

**MINUTES  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
JACKSONVILLE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2024**

The regular Board meeting of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) was held on Thursday, April 25, 2024.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Deborah Buckland, Chair  
Aundra Wallace, Secretary  
Patricia Sams, Treasurer  
Megan Hayward, Board Member

**JTA EXECUTIVE STAFF**

Nathaniel P. Ford Sr., CEO  
Cleveland Ferguson, EVP Administration  
Greer Gillis, SVP System Development  
Raj Srinath, SVP Finance and Technology  
Jeffery Smith, Interim SVP Operations

**BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Arezou Jolly, Immediate Past Chair  
G. Ray Driver, Vice Chair  
Greg Evans, FDOT

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Katie Smith, Board Administrator  
Richard Milian, General Counsel (Virtual)

A. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Buckland called the meeting to order at 1:21 p.m. and thanked the Board for attending the meeting.

Director Hayward led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Smith completed a roll call.

Chair Buckland then provided the safety message for the month of May. “Prevention is Better than Cure.”

Chair Buckland announced that the agenda will be taken out of order until another Board member arrives to constitute a quorum.

C. **COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISON** – Councilwoman Pittman was in attendance but yielded the floor.

**D. AUTHORITY RECOGNITION AWARDS**

**April Employees of the Month:**

Bus Operator: Ramon Farfan

Maintenance: John Hinson

Administrative: Eugenio Diaz

Mrs. Smith announced that Director Wallace joined the meeting, and the Board has a quorum to take action.

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

1. **Algerean G. Emmons** – Ms. Emmons stated that she resided at Mary Eakes Apartments. The bus stop is two blocks from the apartments and her and other residents have to

cross railroad tracks to get to the bus stop. Some of the residents have walkers or are in wheelchairs so going the extra two blocks and crossing the tracks is difficult and even more difficult when returning to the apartment with packages. Ms. Emmons also advised that there are people sleeping along their path and there is some activity in the area that is not safe for the seniors.

Mr. Ford stated that he will have staff look into the location of the bus stop and what can be done to assist Ms. Emmons and other residents in her area.

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 25, 2024 BOARD WORK SESSION AND BOARD MEETING**

MOTION (Hayward/Sams) to approve the minutes. Motion Approved (4-0).

**H. CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR TRANSIT BUS SIMULATOR (P-24-009)**

**2. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AMENDMENT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES – MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND PAYROLL OPTIMIZATION**

**3. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR MARKETING, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (P-24-005)**

**4. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE ASSET MANAGEMENT MOBILE APPLICATION AND DIGITAL WORK ORDER SOFTWARE (P-24-008)**

MOTION (Wallace/Sams) to Approve Consent Agenda H.1 through H.4 as staff recommends. Motion Approved (4-0).

**I. ADOPTION AGENDA**

**1. RESOLUTION 2024-04: AUTHORIZATION TO FILE FISCAL YEAR 2025 TRIP AND EQUIPMENT GRANT - DUVAL COUNTY** – Mr. Srinath stated that staff recommends the Board adopt Resolution 2024-04 authorizing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to file and execute the application documents required by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD) for the Fiscal Year 2025 Trip and Equipment Grant Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program in the amount of \$1,376,151 for services in Duval County. The local match will come from the City of Jacksonville.

**2. RESOLUTION 2024-05: AUTHORIZATION TO FILE FISCAL YEAR 2025 TRIP AND EQUIPMENT GRANT - CLAY COUNTY** - Mr. Srinath stated that staff recommends the Board adopt Resolution 2024-05 authorizing the CEO to file and execute the

application documents required by the FCTD for the Fiscal Year 2025 Trip and Equipment Grant TD Program in the amount of \$502,054 for services in Clay County. The local match will come from Clay County.

**MOTION** (Sams/Hayward) to Adopt Resolution 2024-04 (Duval County) and Resolution 2024-05 (Clay County) authorizing the filing of Fiscal Year 2025 Trip and Equipment Grants. Motion Approved (4-0).

**J. SAFETY, AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE** (Sams, Committee Chair)

There were no items for the Safety, Audit and Compliance Committee; however, Director Sams stated that a key component of the Safety, Audit, and Compliance area at the JTA is the constant evaluation of enterprise risk. Managing risk has a price, and as has been true throughout the state, insurers are leaving the marketplace and refusing to insure due to the impact of risk on their portfolio. The JTA faced a 40 percent increase in its property insurance premiums.

She shared that staff worked with the Authority's broker and carrier to create a layered system that better-controlled risk. As a result, JTA was able to bind all lines of coverage and reduce that 40 percent increase to 25 percent. That cost avoidance was part of the overall administrative budget. She thanked the team for their work in stretching the tax-payer dollars while also ensuring that the public and the agency remain safe and on a solid footing.

**K. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE** (Wallace, Committee Chair)

**ACTION ITEMS**

Mr. Srinath provided the Board with a presentation sharing the final Fiscal Year 2025 budget and highlighting the updates that were made to the budgets since sharing the draft at the April work session.

**1. RESOLUTION 2024-06: APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2025 OPERATING BUDGET** – Mr. Srinath stated that staff recommends the Board adopt Resolution 2024-06 approving the JTA's Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 and authorizing its submission to the Jacksonville City Council.

The Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2025, on an Authority-wide basis and excluding any transfers between funds, totals \$161.9M for operating expenses. The Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget is balanced in that all of the operating expenses will be covered by an equal amount of revenue.

**2. RESOLUTION 2024-07: APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2025 CAPITAL BUDGET AND CAPITAL PLAN OF PROJECTS** – Mr. Srinath stated that staff recommends that the Board adopt Resolution 2024-07, approving the JTA's Capital Budget of \$53.8M and the

Capital Plan of Contracts for Fiscal Year 2025 and authorize submission to the Jacksonville City Council.

The Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget is balanced in that all of the capital spending is covered by an equal amount of funding sources.

**MOTION** (Wallace/Sams) to Approve Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget and Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget and Capital Plan of Projects. Motion Approved (4-0).

Chair Buckland thanked staff for the one-on-ones that were provided for each of the Board Members to have in-depth discussions about the budgets.

Mr. Ford then thanked the Board Members for taking their time to meet with him and the finance team to ensure they have a full understanding of the revenues and expenses for the Fiscal Year 2025 budgets.

L. **SERVICE DELIVERY** (Hayward, Committee Chair)

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. **APPROVAL OF SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS** – Mr. Smith stated that staff recommends the Board approve major service changes to increase weekday service frequencies on Routes 3, 13, 19, and 53; and increase of weekday and weekend service frequencies on the First Coast Flyer Routes Blue, Green, Orange, and Red lines, barring the Title VI public hearing. These enhancements will be implemented in August 2024 and January 2025. He also provided a snapshot of the enhancements and ridership on these routes and lines.

**MOTION** (Hayward/Sams) to Approve Service Enhancements pursuant to the completion of the Title VI Public Hearing. Motion Approved (4-0).

M. **LONG RANGE PLANNING AND SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT** (Driver, Committee Chair)

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. **APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR DESIGN SERVICES - MERRILL ROAD COMPLETE STREETS PROJECT (Q-24-001)** – Mrs. Gillis stated that staff recommends the Board approve the final ranked order and authorize the CEO to negotiate and execute a contract agreement with Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc. for Merrill Road Complete Streets Design Services. The contract term is for one year with a not-to-exceed amount of \$482,285.78. This contract consists of providing all applicable design services necessary to improve the multi-modal mobility of the roadway, calming traffic, and to provide a safer and more comfortable complete streets corridor for Merrill Road. Funding for this project is sourced from

local funds through the LOGT II proceeds and Kimley-Horn & Associates has agreed to meet the LSBE 30 percent participation goal set for this project.

**MOTION** (Sams/Wallace) to Approve the Contract Award for Design Services for Merrill Road Complete Streets Project (Q-24-001). Motion Approved (4-0).

**2. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR DESIGN SERVICES – UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN SERVICES (Q-24-002) –**

Mrs. Gillis stated that staff recommends the Board approve the ranked shortlist and authorize the CEO to negotiate and execute a contract agreement with GAI Consultants, Inc. for Q-24-002 University Boulevard Complete Streets Design Services. The contract term is for one year with a not-to-exceed amount of \$726,769.08. This contract consists of providing all applicable design services necessary to improve the multi-modal mobility of the roadway, calming traffic, and to provide a safer and more comfortable complete streets corridor for University Boulevard.

Phase I is approximately 0.4 miles along University Boulevard from Arlington Expressway to Arlington Road in Duval County, Florida. Phase II is from Arlington Road to the existing University Boulevard and Merrill Road Roundabout. This project is one of the ten complete streets projects from the MobilityWorks 2.0 Program, funded by the LOGT.

Director Hayward asked if the JTA project would be impacted by the project the City of Jacksonville (City) is leading in the same area. Mr. Gillis responded that there will not be any impact.

**MOTION** (Hayward/Sams) to Approve the Contract Award for Design Services for University Boulevard Complete Streets Design Services (Q-24-002). Motion Approved (4-0).

**3. APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR SKYWAY TRAIN MOTOR REPAIR (P-24-006) –**

Mrs. Gillis stated that staff recommends the Board authorize the CEO to negotiate and execute a contract with Westside Electric, Inc. for P-24-006 Skyway Train Motor Repairs. The contract term is for one year, with the option for four one-year renewals, totaling five years if fully exercised. The total contract value is not to exceed \$432,000 annually and the total contract value over a five-year period is not to exceed \$2,160,000. Approval of the recommended contract will extend the existing repair and performance of the Skyway traction motors. This contract will allow the Skyway to operate more efficiently and effectively. The continued repair of the motors will eliminate the high failures of the train and increase fleet availability.

**MOTION** (Wallace/Sams) to Approve the Contract Award for Skyway Train Motor Repair (P-24-006). Motion Approved (4-0).

**4. APPROVAL OF FERRY FEASIBILITY STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS – ST. JOHNS RIVER FERRY** - Mrs. Gillis stated that staff

recommends the Board approve the recommendation for the pursuit of a new renewable diesel hybrid ferry vessel for the St. Johns' River Ferry Service. The purchase of a new Ferry is a part of the MobilityWorks 2.0 program. A new ferry vessel will allow the JTA to provide uninterrupted service 365 days of the year while growing service by offering more reliable and efficient ferry service all year long. In March 2023, JTA began the development of a feasibility study to guide decision-making, balance cost-effectiveness with environmental objectives, recognizing that achieving net zero emissions can evolve over time with technological advancements. Mrs. Gillis shared that staff presented an overview of the draft Ferry Feasibility study at the April 2024 Board of Directors work session, highlighting the various alternatives explored and provided a recommendation for Board consideration on the alternative fuel system for the new ferry vessel.

**MOTION** (Sams/Hayward) to Approve the Ferry Feasibility Study and Recommendations for St. Johns River Ferry. Motion Approved (4-0).

**N. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no New Business

**O. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no New Business

**F. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT:** Mr. Ford stated after his report, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) would provide the Board with details and information related to their divisions.

He shared information on activities over the last month.

At the Central Florida Development Council, Mr. Ford had the pleasure of joining Director Aundra Wallace, the City's Chief of Economic Development Ed Randolph, Miller Electric Chief Strategy Officer Kerri Stewart, and moderator Jim Gilmore in a Leadership fireside chat discussing the critical role of transportation infrastructure in regional economic development. During the Central Florida's delegation visit, they also met with Jessica Shepler, VP of Government and Economic Affairs regarding JTA's TOD initiatives and with Greer Gillis, SVP of System Development, to discuss Innovation and Automation.

He stated that he attended the 2024 International Bus Rodeo in Portland Oregon, where IAM President Melvin Nesmith and the Xpendables of Gilberto Dorta, George McGarry, and Rudy Wells and perennial Bus Operator Champion Ramon Farfan represented the JTA and showcased their talents. This international competition was also the first to use the first electronic scoring

system that was developed right here at JTA. He congratulated the team members, spearheaded by Lorrin Leonard who developed, tested, and successfully launched this scoring system, which was a success in the local, state and now, international competitions.

While in Portland, he had the honor of being a panelist for the "Reinventing the Next Generation of Transportation" session during APTA's Mobility Conference. Mr. Ford was joined by other industry leaders to discuss transit systems' role in fostering sustainable communities and economic prosperity in the communities they serve.

Mr. Ford announced that on May 1, 2024, users of the MyJTA mobile app began to receive the benefits from the new "Best Fare" fare-capping policy. The MyJTA mobile app now automatically provides a refund after meeting the fare equivalent of a daily, three-day, weekly, or monthly pass. By implementing this fare-capping policy, patrons will pay no more than \$65 in fares over 31 days, providing more savings, regardless of their riding and spending habits through the MyJTA mobile app. The adjustment, along with extending fare-free access to seniors using state-issued IDs, represents another step towards ensuring public transport is as accessible and equitable as possible.

At the recent Jax Chamber Health Council meeting, Mr. Ford had the pleasure, along with Immediate Past Chair Ari Jolly, to discuss the impact of JTA's Wellness on Wheels initiative, which, both directly and indirectly provided COVID-19 testing and access to over 12,000 Northeast Florida residents during the statewide emergency declaration. And he is excited to announce that the Authority's retrofitted medical busses will soon be employed again in partnership with Baptist Health as Wellness on Wheels Stroke awareness busses which will bring much needed stroke and health education directly to the people most in need.

On May 6, 2024, JTA celebrated the ribbon-cutting for the opening of the LaVilla Link, which underscores both the commitment to revitalizing the historic LaVilla community and the commitment to providing multi-modal mobility options.

Mr. Ford stated that he was pleased to announce that Finch has upgraded JTA's Issuer Default Rating to AA+, reflecting its robust financial health and strong operational performance. This upgrade signifies a stable outlook and a very low risk of default. Furthermore, the New York based rating agency also affirmed the Authority's AA-a rating on the series 2015 and 2020 bonds. This is a strong affirmation of JTA's commitment to its financial strategy which enables us to better serve the Jacksonville community while continuing to be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars.

The JTA also had the honor of hosting OXA CEO Gavin Jackson at its facilities, showcasing the collaborative efforts with FSCJ in Autonomous Vehicle (AV) technology. This visit highlighted

the progress of the Ultimate Urban Circulator (U<sup>2</sup>C) program as the Authority aims to launch the Bay Street Innovation Corridor (BSIC) in 2025.

On May 14, 2024, the JTA hosted Representative Angie Nixon and Senator Tracie Davis at the JRTC, providing them with an in-depth briefing on the U<sup>2</sup>C program. This meeting was held one day after the JTA hosted two publicly noticed community meetings at the Main Library that gave the public another venue to learn about the U<sup>2</sup>C project, and have their questions answered.

He thanked Chair Buckland and Director Samms for attending the public meetings and recognized community leaders who attended, which included Council President Ron Salem, and Council members Peluso and Lahnen, as well as JTA's council liaison, Ju'Coby Pittman.

On May 15, 2024, Mr. Ford had the distinct honor of joining Sulzbacher CEO Cindy Funkhouser, Mayor Donna Deegan, Darnell Smith, and Michael Munz, each a former board chair of Sulzbacher, along with Whitney Myers, a former board member, for a fundraising campaign event announcing the phased plan to build The Residence at Enterprise Village. The Residence at Enterprise Village will provide 100 very affordable, permanent apartments for single men, 80 emergency units for men in crisis, a healthcare facility, and a job training and manufacturing place to provide opportunities to gain real world training and skills, setting these men up for success.

On May 17, 2024, the Authority welcomed 23 new bus operators to the JTA team at a graduation ceremony. The Human Resources team continues to be proactive to attract, train and retain the best talent here at the JTA, and he was glad to have had the opportunity to shake all of their hands to welcome them aboard.

Mr. Ford announced that the week of May 27, 2024 will be a monumental occasion for the JTA. On May 29, 2024, JTA will host the groundbreaking celebration of Phase I of the U<sup>2</sup>C, the BSIC. FTA Regional Administrator, Dr. Yvette Taylor and Mayor Donna Deegan, among other guests will be in attendance. Then, on Thursday, May 30, JTA will hold its annual State of the Authority, and then wrap up on the week on May 31 by hosting National AV Day, with a series of events, sessions, and demonstrations at the Armsdale Test-n-Learn Center.

He shared that on Thursday, May 16, Director Sams joined Jeff Smith, SVP of Operations for a system tour. The staff is also planning Director Hayward's system tour for June.

Mr. Ford concluded his report with a month in review video.

## **G. DIVISION REPORTS**

**1. ADMINISTRATION MONTHLY REPORTS** – Mr. Ferguson shared highlights of the Administration Division and their activities through April, which included Real Estate and Economic Development and the Procurement Report.



2. **FINANCE MONTHLY REPORTS** – Mr. Srinath shared details of the Monthly Finance Reports for April and activities in his division.

3. **OPERATIONS MONTHLY REPORT** – Mr. Smith provided the Board with a summary of the Operations report through April 2024 and activities in his division, as well as monthly and yearly ridership.

4. **SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY REPORT** – Ms. Gillis shared details of the System Development Report through April 2024 and activities in her division. The Board was provided a copy of the quarterly capital projects summary ending March 2024. Staff will continue to provide the Board with a copy of the quarterly report.

Chair Buckland announced that the next Board meeting is scheduled for June 27, 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

SEAL

  
Aundra Wallace, Secretary  
Patricia Sams, Treasurer

  
Debble Buckland, Chair