

**MINUTES OF THE
JACKSONVILLE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
BOARD WORK SESSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026**

The Jacksonville Transportation Authority Board of Directors held a Work Session on Thursday, March 26, 2026.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Aundra Wallace, Patricia Sams, Elaine Brown, Alan Hopkins, Madelen Salter, and Daniel Vallencourt.

JTA STAFF PRESENT: Nathaniel Ford, Cleveland Ferguson, Jeffery Smith, Jessica Shepler, Heather Oboira and Sherri Barr.

OTHERS PRESENT: Richard Milian

I. WELCOME: Chair Wallace called the Work Session to order at 12:34 p.m. and welcomed the Board, staff and public.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no requests to speak.

III. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

a. Advertising Contract Overview: Mrs. Shepler stated that staff will bring the advertising contract to the Board for consideration at the Board Meeting following the work session. She then introduced Lynn Opperman to provide an overview of the contract.

Mrs. Opperman stated that she will provide an overview of the contract for JTA advertising. The contract represents more than an advertising contract; it is strategic shift in how the JTA leverages its assets to strengthen the financial position and support long-term sustainability. The current advertising contract originated in 2015 and was limited in the amount of assets that were available to the contractor and staff recognized the need to expand the assets and open the network to new modern advertising approaches. It was determined that will also be important to introduce and implement a minimum annual guarantee which was not included in the last contract. This guarantee will assist with budgeting in the future.

She added that equally important is the very intentional work to protect JTA's brand and the community. The contract includes clear advertising restrictions, prohibiting political controversial or inappropriate content that ensures all advertising align with the community standard and for decency and in good taste. The JTA will always maintain full oversight and final approval before any advertising is placed on JTA assets.

Mrs. Opperman shared the procurement timeline, as well as a snapshot of the current and new advertising contract assets and details. She also provided photos of where some of the

advertising is located. Mrs. Opperman concluded by providing the Board with the fiscal impact to the JTA with the new advertising contract.

Director Vallencourt inquired as to who assumes the costs to have the advertising placed on the asset. Mrs. Opperman responded that the vendor works with the contractor on having advertising posted, there is no cost to the JTA.

Director Brown shared her appreciation of the work on this contract. She asked if there are any opportunities for advertising on the Ferry. Mrs. Opperman stated yes and staff will continue to look for assets that can be included in advertising options.

Director Sams requested information on how it is determined what can be placed on JTA assets. Mrs. Opperman shared that the contractor has the list of what types of advertising is allowed on the assets. All advertisements are sent to JTA staff for approval before being placed.

Mrs. Opperman clarified Director Salter's inquiries about clarifying the ads related to alcohol and tobacco and difference between advertising and sponsorship. There was also discussion on the vendors and their relation to the Jacksonville area. Mr. Ferguson further clarified the difference between advertisements and sponsorships.

The Board discussed the cost versus revenue led by Director Hopkins and the certainty of the contractor meeting the guaranteed revenue to the JTA.

IV. LONG RANGE PLANNING AND SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

a. Emerald Trail Update: Mrs. Gillis stated that she will brief the board on the status of the Emerald Trail Program. She began with an overview of the urban trail system, which will be 30-mile network of biking and walking trails, greenways and paths designed to connect downtown within a dozen historic neighborhoods and numerous schools, as well as parks, waterways and the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center (JRTC). The trail is envisioned as signature outdoor destination that will strengthen mobility, encourage healthy lifestyles, improve public safety and support neighborhood revitalization across Jacksonville. She then provided the Board with the history of Local Option Gas Tax (LOGT) agreement that has JTA taking the lead on the final segments of the trail due to its track record to deliver projects on time and within budget, as well as the Authority's ability to receive grant funding.

Mrs. Gillis then provided the status, overview and Updates for each segment (3, 4, 6,7 and 8) related to design phase and construction phase and the funding timeline through the next 30 years. Details on the procurement process for the Design Contract for Segment 3, which will be presented to the Board for consideration at the Board meeting following the work session. An overview of the community meetings that were held and the feedback that was received from

members of the public to ensure the JTA takes those comments into consideration was shared with the Board.

She provided the Board with the delivery approach and estimated cost for each segment that JTA will oversee, as well as an alternative delivery approach that has been shared with the City of Jacksonville (City) and Groundwork Jax.

Mrs. Gillis concluded with next steps for the JTA's segments of the Emerald Trail and future trail images for each segment that were shared with the public.

Director Brown asked if JTA has a grant writer on staff, or who prepares the grants. Mrs. Gillis responded that the JTA, the City and Groundwork Jax are collaborating on grant opportunities. The JTA does have a grant team that works with the government affairs team to ensure the Authority submits the best package.

Director Salter asked for clarification on segment 3 costs of \$24.6 million and a potential build grant fund that was submitted in February 2026 of \$17 million, where does the delta come from. Mrs. Gillis responded it would come from LOGT funds. Director Salter asked for staff to provide here with background information to ensure she has a full understanding of the Emerald Trail Program.

The Board discussed the recommendation that will come to the Board for approval following the work session, as well as the cost for the design contract that will be funded by LOGT. Director Vallencourt shared his plan to recuse himself from the vote at the Board meeting for this item.

Director Hopkins asked where any additional funds would come from should grants not be awarded or there is a cost shortage. Mr. Ford shared the options for funding such as capital funds held by the JTA, LOGT funds and/or potential future grants.

Chair Wallace stated that the Emerald Trail project came to the JTA through the LOGT agreement as it is desirable for the community. Of course, the \$147 million grant was rescinded but the JTA still needs to move forward with this project for good of the community.

Mr. Ford added that further discussions on projects and funding such as the Emerald Trail will be a part of the Board's strategic retreat later in the year.

Director Sams shared her appreciation of the JTA working to continue to work on the project and show the care of the community for delivery on the Emerald Trail.

b. TOD Overview – ARTEA Ground Lease: Mrs. Shepler stated that an amendment to this ground lease will be presented to the Board for consideration at the Board meeting following the work session. She then shared details of the JTA Real Property portfolio and decisions to

produce long term revenue to the JTA and build ridership around the density within these areas through Transit Oriented Development (TOD). She then provided the history and details of the ARTEA 99-year ground lease and the contract terms as agreed to by the JTA and Corner Lot.

Mrs. Shepler then shared details of the amendment to the contract that will be presented for Board consideration. The amendment would modify the rent to reflect economic occupancy. The JTA would receive consistent income but would give ARTEA an opportunity to stabilize, it would expand workforce housing to 50 percent, which positions both parties to capture value on River's Edge activities. She also shared an overview of the market evaluation and the case for recalibration. The payments as shown in the contract agreement will reinstate from January 2028 and beyond. A summary of Corner Lot's investment in ARTEA's growth was shared as well.

Details on the proposed modified payment and the occupancy-based rent projections was provided for the Board's review.

Mr. Milian shared details of the discussions and negotiations between the JTA and Corner Lot to amend the lease until occupancy at ARTEA increased and that there are some things the Board should consider. This property is a TOD, so the JTA does want ARTEA to be successful. There is also the issue with the roads and utilities in the area that were expected but have not yet been completed that may be impacting occupancy. Also, historically the Board has wanted work force housing, and this complex provides that and the amendment will increase the percent of work force housing.

Director Vallencourt shared that he would like the JTA to recoup the money it is not receiving during the amended years of the contract as some time in future. He feels it is the JTA's obligation to ensure it is made whole. He does want to see ARTEA succeed. Mrs. Shepler shared that staff have discussed this with Corner Lot and they are open to finding a way to make JTA whole during negotiations.

Director Hopkins asked where the recommendation came from, Corner Lot or the JTA. Also, there is not a true-up in the amendment. Mrs. Shepler shared that the original request came from Corner Lot and the JTA and General Counsel entered negotiations with Corner Lot to come to this recommendation. As to the true-up, there have been continued negotiations around this and there is an opportunity to amend this amendment to include the true-up.

Director Salter inquired about ridership in the area to show activation of TOD in area. Mrs. Shepler shared that staff would get the information for the Board. Also, the information that Director Hopkins requested related to ridership around these developments.

Mr. Ford stated that based on the questions and the discussion among the Board, he

suggested that staff take the contract back to Corner Lot to amend the recommendation based on the Board's input. With the Board's agreement, defer this item from the March Board meeting agenda.

Chair Wallace stated that he was going to make the same suggestion as Mr. Ford and gave the staff directions on what needs to be included in the negotiations.

The Board agreed to provide any further information that they feel staff should consider in the negotiations.

V. ROUNDTABLE

a. Bus Fire: Mr. Ben Bradley, JTA's Assistant Safety Manager, provided a follow up on the bus fire incident. He began with an overview of the incident, wherein bus 1620 departed the campus at 12:45 pm Monday afternoon. There were no passengers on board at the time of the incident. The operator was headed eastbound on Arlington Expressway when he heard a large bang at the left rear of the vehicle. The bus was pulled to a safe location on the side of the road and the operator stepped off the bus and called operations and fire rescue. Within approximately three minutes, the fire spread to the rest of the bus. The operator had no injuries; however, the bus was a total loss.

An investigation began to determine the cause of the incident. It was determined that it was not any kind of human error. Staff looked at the mechanical records related to the bus, which showed that the tires were replaced in January 2026 and preventive maintenance was completed on the bus just the week prior to the incident. After review of the internal and external bus cameras it was determined the tire blew. So, the determination was that the left inner tire of the bus failed causing friction inside the wheel well as the bus was going down the road. This is what caused the initial fire. Staff and the Michelin team then moved forward with inspecting the entire fleet to make sure that there were no other tire issues. There were no issues found.

b. U2C Phase 3 Update: Mrs. Gillis stated that staff had planned to present a recommendation to the Board at today's Board meeting for approval to negotiate a contract for the Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study for the U²C Phase 3, which are the neighborhood extensions. However, after discussion and further evaluation, staff are requesting the item be deferred so all for additional time to fully review the proposed alternative approach. Specifically, to allow staff to perform the PD&E internally to significantly reduce costs.

VI. ADJOURN: There being no further business, the work session adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Signatures on the following page.

SEAL



Max Guber, Secretary



Aundra Wallace, Chair