaving their office at the end of the month when they retire. ODOT is conducting interviews to fill the vital positions of Ms. Macie Moore and Ms. Juana Hostin, they should encourage them to apply.

Next, Mr. Dyer stated ODOT is currently working through OTP2 grant applications and has over \$98M in requests with only \$37M in funding. So, the ODOT team will be working through these applications to fund as many worthy causes as possible.

Finally, Mr. Dyer stated ODOT is working on RFPs with scheduling, dispatching, and software companies. ODOT is putting together a list of eligible companies that transit companies can use in their contracting for these products. Additionally, ODOT is moving their grant application cycle from the calendar year awards to state fiscal year awards. So, members will see applications for the 2025 fiscal year come out later in the summer.

Claudia Amrhein, PARTA

Ms. Amrhein thanked Mr. Dyer for his report and then introduced Mr. Jason White and Mr. Ed Redfern of the The Bus Coalition, who were virtually present for a presentation on The Bus Coalition.

Ed Redfern, The Bus Coalition

Mr. Redfern thanked Ms. Amrhein and then gave an overview of who The Bus Coalition is and the projects they are currently working on. Slide deck available upon request.

Claudia Amrhein, PARTA

Ms. Amrhein thanked The Bus Coalition for their presentation and then turned it over to present committee chairs for their reports.

Matt Carle, OPTA

Mr. Carle stated that Ms. Dawn Distler was not available for the meeting to give a finance report but that OPTA's finances were in excellent standing and that finance reports were available on the Member Portal.

Shannon Webster, *Greene CATS*

Ms. Shannon Webster stated that currently there are 41 mobility manager positions in the state, operating in 66 of the 88 counties, which means there are 22 counties that have the opportunity to get a mobility manager. Ms. Webster stated that a statewide website was launched this month called "Gohio Mobility (morpc.gohio.com)" which will improve access for Ohioans with mobility needs. The website was developed with the help of ODOT and MORPC.

Daron Brown, *Dayton RTA*

Mr. Daron Brown stated the maintenance committee would be meeting next Wednesday at 10 AM to talk about purchasing and maintenance.

Clayton Popik, SARTA

Mr. Clayton Popik stated the planning committee will be meeting later this summer for the first in-person meeting the committee has had since the pandemic. Additionally, the planning committee will be putting on two sessions at the OPTA conference this fall, which they are excited about.

Claudia Amrhein, PARTA

Ms. Amrhein thanked all the committee chairs for their reports and then turned to her President's report. She stated that the OPTA 2023 strategic priorities have been updated with mid-year updates and have been posted to the Member Portal. Additionally, OPTA's contract with Mr. Carle and CHW Advisors has been renewed. Ms. Amrhein thanked everyone for their attendance at the in-person board meeting and stated she looked forward to seeing everyone at the Ohio Needs Transit Conference & OPTA Expo 2023 in September.

Ms. Amrhein then adjourned the meeting at 12:42 PM.