



## **NEORide**

### **Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting**

March 23, 2023@ 1:00pm – Nationwide Hotel & Conference Center  
100 Green Meadows Dr. S., Lewis Center, OH 43035

#### ***I. Attendance***

NEORide President Mr. Ben Capelle asked for the Roll Call and determined that a quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 12:54 p.m.

Board Members, Alternates and Other Interested Parties present are listed below.

#### Board Members and Alternates:

Ben Capelle, President	Laketrans
Chasilyn Carter	LFPT
Dawn Distler	Akron METRO
Matt Dutkevich	BCRTA
Delene Weidner	BCRTA
Darryl Haley	SORTA
Kirt Conrad	SARTA
Mark Finnicum	SARTA
Dean Harris	WRTA
Mike Salamone	Trumbull County
Brian Trautman	PARTA
Kelly Jurisch	PARTA
Lucas Boehm	TARTA
Joshua Miranda	GCRTA
Gina Douthat	TANK
Mike Blackston	TheRide
Crystal James	DCTB
Andy Volenik	DCTB
Shari Green	CARTS
Jose Feliciano (phone)	GCRTA
Sean Hill (phone)	KRT
Shannon Rine (phone)	MCPT
Justin Avery (phone)	Rock Region METRO

#### Other Interested Parties:

Katherine Conrad	OTRP
Barbara Rhoades	OTRP
Cristian Kornea	OTRP
Ken Reed	OTRP
Mark Landes	Isaac Wiles
Jason Yanni	COTA
Jean Taddie (phone)	Richland County Transit
Jacque Gibb (phone)	C. Robinsons Associates Inc.
Tina Burek (phone)	C. Robinsons Associates Inc.

## ***II. Summary of Board Actions***

- 1. Approved Board Meeting Agenda of 3-23-23**
- 2. Approved NEORide Executive Committee Meeting Minutes 2/03/23**
- 3. Approved and Accepted Licking County's Resolution to Join NEORide on Behalf of Licking County Transit.**
- 4. Approved NEORide Investment Policy.**
- 5. Approved NEORide Conflict of Interest Policy.**
- 6. Approved a Cooperative Agreement Between the Federal Highway Administration, ODOT and NEORide for the ATCMTD Grant in the Amount of \$1,493,313 Contingent on Final Legal Review.**
- 7. Approved all Subcontracts as Listed Below for the ATCMTD Grant.**
  - a. Subcontract with ARCADIS/IBI Group in the amount of \$754,027 to complete work on the ATCMTD Grant awarded to NEORide. This contract is contingent on final execution of the ODOT/USDOT's contract and final legal review.
  - b. Subcontract with CALSTART in the amount of \$224,000 to complete work on the ATCMTD Grant awarded to NEORide. This contract is contingent on final execution of the ODPT/USDOT's contract with NEORide and final legal review.
  - c. Subcontract with Cleveland State University in the amount of \$322,222 to complete work on the ATCMTD Grant awarded to NEORide. This contract is contingent on final execution of the ODOT/USDOT's contract with NEORide and final legal review.
- 8. Approved Agreement with the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority to Provide Project Management Support for the EZConnect One-Call Center Project Under Senator Sherrod Brown's Congressionally Directed Spending, Contingent on Final Legal Review.**
- 9. Approved Special Assessment of \$25,000 and Utilizing \$25,000 of Project Management Funds Earned in 2023. Recommended by the Strategic Planning and Dues Committee.**
- 10. Approved the Strategic Planning and Dues Committee's Recommendation to Hire a Strategic Planning Consultant with a Budget not to Exceed \$50,000.**
- 11. Accepted Hiring of C. Robinson Associates Inc. in an Amount not to Exceed \$50,000.**

### ***III. Consent Docket***

#### **1. Consent Docket**

**Motion:** Mr. Haley made a motion to approve the consent docket. Mr. Conrad seconded the motion.

No discussion was heard.

**Vote:** All voted in favor of the motion.

*Approve, Accept and Affirm all items on the Consent Docket*

- a. Approve Board Meeting Agenda of 3-23-23.
- b. Approve NEORide Executive Committee Minutes 2/03/2023
- c. Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure – Katherine and Kirt Conrad

### ***IV. Presentation***

#### **2. Presentation: C. Robinsons Associates Inc. (Strategic Planning)**

Ms. Gibbs gives an overview of C. Robinsons Associates Inc. and their experience in strategic planning.

Mr. Haley highly recommends C. Robinsons Associates Inc. based on previous experience with them.

### ***V. Discussion/Action Items/Reports***

#### **3. ACTION: Motion to Approve and Accept Licking County's Resolution to Join NEORide on Behalf of Licking County Transit.**

**Motion:** Mr. Haley made a motion to approve and accept Licking County's resolution to join NEORide on behalf of Licking County Transit. Mr. Harris seconded the motion.

No discussion was heard.

**Vote:** All voted in favor of the motion.

**NEORide Policies**

**4. ACTION: Motion to Approve Investment Policy.**

**Motion: Mr. Dutkevicz made a motion to approve investment policy. Mr. Haley seconded the motion.**

Ms. Conrad gives an overview of the NEORide investment policy.

**5. ACTION: Motion to Approve Conflict of Interest Policy.**

**Motion: Mr. Harris made a motion to approve conflict of interest policy. Mr. Salamone seconded the motion.**

Ms. Conrad gives an overview of the NEORide conflict-of-interest policy.

**Vote: All voted in favor of the motion.**

**Contracts for Approval**

**6. ACTION: Motion to Approve a Cooperative Agreement Between the Federal Highway Administration, ODOT and NEORide for the ATCMTD Grant in the Amount of \$1,493,313 Contingent on Final Legal Review.**

**Motion: Mr. Haley made a motion to approve a cooperative agreement between the federal highway administration, ODOT and NEORide for the ATCMTD grant in the amount of \$1,493,313 contingent on final legal review. Mr. Conrad seconded the motion.**

Ms. Conrad states the grant was awarded last year to fund the EZConnect project. The funds received from ODOT last year will be used to fulfill the requirements for the 50% match required by this grant, meaning no local funds will be needed to fund the project. The agreement allows ODOT to execute the grant as requested by the federal highway administration with NEORide as the recipient.

No further discussion was heard.

**7. ACTION: Motion to Approve all Subcontracts as Listed Below for the ATCMTD Grant.**

**Motion: Mr. Harris made a motion to approve all subcontracts as listed below for the ATCMTD grant. Mr. Volenik seconded the motion.**

Mr. Conrad states these subcontracts are in place to allow NEORide to allocate the awarded

funds to the following subrecipients. IBI Group, CALSTART, and Cleveland State University. We worked with ODOT through an extensive procurement process to identify these subrecipients as sole source which were approved by ODOT.

- a. Subcontract with ARCADIS/IBI Group in the amount of \$754,027 to complete work on the ATCMTD Grant awarded to NEORide. This contract is contingent on final execution of the ODOT/USDOT's contract and final legal review.
- b. Subcontract with CALSTART in the amount of \$224,000 to complete work on the ATCMTD Grant awarded to NEORide. This contract is contingent on final execution of the ODPT/USDOT's contract with NEORide and final legal review.
- c. Subcontract with Cleveland State University in the amount of \$322,222 to complete work on the ATCMTD Grant awarded to NEORide. This contract is contingent on final execution of the ODOT/USDOT's contract with NEORide and final legal review.

**Vote: All voted in favor of the motion.**

8. **ACTION: Motion to Approve Agreement with the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority to Provide Project Management Support for the EZConnect One-Call Center Project Under Senator Sherrod Brown's Congressionally Directed Spending, Contingent on Final Legal Review.**

**Motion: Mr. Volenik made a motion to approve agreement with Stark Area Regional Transit Authority to provide project management support for the EZConnect one-call center project under Senator Sherrod Brown's Congressionally Directed Spending contingent on final legal review. Mr. Salamone seconded the motion.**

- **Mr. Conrad abstains.**

Ms. Conrad states NEORide applied for Sherrod Brown's Congressionally Directed Spending for appropriation funding to help fund the EZConnect project. The funds were awarded on the contingency that they go directly to a transit authority instead of directly to NEORide. SARTA agreed to be the direct recipient. This contract would pay for project management support and legal. NEORide will be considered as a subrecipient by SATRA's board in the coming weeks. We will be working with our legal counsel Isaac Wiles during the process.

Mr. Trautman enquired if the responsibility will fall on SARTA to manage the grant.

Ms. Conrad states SARTA will be responsible.

### **Miscellaneous**

9. **ACTION: Motion to Approve Special Assessment of \$25,000 and Utilizing \$25,000 of Project Management Funds Earned in 2023. Recommended by the Strategic Planning and Dues Committee.**

**Motion: Mr. Harris made a motion to approve special assessment of \$25,000 and utilizing \$25,000 of project management funds earned in 2023. Recommended by the Strategic Planning and Dues Committee. Mr. Haley seconded the motion.**

Mr. Capelle states the dues and strategic planning committee discussed funding strategic planning. The first item on the strategic planning assessment document is to approve a special assessment and use 25,000 of project management funds earned in 2023. The objective is to fund strategic planning with future funds and with some existing funds. There was healthy debate within the committee but in the end the committee agreed this was the best action.

Ms. Conrad explains the structure, including rural transits having no requirement to participate due to financial constraints. We had volunteers from Lancaster, BCRTA, And Sandusky who respectively pitched in a \$250,000 share.

**Vote: All voted in favor of the motion.**

**10. ACTION: Motion to Approve the Strategic Planning and Dues Committee's Recommendation to Hire a Strategic Planning Consultant with a Budget not to Exceed \$50,000.**

**Motion: Mr. Conrad made a motion to approve the Strategic Planning and Dues Committee's recommendation to hire a Strategic Planning Consultant with a budget not to exceed \$50,000. Mr. Haley seconded the motion.**

Ms. Conrad explains that there is a \$47,500 cost for the consultants and an additional \$25,000 in contingency should there be any loss associated with the project.

**Vote: All voted in favor of the motion.**

**11. ACTION: Motion to Hire C. Robinson Associates Inc. in an Amount not to Exceed \$50,000.**

**Motion: Mr. Harris made a motion to hire C. Robinson Associates Inc. in an amount to not exceed \$50,000. Mr. Haley seconded the motion.**

Mr. Capelle voices his support for hiring a consultant.

**Vote: All voted in favor of the motion.**

**12. REPORT: Fiscal Agent (Ms. Rhoades)**

Ms. Rhoades states that the first quarter is looking strong on the balance sheet. She states the profit and loss document shows our unaudited number for unused stored value on account. The amount is \$9,390.54. This amount shows that EZfare users who add stored value to their account are using it quickly, due to the insignificant amount we are seeing.

Ms. Rhoades states the A/R report shows a significant amount on accounts receivable. Although

we recently received several payments, if you are in the 61-90 range, please check in with your finance department regarding payment.

Ms. Conrad states there have been communications sent out to members in this range. She states Cleveland and SORTA had opted to hold payments until they receive clarification from transit app on what the new contract will look like with the addition of Transit Royale.

Mr. Harris references the treasurer's report. There is nothing significant to report.

Mr. Rhoades gives an overview of the Administrators Contract Usage report by outlining the way staff allocates its time. By tracking how OTRP staff allocates time to keep us within the contract agreement price.

- i. Balance Sheet
- ii. Profit and Loss
- iii. Budget to Actual for NEORide
- iv. A/R Report
- v. Treasurers Report (Dean Harris)
- vi. Administrators Contract Usage Report – Provided as a long-term management tool (Barbara Rhoades)

### **13. REPORT: EZfare Committee** (Mr. Dutkevicz)

Mr. Dutkevicz states the RFP for the EZfare software is out to bid and the committee is keeping an eye on it.

Ms. Conrad states put a link in packet and a website we did receive interest from a few vendors. She will reach out to evaluation committee make sure we put someone from a different transit to conduct the evaluation. The EZfare sales are close to one million dollars.

Ms. Rhoades mentions a concern with the fees associated with stored value that was discussed by the EZfare committee. She explains that we track fare revenue at 100% and we hold the associated fees in an expense account. Every time we send you funds, we deduct the fees. For stored value once a rider uses it to purchase a ticket the fees will be allocated to the respective transit. This system leaves fees on NEORide books for unused stored value and this amount is growing. One way we can address the concern is to have these fees be allocated to our members based on overall usage of EZfare for each transit. The fees can then be billed to our members on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Ms. Rhoades mentions another concern regarding EZfare stored value in terms of how stored value expires. Currently funds expire after 5 years of not being used. We would like to consider changing the policy to have those funds expire only if a rider was not active in their account for 5 years. The benefit would be we would not have to track when each dollar was added and when it should expire, we would only track if the user was active in their account in a 5-year time frame.

- a. EZfare Discussion Group Meeting Recording
- b. Budget to Actual EZfare
- c. EZfare Sales
- d. EZfare Procurement is Live

- e. Discussion: Stored Value Accounting (Barbara Rhoades)
  - i. Stored Value Accounting Exhibit

**14. REPORT: IMI Grant Committee** (Ms. Conrad)

Ms. Conrad states we are in the final phases of the IMI grant which ends in July. We are working on getting a final report from the committee and vendors and an evaluation with FTA.

Ms. Conrad introduces Jason Yanni from COTA.

- a. Budget to actual IMI

**15. REPORT: EZConnect Committee** (Mr. Conrad)

Ms. Conrad outlines the development of EZConnect, a one call mobility center. The project includes an EZConnect hub in Northeast Ohio and Southwest Ohio. We are working to get all grant funding organized referencing the budget to actual for each hub in the board packet. You can also see the Via Quarterly Report in the board packet which shows the budget to actual for the via project for those who are launching Via but not EZConnect.

- a. Budget to Actual EZConnect (OTP2 Grant/NEO)
- b. Budget to Actual OTP2 Grant/SWO
- c. Via Quarterly Report

**16. REPORT: Dues & Strategic Planning Committee** (Mr. Capelle)

Mr. Capelle mentions the committee voted to keep the dues the same for this year. We did not discuss or create any strategic objectives because we believe it will be a part of our strategic planning network.

**17. REPORT: Obsolete Parts Committee** (Mr. Hampshire)

Ms. Conrad states we did not receive funding from SMART grant for this project. The project is tabled until the next steps are decided.

**18. REPORT: Grants** (Ms. Conrad)

Ms. Conrad states SMART Grant was not awarded to NEORide. We have the proposals already written and can try applying for funds elsewhere. We are in the process of applying for the Low-No Grant in conjunction with ODOT. CALSTART will be writing the grant and managing the process. We have 10 transits in Ohio and will be submitting the grant to be submitted by April 14<sup>th</sup>.



- a. SMART Grant Applications: Transit-Based Advanced Driver Assistance and Predictive Maintenance/Cloud-Based Database (Not Awarded)
- b. Low-No Grant in partnership with ODOT

**19. REPORT: Active Procurements: Digital Signs, Collision Avoidance and TVM's**  
(Ms. Conrad)

Ms. Conrad reports digital signage budget and contract was approved during the last executive board meeting. The vendor Message Point Media has been working directly with SORTA and Akron METRO on the project. The Collision avoidance procurement with Rosco Systems is in contract negotiation and will be further discussed at the next NEORide executive board meeting. The TVM procurement is active, we should receive responses by April 2023.

Discussion: Procurement Project

Ms. Conrad opens the floor for discussion. Ms. Conrad questions if NEORide wants to continue to create joint procurements. If we move forward with NEORide procurements would procurement software or hiring a procurement professional to work on creation of NEORide procurements be beneficial to NEORide.

Some discussion was heard.

Mr. Capelle states that this is something that needs to be discussed critically by each transit internally and with their procurement professionals.

- a. Budget to Actual – Digital Signs
- b. TVM Procurement
- c. Discussion Item: Procurement Project

**20. REPORT: Chairman's Report** (Mr. Capelle)

Mr. Capelle, nothing significant to report.

- a. SPO's 2023

**21. Guest Communications: (Limit 5 Minutes)**

No discussion was heard.

**22. Motion: Mr. Haley made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Conrad seconded the motion.**

- i. Next Board Meeting is June 23, 2023 – At 1p.m.; Columbus (Location TBD)

**Vote: All voted in favor of the motion**