



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

via WebEx

MEETING MINUTES

Board Chair Rita Scott called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Board Members Present	Staff Members Present
Roberta Abdul-Salaam	Jeffrey Parker
Stacy Blakley	Collie Greenwood
Jim Durrett	Rhonda Allen
William Floyd	Luz Borrero
Roderick Frierson	Elizabeth O'Neill
Freda Hardage	Raj Srinath
Russell McMurry ¹	
Al Pond	
Kathryn Powers	
Rita Scott, Chair	
Reginald Snyder	
Christopher Tomlinson ¹	
W. Thomas Worthy	

Also, in attendance: MARTA Board General Counsel Justice Leah Ward Sears of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP; other MARTA staff members: Heather Alhadef, Marsha Anderson Bomar, LaShanda Dawkins, Tyrene Huff, Michael Kreher, Gena Major, Paula Nash, Santiago Osorio, Kirk Talbott, and George Wright.

Public Comment /See attached: "2021-04-08 Public Comments"]

Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill reported that eight comments were received from the public and that all comments pertained to the Beltline:

- 1) Garrett Clum
- 2) Walter Heape
- 3) Binh Dam

¹Russell McMurry is Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Christopher Tomlinson is Executive Director of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). Per the MARTA Act, both are non-voting members of the Board of Directors.

- 4) Cathy Woolard
- 5) George Chidi
- 6) Matthew Roa
- 7) Jenne Shepard
- 8) Lawrence Miller

1. Approval of March 11, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Chair Scott called for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion to approve was made by Vice Chair Roberta Abdul-Salaam and seconded by Board Member Freda Hardage. The minutes were approved unanimously by a vote of 11 to 0 with 13 members present.¹

2. External Relations Committee Report

Board Chair Rita Scott reported on behalf of Committee Chair Robert Ashe, III that the Committee met on Thursday, March 18, 2021 and received the following briefings:

- a. 1-285 Top End Update
- b. Media Impressions Update

3. Audit Committee Report

Committee Chair Freda Hardage reported that the Committee met on Thursday, March 18, 2021 and approved the following resolution:

- a. Resolution Authorizing a Modification in Contractual Authorization for Professional Services for an Internal Audit GRC Automation Tool, LOA L46790

Committee Chair Hardage requested approval of the resolution, which was seconded by Board Member Jim Durrett. The resolution was approved unanimously by a vote of 11 to 0 with 13 members present.¹

Committee Chair Hardage reported that the Committee received the following briefings:

- a. Internal Audit Activity
- b. Cybersecurity Update

4. Planning & Capital Programs Committee Report

Committee Chair Al Pond reported that the Committee met on Thursday, March 25, 2021 and approved the following resolutions:

- a. Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Single Source Contract for the

Procurement of Electrical Vehicle Equipment Request for Price Proposal
RFP P47634

- b.** Resolution Authorizing the Solicitation of Proposal for the Fabrication and Installation of a Mosaic Wall at Airport Station
- c.** Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract for the Beltline Light Rail Feasibility Study RFP P48439

Committee Chair Pond requested approval of the resolutions, which was seconded by Board Member Durrett. The resolutions were approved unanimously by a vote of 11 to 0 with 13 members present.¹

Committee Chair Pond reported that the Committee received the following briefing:

- d.** Bus Network Redesign Update

5. Operations & Safety Committee Report

Committee Chair W. Thomas Worthy reported that the Committee met on Thursday, March 25, 2021 and approved the following resolution:

- a.** Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract for the Procurement of Eligibility Assessment Services for MARTA Mobility RFP P46866

Committee Chair Worthy requested approval of the resolution, which was seconded by Board Member Hardage. The resolution was approved unanimously by a vote of 11 to 0 with 13 members present.¹

Committee Chair Worthy reported that the Committee received the following briefings:

- b.** 2002 ADA Court Order Update
- c.** Bus Transportation Key Performance Indicators

6. Business Management Committee Report

Committee Chair Roderick Frierson reported that the Committee met on Thursday, March 25, 2021 and approved the following resolution:

- a.** Resolution Authorizing the Solicitation of Proposals for the Procurement of Property and Casualty Insurance Brokerage RFP P48464

Committee Chair Frierson requested approval of the resolution, which was seconded by Board Member Hardage. The resolution was approved unanimously by a vote of 11 to 0 with 13 members present.¹

unanimously by a vote of 11 to 0 with 13 members present.¹

7. Other Matters

None.

8. Comments from the Board

None.

Adjournment

The Board meeting adjourned at 1:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tyrene L. Huff".

Tyrene L. Huff
Assistant Secretary to the Board

YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/ITJ5bpSmU1U>

April 8, 2021 Board Meeting Public Comments

Received via (404) 848-6000, marta.board@itsmarta.com, public@itsmarta.com

Summary: Eight customers provided public comments

7 – E-mails

3 – Voice Messages

Note: 2 customers e-mailed and left voice messages

1.) Message Date: April 7, 2021 11:10 a.m. (via MARTA Public Voicemail)

Garrett Clum [\(770\) 355-5987](mailto:garrettclum@mac.com)

Hello my name is Garrett Clum, G-A-R-R-E-T-T C-L-U-M my telephone number, I mean my email address is garrettclum@mac.com and I am calling about the Federal transit money and putting my strong support in getting the Beltline rail completely completed. It's way behind schedule and in fact we have taxpayers, I live in Midtown, and voted for a tax to go particularly to this and MARTA hasn't done anything about it. Please let everybody know that this money needs to go to Beltline rail and nowhere else, Thank you.

2.) Message Date: April 07, 2021 12:26 p.m. (via MARTA public@itsmarta.com)

Walter Heape Walter.heape@icloud.com

I would like to add my voice to the mix to request funding be used for rail on the Beltline. We bought into that dream, now please make it happen!

Sincerely,
Walter S Heape

3.) Message Date: April 07, 2021 12:31 p.m. (via MARTA Public Voicemail)
 12:39 p.m. (via MARTA public@itsmarta.com)

Binh Dam Qbdam@yahoo.com (404) 384-9106

Voicemail:

My name is

I have been following the Beltline project for almost 20 years and have always been excited by the vision of trail and rail connecting the neighborhoods around town. I am a bit disappointed that, despite approval in 2016 with More MARTA, advancement on the Beltline rail has been non-existent, and recent statements from MARTA regarding transit construction and timeline have been timid at best.

So today, I'm calling on MARTA and the board to something bold, not timid, but bold and that's what was voted for in More MARTA:

1. Restate your commitment to light rail that came out from previous MARTA studies, as the locally preferred alternative
2. There is an N+1 study adopted last March for another feasibility study, please state how it serves the Beltline vision of trails and rail and how it will expedite the timeline for light rail construction.

I would like to remind MARTA and the board that if it weren't for the bold vision for building heavy rail in the 70s, and had the leaders at the time picked something less significant, Atlanta as we know it today wouldn't exist, so here is your shot at delivering a landmark project that will shape Atlanta for the generations to come.

Thank you.

Email:

My name is Binh Dam, a MARTA Army co-founder, but today I speak for myself. I have been following the Beltline project for almost 20 years and have always been excited by the vision of trail and rail connecting the neighborhoods around town.

I am a bit disappointed that, despite approval in 2016 with More MARTA, advancement on the Beltline rail has been non-existent, and recent statements regarding transit construction and timeline have been timid at best.

So today, I'm calling on MARTA and the board to something bold, within reach, and that was voted for in More MARTA:

1. Restate your commitment to light rail that came out from previous MARTA studies, as the locally preferred alternative
2. There is an n+1 study adopted last March for another feasibility study, please state how it serves the Beltline vision of trails and rail and how it will expedite the timeline for light rail construction.

I would like to remind MARTA and the board that if it weren't for the bold vision for building heavy rail in the 70s, and had the leaders at the time picked something less significant, Atlanta as we know it today wouldn't exist, so here is your shot at delivering a landmark project that will shape Atlanta for the generations to come.

Thank you.

-Binh Dam
4043849106

4.) Message Date: April 08, 2021

9:39 a.m. (via MARTA public@itsmarta.com)

Cathy Woolard

woolard.cathy@gmail.com

I am concerned that MARTA continues to look for delays or changes to the Atlanta BeltLine light rail transit with the RFP on your agenda. When I initially engaged with MARTA to be the transit partner for the Atlanta BeltLine, it was because I had full confidence that MARTA could

construct and build this transit line that would finally make MARTA transit “go somewhere”. The political lift for that confidence was considerable to say the least, but I felt like Atlantans had invested heavily in MARTA and I wanted to make sure that investment was supported and would continue to grow. On at least three occasions the LPA has determined that light rail is the transit mode preferred by the future riders of the Atlanta Beltline transit. Only one study is needed and so the search for a different outcome only tells me that MARTA leadership is looking for ways to fundamentally change the project and is not committed to full connectivity on the Atlanta BeltLine.

When we began work on this project almost 20 years ago now, we set into motion growth patterns with density that would support transit ridership. Neighborhoods committed to this density and the frustrating potential for vastly increased car traffic to support the transit that was promised and would soon come. When I was asked to serve on the board of the public education campaign to support additional long term funds for MARTA transit, it was because I'd be a unique validator for the intended and stated use of this funding - transit on the Atlanta BeltLine. And yet again, we and I have been bamboozled by MARTA.

Now we have a President that is poised to invest trillions of dollars in infrastructure including transit. We have matching funds sitting in an account to dedicate to future projects that are not even proven viable while a shovel ready project that has generated billions of dollars in private investment continues to be delayed. We have two members of Congress in our metro area on the Congressional Infrastructure committee and two US Senators who are familiar and supportive of this project. Never in the 20 years of the Atlanta BeltLine history have we had conditions as ripe for funding and expediting the delivery of this long promised transit expansion. Shame on MARTA leadership for allowing Atlanta residents to continue to disproportionately fund MARTA while failing to deliver on a project that it promised two decades ago.

Cathy Woolard
563 Memorial Drive, SE
#501
Atlanta, GA 30312
C 404.247.9035

5.) Message Date: April 08, 2021 10:35 a.m. (via MARTA public@itsmarta.com)

George Chidi georgechidi@gmail.com

I'm George Chidi. I am a writer for Decaturish and contribute to investigative online news magazine The Intercept. I host a public affairs show on Fox 5 Atlanta. I served in public office as a city councilman for Pine Lake. I served as social impact director for the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District, which helped establish the streetcar downtown.

I am concerned that MARTA appears to be backing away from a commitment to rail on the Beltline. You're soliciting an RFP for a study of rail "gaps" with the apparent intent to abandon light rail as the transit component for the Beltline.

I don't need to tell you that a move away from light rail will appear like a bait-and-switch for the Beltline in exactly the same way the promises of affordable housing development never materialized. You're all well aware of the skepticism in South DeKalb about promises for light rail made 30 years ago that never materialized.

You are also aware, I suspect, of how this kind of skepticism affected the MARTA expansion vote in Gwinnett County. That vote failed because many middle-class African-American voters in south Gwinnett viewed the options offered as second-class with limited utility.

Now I am seeing the early, quiet steps away from light rail that would be transformative to struggling -- and middle-class -- African American neighborhoods on Atlanta's south and west side. The Beltline passes through long-established neighborhoods full of Black homeowners who pay close attention to the quality of services offered by the city, county ... and MARTA. They are likely to decide elections here for a long time to come.

They're fully aware of the legacy of racism in transportation policy in Atlanta, from the way I-20 carved up and separated Black neighborhoods to the state government's deliberate underfunding of MARTA infrastructure. If MARTA abandons rail here, I imagine a substantial local reaction.

You should know that if I've seen this RFP and understand its implications, the rest of the media isn't far behind.

I ask you: will you state plainly today that light rail remains the locally-preferred alternative for transit development on the Beltline, without wiggle room or caveats, in line with the promises made and the expectations of this community? If not ... I will presume you're walking away.

George Chidi
678-824-4187

6.) Message Date: April 08, 2021 11:42 a.m. (via MARTA public@itsmarta.com)
12:41 p.m. (via MARTA Public Voicemail)

Matthew Roa [\(404\) 354-5280](mailto:info@beltlineraillnow.org)

To The MARTA Board of Directors,

I am writing to comment on RFP 48439, Study of LRT East Extension LRT Feasibility, issued at MARTA's Capital Programs and Board Meeting on March 25, 2021. Please see the attached letter, for entry into the public record related to the MARTA board meeting today.

Thank you,

Matthew Rao
Board Chair,
BeltLine Rail Now

Voicemail:

Hello, my name is Matthew Rao and I represent Beltline Rail Now. My e-mail address is matthew@raodesignstudio.com. I'm calling today regarding the Board's RFP48439, which is study of LRT's ability for the east extension of the streetcar and Beltline rail. We are seeking clarification on the written and spoken statements from the 3/25 meeting that suggest reassessment of light rail on the Beltline as the locally preferred alternative. Light rail on the "J" of the Beltline is a part of the More MARTA and Atlanta voters approved the More MARTA sales tax to pay for it. We respectfully ask that you publicly affirm your commitment to the delivery of light rail transit on the Beltline. On three separate occasions, most recently in 2012, MARTA has affirmed LRT as the LPA for the Beltline; however, reading of the so called rail gap identified by presenter Larry Prescott at the 3/25 meeting identifies challenges that were all known by MARTA and the city since the Beltline project began and they were known in every prior study. One in fact is a parking lot. Yes, a parking lot. A parking lot owned by the city in the right-of-way that it owns. These optics are bad for MARTA and its reputation as a good faith partner in light of Board member Durrett's spoken comments at the March meeting and his prior written statements, the Beltline Rail Now apposing light rail on the Beltline we ask that MARTA unequivocally state its commitment to the LPA and to the process of seeking solutions to make that happen. We ask MARTA to assure us that the RFP will not result in obstacles that will serve as a pretext to selecting another mode of transit such as the RT. Further, Board member Durrett is the owner of property near the Beltline and thus has an inherent bias that should have been disclosed to you and the public. In the presentation, of the rail gap given to the consultant as part of the public presentation on 3/25. No mention was made of recent development since 2012, which provide critical information and solutions to some of those rail gaps. These include the City of Atlanta's 2018 Transportation Plan, calling for infill MARTA stations at Hulsey and at Armour and the 2019 Hulsey Yard Master Plan with its more direct rail alignment under Dekalb Avenue and the active CSX rail tracks. The first More MARTA Beltline rail project is an extension of the streetcar from Ebenezer Baptist Church at Jackson Street to the Ponce City Market on the Beltline. In light of the new climate in Washington our new 5th District Congress Woman, Representative Nikema Williams on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the President calling for investment in mass transit and the Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg, who this past Monday called for investment in light rail on the Beltline, we emphatically ask MARTA to rearticulate its commitment to the goal of building light rail on the Atlanta Beltline and to commit to its accelerated completion. Thank you for allowing me to commit.

7.) Message Date: April 08, 2021

12:49 p.m. (via MARTA public@itsmarta.com)

Jenne Shepard

Jenne@voteshepherd.org

I am a resident of Southwest Atlanta and I am also a candidate for District 12 City council. As a resident/community leader I have been a part of many meetings, RFP's, loaded conversations surrounding the Beltline and its plan to complete this project, and it has always been supported by residents surrounding the idea of light rail on the Beltline. I have gained knowledge of these plans to possibly be revoked by MARTA with no clear explanation as to why. This isn't about funding, because there have been extra taxes being paid by residents to support light rail on the Beltline. We are also under a new administration that is ready to give money for the building and upgrades of infrastructure/transit.

Throwing the community, a bone to "appease" them is not going to work this time around. The residents of Southwest Atlanta are well aware of the way they have been disproportionately

treated when it comes to transit ever since the thought of building MARTA was put into motion in 1971. In order to increase Atlanta's competitiveness in the global economy, it is imperative that we have a world class transit system that connects people of all backgrounds to bigger and better opportunities.

I submit to you that you should be ready for the response of the community to be loud, and clear if you should decide to do anything other than deliver on the promises made concerning light rail and the Atlanta Beltline because we will sound the alarm and we will not back down.

Kind Regards,

Jenné Shepherd
Mobile: (631) 524-4378
Jenne@voteshepherd.org

8.) Message Date: April 08, 2021 12:55 p.m. (via MARTA public@itsmarta.com)

Lawrence Miller l-lawrencemiller@yahoo.com

It looks like MARTA wants to treat SW and SE Atlanta like 2nd class citizens. We were promised rail on the Beltline and now they are trying to pull a fast one and do yet ANOTHER feasibility study to justify bus rapid transit. We deserve what was promised.

Frankly I'm tired MARTA being a tool to push racist transit policies on us! It's time to take a stand. We were PROMISED rail on the Beltline over 10 years ago. We agreed to the MoreMARTA ½¢ tax 5 years ago to help pay for it but nooooo! Just like the interstate dividing Black neighborhoods and a reticence to move even busses further into the counties now they appear to be doing this!

We deserve what was promised and not to be treated like 2nd class citizens. We see the big not so hidden message that another feasibility study is intended to justify the MARTA desire for busses rather than what was promised and a big reason we supported a new tax.

J Lawrence Miller
President, Adair Park Today (Historic Adair Park neighborhood)
Chair, Murphy Crossing Neighborhood Alliance