

**MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
JACKSONVILLE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026**

The regular Board meeting of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) was held on Thursday, May 28, 2026 at JRTC, 100 LaVilla Center Drive, Jacksonville, Florida 32204.

BOARD MEMBERS

Aundra Wallace, Chair
Patricia Sams, Vice Chair
Max Globler, Secretary
Elaine Brown, Treasurer
Alan Hopkins
Madelen Salter
Daniel Vallencourt

JTA EXECUTIVE STAFF

Nathaniel P. Ford Sr., CEO
Cleveland Ferguson, EVP Administration
Greer Gillis, SVP System Development
Jeffery Smith, SVP Operations
Jessica Shepler, SVP Public Affairs
Heather Obora, SVP Finance

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Katie Smith, Board Administrator
Rahman Johnson, Council Liaison

A. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Wallace called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and thanked the Board for attending the meeting and the work session that was held prior to the Board meeting.

Director Vallencourt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Smith provided roll call to confirm a quorum.

Chair Wallace shared the Safety Message for the Month of May: “Prepare for Disaster, Recover Faster.”

B. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 30, 2026 BOARD MEETING**

MOTION (Globler/Brown) to approve the minutes from April 30, 2026. Motion Approved (7-0).

C. **COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISON** – Councilman Johnson was not in attendance but will be given the opportunity to speak when he arrives.

D. **AUTHORITY RECOGNITIONS**

There was a special recognition for Ken Middleton. He was recognized for his retirement after more than 24 years with the JTA and his commitment to the Authority, the City of Jacksonville and his work with the Jacksonville Transportation Advisory Committee (JTAC).

Mr. Ford then recognized the employees for the month of May 2026.

May Operator: Gerald Hawkins

May Maintenance Employee: Sandy McDaniel

May Administrative Employee: Brian Reed

E. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**: There was one public comment.

1. **Russ Davis:** Mr. Davis shared his appreciation of Ken Middleton and the work related to JTAC. He then thanked the Board, Mr. Ford and JTA staff for putting together all the stakeholders' meetings (Chamber of Care) to discuss the paratransit service and continue to build the best transportation agency in the country.

F. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT:** Mr. Ford thanked the Board members for taking time to meet with him and staff to prepare for Board Day. He acknowledged the extraordinary amount of time, focus, and thoughtful engagement the Board has dedicated throughout the Fiscal Year 2027 budget development process.

Like many organizations and municipalities across our region, the JTA has faced a challenging fiscal environment this year as sales tax revenues have trended below projections, creating significant impacts on the operating budget. While these challenges are not unique to the JTA, Mr. Ford said that he is proud of the way this Board has approached them — with discipline, collaboration, transparency, and an unwavering commitment to the community JTA serves.

He stated “The many hours spent in workshops, committee discussions, strategic planning conversations, and detailed financial reviews reflect your deep commitment to the long-term success, stability, and stewardship of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA). Your leadership and guidance have been instrumental in helping to position the JTA to navigate these financial realities responsibly while continuing to prioritize safe, reliable, innovative, and customer-focused mobility services for Northeast Florida. Difficult decisions are never easy, but this Board has remained focused on balancing fiscal responsibility with our mission to enhance the quality of life, economic vitality, and connectivity of the communities we serve. For that, I want to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude.”

Mr. Ford then provided an update and a review of activities since the last board meeting. May was a strong and productive month for the JTA, marked by continued progress in innovation, community engagement, workforce development, and national industry leadership. Throughout the month, the Authority continued advancing strategic initiatives that support JTA's mission of providing safe, reliable, innovative, and sustainable mobility solutions for the Northeast Florida region.

On May 1, 2026, Mr. Ford joined fellow Jacksonville leaders as a panelist during the Hampton Roads Chamber Leadership Exchange held at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens. The discussion focused on how strategic investments in mobility, resilience, and affordable housing can strengthen economic growth and quality of life across communities.

The same day, JTA leadership welcomed representatives from Naval Air Station Jacksonville (NAS JAX) for a visit focused on innovative mobility solutions, including a tour of the Autonomous Innovation Center (AIC) and demonstrations of the NAVI autonomous transportation system. Discussions included the Authority's ongoing infrastructure initiatives and the importance of delivering safe, reliable mobility solutions within complex operating environments. The visit also provided an opportunity to highlight the JTA's deliberate and phased approach to deploying advanced mobility technologies in real-world operating conditions.

The Authority's six-month Fare Modification Pilot Program continues generating strong community response and encouraging ridership trends across the system. Although the pilot is only three months underway, the JTA is already experiencing record ridership growth, including some of the highest ridership numbers the Authority has seen since the COVID-19 pandemic. The Authority will continue closely monitoring performance metrics, customer feedback, and ridership trends throughout the duration of the pilot program.

Also in May, the JTA was proud to be recognized as a First Coast Worksite Wellness Council Gold Award recipient for excellence in workplace wellness. This recognition reflects the Authority's continued commitment to supporting the health, wellness, and well-being of employees both inside and outside the workplace. Special appreciation is extended to the Human Resources team for their dedication and leadership in developing programs and initiatives that contribute to a healthier and stronger workplace environment.

On May 7, 2026, the JTA Connexion and Eligibility team visited Cecil Pines Adult Living Community to provide residents with information regarding available transportation services and mobility options. During the outreach effort, the team highlighted JTA Connexion and Connexion Plus services as flexible and accessible transportation solutions designed to support daily travel, medical appointments, and continued community connectivity.

The JTA also participated in KIPP VOICE Academy's 8th Grade Career Day, where students had the opportunity to explore one of the Authority's NAVI autonomous vehicles (AV) and engage directly with JTA engineers regarding careers in transportation and technology. The event provided students with firsthand exposure to emerging mobility technologies and reinforced the importance of workforce development and STEM education partnerships. The Authority remains proud of its continued partnership with KIPP Jacksonville, including the completed KIPP Academy Transit-Oriented Development project, where KIPP Jacksonville Public Schools leased eight acres from the JTA in 2020. The campus also features a First Coast Flyer Green Line station

and dedicated bus loop, helping students safely and conveniently connect to public transportation services each day.

The JTA was proud to have team members represent Northeast Florida at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) International Bus Roadeo. The JTA Maintenance Team — “The Xpendables,” consisting of George McGarry, Rudolph Wells, and Jarrod Morales — along with Bus Operator Ramon Farfan, competed among the industry’s top transportation professionals and represented the Authority with distinction. There were 40 teams that competed and the JTA made a great showing, coming in 7th for the overall Grand Champion Award.

On May 22, 2026, the JTA welcomed its newest graduating class of Bus Operators following completion of extensive hands-on training through the JTA Bus Operator Academy.

In recognition of Compliance and Ethics Week and National Ethics Awareness Month, the Authority celebrated employees recognized by their peers for their commitment to ethical excellence. These employees exemplify the integrity, accountability, and professionalism that remain foundational to the JTA’s mission and organizational culture. Special appreciation is extended to the Audit and Compliance team for organizing these efforts and continuing to reinforce a strong culture of ethics, accountability, and transparency across the organization.

Throughout the month of May, the JTA continued representing Jacksonville on the national stage at several major industry events and conferences. At the APTA Mobility Conference, the Authority shared Jacksonville’s experience becoming the first city in the nation to deploy a permanent autonomous public transportation system through the NAVI service. Discussions focused on the JTA’s culture of innovation, lessons learned throughout deployment, and the importance of integrating autonomous mobility into existing public transportation networks.

On May 27, 2026, JTA, alongside its partners at BEEP, staff had the opportunity to meet with the Honorable Jonathan Morrison, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). During this virtual call, JTA had the opportunity to show him the state-of-the-art Autonomous Innovation Center (AIC) and highlight the NAVI service. Key focus areas of the discussion were around the development and implementation of safety features not only on the vehicle but also along the corridor. These conversations are essential to the continued evolution in the regulatory framework for autonomous mobility.

Mr. Ford concluded his report with a video of activities over the last month.

H. CONSENT AGENDA

No items.

I. ADOPTION AGENDA

No items.

J. SAFETY, AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

(Hopkins, Committee Chair)

Director Hopkins stated that there are no items for consideration under this committee. He shared his appreciation of Chris Geraci and the Safety and Security team and the great work they do. He then provided an overview of a couple activities related to Safety and Security Department.

Staff activities related to DAVID (Driver and Vehicle Information Database) Certification were:

The JTA has successfully completed its annual affirmation requirements with Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. As required under the Memorandum of Understanding, the Authority timely submitted its annual attestation.

In furtherance of the Authority's internal control and cybersecurity obligations, quarterly control reviews have also been completed for this reporting period. These reviews include verification that system access logs and user activity monitoring protocols are functioning appropriately and are being documented in accordance with applicable security and compliance standards.

As it relates to furloughs:

The Authority formally activated its Continuity of Operations Plan and Incident Management Team structure on May 18, 2026, due to furlough period beginning June 1, 2026. Personnel across affected divisions have been briefed regarding operational continuity protocols, delegated authorities, and functional responsibilities. The Authority remains positioned to continue essential operational and administrative functions through September 30, 2026, and the Board will continue to receive updates and briefings as circumstances warrant.

K. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

(Brown, Committee Chair)

Director Brown stated that there are two items under the Finance and Administration Committee, both are for the Fiscal Year 2027 Budgets. Before I turn it over to Heather, I want to thank the Board members and staff for the time they have taken in just the last month.

On April 30, we held a Finance and Administration Committee meeting to discuss and review the budget. Then each of us met individually with Mr. Ford and CFO Obora to do deep dive with the budget. The committee met again on May 21 to continue discussion on the budget. And this week, each of us met one on one again with staff to give more feedback, followed by the

presentation and discussions earlier today at the work session under the Finance and Administration Committee. Everyone has put in a lot of time to get us to this position – and I thank you all for that.

1. RESOLUTION 2026-08: APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2027 OPERATING BUDGET: Ms. Obora stated that staff recommends the Board adopt Resolution 2026-08 approving the Jacksonville Transportation Authority's Operating Budget, in the amount of \$139.2 million for Fiscal Year 2027 and authorizing its submission to the Jacksonville City Counsel.

Mr. Milian shared the motion before the Board based on stated that based on the discussions during the work session.

MOTION (Brown/Sams) to adopt Resolution 2026-08, approving the JTA Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget in the amount of \$19.2, based on staff's recommendation related to service modification and fare adjustments. Motion Approved (7-0).

Chair Wallace provided an overview of the service modifications. He stated that the Board was presented scenarios 1, 2A, 2B, and 3. It was determined that the Board would like to go real conservative with the projections of \$80 million to bring the Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget to \$139.2 million. He added that there must be adjustments and provided the breakdown of savings of \$13.6 million through route frequency, service hours and elimination of routes.

Chair Wallace then provided details on the changes to fares for JTA services that will go into effect January 1, 2027. The fare modification will provide projected revenues of almost \$1.56 million.

He stated that when these discussions began, the budget had a delta of roughly \$17.5 million. The projected savings and revenue that was just provided, based on the \$80 million tax revenue projection, still leaves a delta of \$2.3 million.

Director Vallencourt inquired about the fare change to Fixed Route. Chair Wallace responded by sharing the current fare on Fixed Route is \$1 during the pilot, which will end on September 1, 2026. Fares will then go back to the original fare of \$1.75. On January 1, 2027, fares for Fixed Route will increase by \$.25, to \$2.

Mr. Milian stated that like every other budget that has been adopted by the Authority, it is contingent upon Title VI review.

Chair Wallace stated that this decision was not made lightly, and although there will be a fare increase, JTA's fare is still lower than other agencies in the southeast, particularly in Florida. This is not something the Board wants to do; it is something that the Board has to do.

Mr. Ford stated the Board's presence clearly mattered as they were with staff every step of the way - from committee meetings, to work sessions to one-on-ones and he applauded the Board's

efforts. Mr. Ford shared that he did not want the story to just about the numbers, but the actual spirit and heart related to making the decision the Board did. He expressed genuine gratitude to the Board. This has been one of the most consequential and difficult decision during his tenure as the CEO of the JTA. He also shared his appreciation of the staff for the work that has been done to get to this point. After long deliberations, the Board made an affirmative vote for scenario two. The Board will have the opportunity to further discuss these decisions at the annual strategic retreat and staff will share comments and feedback that were received during the Title VI public meetings and the public hearing.

Chair Wallace noted that there is 6.1 percent reduction in the budget from Fiscal Year 2026 to Fiscal Year 2027, reflecting a difference of \$9 million.

2. RESOLUTION 2026-09: APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2027 CAPITAL BUDGET AND CAPITAL PLAN OF CONTRACTS: Ms. Obora stated that staff recommends the Board adopt Resolution 2026-09 approving the JTA's Capital Budget and Capital Plan of Contracts Schedule for Fiscal Year 2027 and authorize submission to the Jacksonville City Council. The budget was completed in adherence with the annual capital budget process under the policy established. The budget includes prioritized projects and equipment replacement needs throughout the Authority in accordance with the Federal Transit Administration's State of Good Repair requirements, the Authority's Transit Asset Management Plan, the Authority's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and JTA's MOVE2027 Plan. The Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 is \$46 million.

MOTION (Sams/Vallencourt) to adopt Resolution 2026-09, approving the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget and Capital Plan of Contracts. Motion Approved (7-0).

Director Hopkins inquired about receiving grant funding on time and if that will impact the budget. Ms. Obora stated that will not.

L. SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

(Glober, Committee Chair)

sDirector Glober stated there are no items for the Service Delivery Committee. He then stated that Service Delivery Committee did meet prior to the work session and thanked fellow Board member for attending. He feels that the committee has a good tale to tell. There is a little over \$500,000 in cost avoidance with the pilot program, which is huge win to date. Staff have successfully navigated the migration from Connexion Plus Service to Connexion Service. Service Delivery is also exceeding the four pillars of the KPIs. Thanked the staff for their work.

M. LONG RANGE PLANNING AND SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Sams, Committee Chair)

Director Sams shared that there were no items for the committee. She then provided a summary of the TPO meeting that was held on May 14, 2026.

The TPO Board took several key actions to keep regional transportation priorities moving forward. Most notably, the Board approved the 2026 List of Priority Projects through the Transportation Regional Incentive Program, which helps position the region to compete for state funding. This list focuses on capacity improvements, safety upgrades, and multimodal enhancements across all six counties.

The Board approved: amendments to the current Transportation Improvement Program, ensuring projects remain aligned with funding and delivery schedules; adopted the Unified Planning Work Program for the next two years, which outlines the region's transportation planning priorities and includes several initiatives involving the JTA. The Board also received an update on the draft five-year Transportation Improvement Program, which will come back for final approval in June 2026, along with confirmation that the region's planning process remains fully compliant with federal requirements.

Also, importantly, JTA presented on the Ultimate Urban Circulator (U²C) Phase II Skyway Rehabilitation and Downtown Expansion PD&E Study, walking the Board through the alternatives currently under consideration and outlining the next steps.

She concluded by stating that overall, the meeting reflected strong regional coordination and continued progress in advancing projects that improve mobility, safety, and accessibility across Northeast Florida.

Chair Wallace then turned the floor over to Councilman Johnson for remarks.

Councilman Johnson apologized for not arriving sooner. He shared that he was made aware of the tough decisions the JTA has had to make and shared the information with the Council President. He added that he has also asked the Council Auditors Office to look and see if there is any way to offer relief. He does not know the answer but has asked the auditors to look into it. Councilman Johns feels it is important for everyone to pitch in and tighten belts to ensure that transportation continue to roll as necessary in the community. He concluded by announcing that Council recently elected Councilman Howland as Council President. Councilman Johnson serves at the pleasure of the Council President and doesn't know if he will continue to serve as the JTA Liaison, but he has enjoyed his time and knows the importance of the work JTA does.

He also recognized Ken Middleton and presented him with a Council Recognition on behalf of the Council President and the entire City Council.

G. DIVISION REPORTS

The Division Reports were provided to the Board. Staff received no questions related to the monthly report.

1. **ADMINISTRATION MONTHLY REPORT**
2. **FINANCE MONTHLY REPORTS**
3. **OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT**
4. **PUBLIC AFFAIRS MONTHLY REPORT**
5. **SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

N. OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business.

O. NEW BUSINESS

No New Business.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.



Max Guber, Secretary



Aundra Wallace, Chair