

January 15, 2025. Chicago Transit Board Regular Meeting Minutes.

Noticed for 10:00 a.m. Commenced at 11:09 a.m.

AGENDA: The posted agenda for the meeting is available at www.transitchicago.com, "Chicago Transit Board", "Meeting Notices, Agendas, and Minutes", (01/15/2025) (Regular Board Meeting), "Agenda".

There was a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL: Directors: Lester L. Barclay (Chairman), Rosa Ortiz, Roberto Requejo, Neema Jha, Michele Lee, Michael Eaddy, and Director Bernard Jakes was present.

There was a quorum with 7 members present.

REMOTE ATTENDANCE: Chairman Barclay advised the Board that Director Eaddy was unable to attend the meeting in person due to a travel obligation connected to a work commitment and requested a motion to permit Director Eaddy to attend the meeting remotely.

Director Requejo moved to admit Director Eaddy to attend the meeting remotely and Director Lee seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously. Chairman Barclay welcomed Director Eaddy to the meeting.

MINUTES: Chairman Barclay asked for a motion to approve the regular Board meeting minutes from December 11, 2024. After being moved by Director Requejo and seconded by Director Lee, the minutes were approved with seven (7) votes by roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chairman Barclay advanced the agenda to Public Comments.

Secretary Greenlee advised that the Board Office had received five (5) requests for public comments. Three of the requestors were in attendance:

- Ms. Trudy Leong
 - At the conclusion of Trudy Leong's comments, Secretary Greenlee invited her to forward a copy of the transcripts with a CTA union steward that she referenced to the Board Office
- Mr. Niquy McMullen
- A written Public Comment submitted by the Red Line TIF Coalition and a portion of it was read by Secretary Greenlee
- Dr. Kisha Roberts Tabb
 - At the conclusion of Dr. Roberts Tabb's remarks Director Jakes said he had questions and would have someone get in touch with her.

CONSTRUCTION REPORT: The monthly Construction Report was presented by Bill Mooney, CTA's Chief of Infrastructure and the DBE/MWBE/SBE report was presented by JuanPablo Prieto, CTA's Director of Diversity Programs.

CONSTRUCTION REPORT: The Construction Report was presented and can be found at:
<https://www.transitchicago.com/board/presentations/>

Following the report there was a request made by Director Neema Jha that an ADA Accessible Stations List be included in the Construction Report moving forward so that the Board can see how many accessible stations exists, how many have been brought on-line and how many stations remain that need to be made accessible.

There was discussion.

It was determined that a report would be rendered monthly, even if it is an appendix in the construction report that delineates the plan for the year and identifies whenever there is a change.

Director Requejo congratulated staff on the progress that has been made. He reminded Chief Mooney that the Board has requested a Transit Orientated Development strategy presentation. He would like to hear a cohesive strategy with the city – and all of the various Chicago municipal departments required.

Regarding the Red Line Extension, the community is excited about seeing the full development of the areas around the planned new stations but want more information regarding what the infill, new facilities, restaurants, and housing centers will look like. Making the TOD sites around the Red Line equitable is very important. He would love for a report to be made to the Board in the upcoming year regarding what the overall plan is for TOD.

Bill Mooney responded that there have been some interdisciplinary conversations and that in the upcoming months they should be in a good position to make an update to the Board. President Carter suggested that Chief Mooney to reach out to the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and that briefings of the Board members on the plans that CDOP has for the areas around the Red Line Extension.

Director Ortiz remarked that the event on Friday, January 10, 2025, commemorating the execution of the Red Line Extension, was a great opportunity to celebrate work that has been in process for over a decade to fulfill a 60-year-old promise. Congratulations again to everyone for all the efforts to make that happen.

Director Eaddy requested access to visit the construction projects that are on-going. President Carter stated that staff would coordinate with the Chairman's Office and April Morgan, Chief of Staff to get those tours scheduled.

There were no further comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

CTA's General Counsel Kent Ray explained that there would be an Executive Session pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, Article 2C, Sections 1, 2, 11 and 21. Director Requejo moved that the Board go into Executive Session and Director Lee seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. The Board went into Executive Session at 10:45 a.m.

At approximately 1:34 p.m. the Board returned from Executive Session.

Chairman Barclay requested a motion to return to open session, which was moved by Director Requejo and seconded by Director Jakes. The motion passed unanimously following a roll call vote.

AGENDA ITEM 5(A) - CLOSED SESSION MINUTES APPROVAL: It was moved by Director Requejo and seconded by Director Lee that the Board approve the closed session minutes from December 11, 2024. The motion passed with seven (7) votes in the affirmative.

AGENDA ITEM 5(B) – APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 024-125: CTA's General Counsel Kent Ray stated that Item 5(B) involved the proposed amendment of ordinance 024-125 which authorized execution of collective bargaining agreements with the Craft Coalition of Trade Unions in order to attach all applicable side letters.

Director Requejo moved that the Board approve the ordinance amending ordinance 024-125 authorizing the execution of collective bargaining agreements containing the terms of tentative agreements with the Craft Coalition of Trade Unions to attach applicable letters. The motion was seconded by Director Lee and the motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

AGENDA ITEM 5(C) – APPROVAL OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT CONTAINING THE TERMS OF A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH UNITED STEELWORKERS of AMERICA LOCAL 9777: Director Requejo moved to approve the execution of a collective bargaining agreement containing the terms of a tentative agreement with the United Steelworkers of America Local 9777. Director Lee seconded the motion and the motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

AGENDA ITEM 5(D) – APPROVAL OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT CONTAINING THE TERMS OF A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCALS 241 AND 308: Director Requejo moved to approve the execution of a collective bargaining agreement containing the terms of a tentative agreement with the Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 241 and 308. Director Lee seconded the motion and the motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

AGENDA ITEM 5(E) – APPROVAL OF A SETTLEMENT with the TEAMSTERS LOCAL 700: Director Requejo moved to authorize execution of a settlement agreement with the Teamsters Local 700 relating to retroactive payments under the terms of the previous collective bargaining agreement in the amount of \$254,234.20. (Two Hundred and Fifty Four Thousand Two Hundred and Thirty-Four Dollars and Twenty Cents and no/100). Director Lee seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

AGENDA ITEM 5(F) – VICTORIA VILLANUEVA v. CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY and WILSON WATSON / Case No. 2023-L-4773:

General Counsel Kent Ray advised that in regard to Agenda Item 5F the Board reviewed a proposed settlement in the case of Victoria Villanueva vs Chicago Transit Authority and Wilson Watson in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Case No. 2023-L-4773.

Director Requejo moved that the Board approve a settlement negotiated by counsel in the amount of \$8,000,000 (Eight Million Dollars and Zero Cents and no/100). Director Lee seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, AUDIT AND BUDGET: The Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee report was presented by Director Bernard Jakes. The committee reviewed the monthly finance report and approved the December 11, 2024, FAB committee meeting minutes. Director Jakes stated that all Committee agenda items, listed on the Board agenda, were presented, reviewed, discussed, and recommended by the Committee, for Board approval. Director Lee stated that all the approved committee items, 10 ordinances and 2 contracts, were placed on the omnibus for approval by the Board. Director Jakes concluded the Finance, Audit and Budget Committee report.

Director Requejo moved that the omnibus be approved, and the motion was seconded by Director Lee. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

All approved January 15, 2025, Board ordinances are available online, at www.transitchicago.com, "Chicago Transit Board", "Board Ordinances", Ordinance numbers 025-1 through 025-16.

BOARD MATTERS: Chairman Barclay asked whether there were any Board Matters?

Secretary Greenlee responded that there were two board matters. The first was to approve a resolution changing the date of the January 2025 Chicago Transit Board regular meeting from January 8, 2025, to January 15, 2025. Director Requejo moved to adopt the resolution and Director Lee seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The second board matter was to approve an ordinance appointing an acting president of the Chicago Transit Authority. Chairman Barclay asked for a motion to appoint Nora Leerhsen as acting president of the Chicago Transit Authority and to set an annual salary of the acting president as \$278,703.73 (Two Hundred and Seventy-Eight Thousand Seven Hundred and Three Dollars and Seventy-Three Cents and no/100) for the time serving in such position.

Director Requejo moved that the Board approve the ordinance appointing Nora Leerhsen as acting president and setting her salary for the time serving in such position at \$278,703.73. Director Lee seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Dorval Carter gave his last and final report as President of the Chicago Transit Authority.

"Thank you for this very short and quick Board meeting today. Mr. Chairman, members of the Board, good afternoon.

I was 27 years old when I first walked into the Merchandise Mart and began my career as a staff attorney at the CTA. It was an exciting time for me. But like most young people, I honestly had no idea what the future was going to hold.

Even as I found myself quickly enamored with public service, even as I felt the deepening pride of being a part of an agency that is so important to Chicago residents and visitors, I never imagined that I would end up becoming president of the Chicago Transit Authority.

As the years have gone by, an unexpected career path unfolded before me. I felt a strong pull towards public transportation and, I made the decision that this industry would not simply be a professional stop along the way, but it would be where I would spend the majority of my life's work. During that time, I've had the privilege of serving at high level roles at both the local and federal levels. It has been a rewarding and fulfilling experience that has exceeded my wildest dreams.

Today, more than 40 years later, looking back at my years in public transportation, what has fascinated me about the richness of my experience has been the people that I've met, the

work I've had the opportunity to do, and the challenges that I have worked to overcome while standing shoulder to shoulder with all of my colleagues.

The sum of my experience working at this agency has been a portfolio of knowledge about public transit and the resulting respect for the hard work that it takes to lead a transit system. This job can be very difficult, but the challenges that I faced have been eclipsed by the opportunity to work with a group of professionals who are among the best in our industry. And I am eternally grateful to the employees and the management team that have supported me every day that we have done this work.

Of course, so many of the most important, most vital employees at CTA aren't here today. They drive the buses, they operate the trains, they serve our customers without regard to weather or street conditions. They work in rail stations and help our customers find their way across the city. They clean, repair, and maintain our vehicles and rail stations, and many others spend long hours managing the people who are doing that work or supporting their efforts in a number of different ways.

I've spent a combined quarter century bearing witness to the hard work being done by the men and women of CTA's workforce and it is truly a humbling experience. I have often noted my respect and appreciation for the CTA family of employees. And, today, standing at the end of this 40-year journey, that admiration has only grown.

Throughout the years, I've had the opportunity to visit other public transit systems in other cities domestically and internationally, all with an eye towards bringing back useful information, observations regarding best practices or new technologies that could benefit our organization. Those experiences have included, for instance, new ideas on how we provide bus service and ways to improve our new control center, among other insights that have, I believe, helped me and my staff make CTA better, more effective, and more supportive of the communities that we serve and have provided insights to help us improve CTA in the future.

I would be remiss if I didn't touch on a final note before leaving CTA and it's something that I have talked about for many years, well before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. For years, it has been a central focus of mine, and I believe it is the most important challenge facing public transit in Chicago. Above all else, the future of CTA is about how this region's public transit systems are funded.

Funding is a critical component to support legacy public transit systems like ours and, to be frank, no matter how good one's intentions, no matter how much one truly believes in equitable transit outcomes, providing the services that are most transit dependent low-income customers need cost money.

The change of CTA's funding formula is a can that has been kicked down the road for decades and its shortcomings have exacerbated and were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The unfortunate result is now a political climate where those who are able to effect that change that needs to be made are, again, definitely looking for scapegoats and excuses on which to blame four decades inaction. That time is over. It won't be easy, but it has to get done. If we ever hope to achieve a world-class transit system in Chicago, I can provide you with an example of doing the type of hard work that will be required to move forward.

Last Friday, CTA was joined by local and federal officials to celebrate a signed full-funding grant agreement from the Federal Transit Administration for the Red Line Extension. And I doubt anyone in this room was happier about that than I was. What can get lost in that celebration is the hard work and long history required to actually get to that day. The focus on actually making the Red Line Extension a reality began in earnest in 2016, not long after I began as president.

I worked closer with then Mayor Rahm Emanuel to create the transit tax increment financing district, which became known as the transit TIF, which was a tool for local funding for both the Red/Purple modernization project on Chicago's north side, the Red Line Extension project on the south side, and which has potential to be used to fund upgrades on the Forest Park branch of the Blue Line on the City's west side.

After the General Assembly approved the transit TIF in 2016, we worked to gain the Chicago's City Council's approval for the TIF, which was successful. Thanks to their support in 2022, the transit TIF is expected to generate \$959 million. Only then were we able to move forward with FTA's nearly \$2 billion commitment. That, of course, is only the financial side of this discussion. The extensive work related to engineering, project development, contract evaluation, and other vital areas culminated in last week's celebration at the House of Hope -- what an appropriate name -- recognizing our efforts to fulfill a promise that we made nearly 60 years ago. I'm sharing that timeline with you to provide some perspective on the hard work that was required to get us here today and the often-slow pace of progress required to achieve the results that we want. It took focus, it took time, and, most important, it required funding, funding that we worked hard to get because we believed the people of the far south side deserve the same access to transit, jobs, and opportunities as the rest of the city.

The ability to see the long view, to plan, strategize, execute over many years has been central to the successes that I've enjoyed throughout my career. That is especially true in the case of the Red Line Extension and extraordinary results that we achieved, which make me very proud.

I committed nearly ten years of my life to the CTA presidency, working to achieve goals that I've shared with 10,000-plus CTA employees, along with my senior leadership team. We've worked to drive our Agency's priorities leading to a confidence that I know have made the city better. We have created and contributed to a legacy that will last for many generations to come. As many of you likely know, while I'm retiring from public transit, I am not at the end of my professional journey. Instead, I will soon be taking a new path as the president and chief executive officer of Saint Anthony's Hospital on the west side of the city.

I have a long relationship with Saint Anthony's, including a tenure as Board chair, and will follow in the footsteps of my father who was a doctor at the hospital for 40 years and served for ten years as chair of the obstetrics and gynecology department.

Today, Saint Anthony's maternity ward is named the Dr. Dorval and Vivian Carter Family Birthing Center is named in my parents' honor and I carry them in my spirit into this next challenge.

I cannot be more excited to start the next chapter of my life, but I want you all to know that it has been an honor of a lifetime to serve as CTA president and it is humbling to remember that this journey began when I was a little boy on the south side of Chicago discovering our amazing city while riding buses and trains provided by this agency that I would one day lead, lead alongside the people that I would one day serve.

I am forever grateful for this opportunity to serve our customers, the people of the City of Chicago, and this esteemed Board.

Thank you, Chairman Barclay. That concludes my remarks."

RESPONSES from the CTA BOARD MEMBERS:

Chairman Barclay:

"President Carter, as Chairman of the Board, I want to express my gratitude to you for your years of dedicated service and leadership to the CTA. Over the past ten years as president, you have guided this agency through moments of tremendous success and achievement as well as periods of significant challenge. Through it all, your steadfast commitment to this agency, to the public we serve, and to this great city has remained clear and unwavering. You have been a champion for equity, ensuring that our service and initiatives reflect the communities we serve. This is exemplified in CTA's successful DBE program and historic industry initiatives like the equity and infrastructure project, which you co-chaired, and, most notably, the Red Line Extension project.

Without your leadership, vision, and expertise, this project would still be a deferred promise and not the exciting reality it is with the signing of the Federal full-funding agreement last week. You led this agency through a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, a time of tremendous loss and uncertainty for everyone and every industry. And when most transit systems ramped down or shut down, you kept our system going for those who relied on it to provide and receive essential services.

There's been a great deal of Monday morning quarterbacking on decisions. But to the folks who relied on our system to get them where they needed to go in those critical times, it was imperative. The transit industry even recognized and applauded you and the CTA by awarding the American Public Transit Association outstanding transit manager and outstanding transit agency in 2021, the first time in the Association's history that a single transit agency was recognized with both awards and in the same year. That's a result of our leadership, sir. Personally, I remember when you were presented with the job of heading up New York Transit and you brought that to me, that you had been offered that job. And then Boston transit as well. You turned those down to stay here in Chicago to make sure that the Red Line Extension project got to where it needed to go. You're a true transportation professional with a remarkable career spanning decades in the transit industry. My first encounter with you was about 39 years ago as young lawyers working on a transportation project. Earning respect not only within our organization but across the nation and the world, your leadership and legacy will leave a positive and lasting impact on the CTA. On behalf of the Board, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your years of service, your leadership, and commitment to advancing the CTA's mission.

While your presence will be deeply missed, your impact will continue to guide us as we build upon the foundation which you've laid. I want to wish you nothing but the best as you step into this next chapter of your life. May it be filled with happiness, health, and continued success in all your future endeavors.

Thank you for everything you've done for CTA, the City of Chicago, and the transit industry. You leave a legacy that will never be forgotten. Thank you very much."

Director Jha:

"I don't think there's any words to express the gratitude and how lucky I feel to be on this Board, seeing you, how you lead your team, the humanity. Countless number of times we've had wonderful conversation and I looked forward to those. We hope that you continue, as you said, to help when we need.

It's been incredible to see what public service is like and how to uphold those standards and raise the bar higher and higher with every single monthly Board meeting that we come to. So

we're going to miss you. But we also know that you're not going far. But we're going to miss you. We're going to miss you a lot. Thank you so much."

Director Requejo:

"I don't want to repeat the things that the Chair has mentioned. Your professional trajectory is clear, your track record.

I'd rather focus on the personal. And when you communicated to me your next move, I expressed that I wanted to thank you on a personal level as a human being knowing the amount of human energy and humanity that you have invested in this organization.

There are three values that you carried forward in my nine months here that I wanted to make sure are appreciated and acknowledge.

Number one, Dorval, is your responsiveness. Every single time I reach out, I ask a question in person, by e-mail, by text, you directly responded, and you connected me with people in your team to respond to those questions, no exceptions made.

Second, your respect. Your respect that you have shown when sometimes we challenged, you know, each other and we have come up to this table and behind scenes with ideas that we were not in agreement and the utmost respect was always offered from your end. And your ability to listen and to incorporate feedback is outstanding.

And the third thing is your resilience, your resilience through perhaps the hardest moment for public transportation and for CTA in the history of this country, right? And that pandemic and the human toll it took, you absorbed all of that and you decided to stay, as the Chair mentioned. And that is something that will be appreciated for a very, very long time and honors you.

So, I want to congratulate you for your next move. I also want to congratulate your new home because they are getting a huge gift with you at Saint Anthony's Hospital, a transit-oriented hospital at California station.

And, finally, I really hope from a personal level that you get to turn your phone off the whole night on December 31st and moving forward as much as possible because you truly have earned that, Dorval. Thank you."

Director Ortiz:

"I want to second everyone's comments. There wasn't much more to say. But I -- coming into the Board and knowing the responsibility of this position and taking that on, right, it's a personal commitment.

I just want to thank you for all of what you've gifted the city and our suburbs because it's our region that's impacted by the CTA, your unwavering commitment to do the best thing. And I've always felt -- again, coming into this role, I always felt like your heart was in the right place. You have always meant the good and the best for our people in the city and in our region. So regardless of the various details or things or how to get to things or what solution we come up with, that always gave me peace, knowing that your heart was in the right place. And so I thank you for that. I thank you for always thinking about our city and our region and doing your very best to do right for everyone here. So, thank you for that. And congratulations again.

I second Roberto's comment. Saint Anthony is getting a gift. I know your personal connections to the hospital and to the area. I share them in so many different ways. So I'm excited for the transformation they're going to have and all the great things that are going to come with the hospital, Saint Anthony, and with yourself."

Director Jakes:

"Dorval, I want to deal with it from a different perspective. Because you, for me, and for a lot of young black boys and girls, you are the best of who we are. And we needed to see you. And I am grateful that you have modeled a life for our community that encourages us, that gives us someone that we can look at and hold up to say here's somebody that you can emulate. When -- and I don't know if you remember this. But when we had the -- I don't know if they were in Chicago, wherever they were, the young people, and they were downstairs and this one young black man -- young black boy, he asked you -- he said, what do you do? And you looked at him and you said, I'm doing what you should be doing and can do in the next 15, 20 years. And that meant the world to him and to me. So, thank you for being that person that we can hold up as a model of excellence and greatness.

The other part is there is a poem that is near and dear to us called the "Test of a Man." And you have exemplified the test of a man. Now, for those that do not know the poem, they can Google it. I will not say it. But you have, indeed, exemplified the test of a man because in the seven years I've had the pleasure of working with you, you have taken life's numerous bumps and blows and still continue to have what I call the Weeble wobble spirit. You weebled and you wobbled, but they didn't knock you down.

And so thank you so much for all that you've done. I wish you well for all that you are yet to do down the street. And it's still not too late to rescind your resignation, if you want to.

Thank you, Dorval."

Director Lee:

“Hard to follow all the comments. But just from a personal perspective of a rider, thank you for doing this for the city and making sure the people like me can get where they need to go. And it's part of why I love Chicago. And thank you for being part of this. And your legacy will never be forgotten. And we're going to miss you so much.”

Director Eaddy:

“As the newest member of the Board, I tell you, part of my excitement in coming on to this very distinguished Board and group was I was going to get a chance to work with Dorval Carter. I certainly -- like many others, we've observed you, we've followed you, never had the opportunity before just a few months ago to actually work with you, be up close. And I was really very excited about this opportunity.

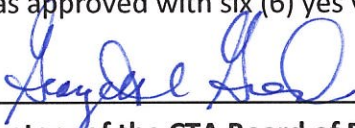
And so it's certainly bittersweet in many regards because you represent so much and so much that is good and you're one that an individual can glean so much from. When I think about you, it comes to my mind you're the consummate professional. You're always professional. You're always on point. And I admire that about you. And it is for me to just say, in my opinion, you never appear lost. You have a sense of direction. You know exactly where you're going, and you know exactly how to get there.

And I join with Reverend Jakes to say -- and I thought about it -- and you are the epitome and you express ethnic pride. You represent the best and brightest of who you are, who you're connected to. And just want you to know that individuals like myself, we're cheering you on all the time because of what you represent and it's all good.

And I was so happy for you because I've known of your efforts around the Red Line Extension. And that is a crowning achievement. And I'll say this. You really knew how to go out on top, you know? You know how to go out on top. And I just want you to know -- and I'll close with this. You're a very humble man and your greatness is in your humility. And I want you to know that we commend you for that. And I just think that you're the greatest and your transition to the hospital is just an indicator of your continued service to humanity. And you are commendable. And I want you to know that sir. Hats off to you.”

NEW BUSINESS: Secretary Greenlee stated that there was no official New Business, but that a call had been received in the Board Office from Garland Armstrong, a former member of the ADA Advisory Committee. He asked that President Carter be given the following message: *“Me and my wife love you. We are proud of you. Rock on, Black brother, rock on!”*

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chairperson Barclay asked for a motion to adjourn the January 15, 2025, Chicago Transit Board meeting. After being moved by Director Requejo and seconded by Director Lee, the motion was approved with six (6) yes votes and the meeting was adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

APPROVED: 
Secretary of the CTA Board of Directors

Date: 02/12/2025