



WINSTON-SALEM TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

MINUTES
for
THURSDAY; JULY 31, 2025

PRESENT:

WSTA Board Members

Keith King, Chairperson
Willie Clark, Jr.
Dr. David Wren
Dr. Sarah Morath
Dr. Suneel Parvathareddy

City Staff

Jeff Fansler, Director of DOT
Kelly Garvin, Assistant Director of DOT
Hunter Staszak, Winston-Salem Area Transportation
Planning Organization (WSATPO)
Maddie Burgiss, Transportation Planner

WSTA/RATP DEV, USA Staff

Michael Rosson, Assist. General Manager of
Operation, RATP Dev, USA
Reggie Arrington, Assist. General Manager of
Maintenance, RATP Dev, USA
Levine Hedgepeth, Assist. General Manager of
Safety, RATP Dev, USA
Brandie Peterson, Director of Marketing and
Community Engagement, RATP Dev, USA
Lisa Sides, Assistant Operations Manager, RATP
Dev, USA
Andrea Ingram, HR Generalist, RATP Dev, USA
Jackie Settle, Customer Service Manager, RATP
Dev, USA
Tikiha Alston, ADA Eligibility Manager, RATP Dev,
USA
Teika Holloway, Administrative Assistant, RATP
Dev, USA
Myra Stafford, Facilities Supervisor, RATP Dev,
USA
Zavia Halliday, HR Recruiter, RATP Dev, USA

Other Attendees

Brandee Searcy, Utility Worker RATP Dev, USA
Frederick Berry, Booking Agent

Meeting Opened: 4:06 pm

Chairperson Keith King called July 31, 2025, Winston-Salem Transit Authority (WSTA) Board Meeting to order.

Safety Message (Keith King, Chairman): Chairman King said we are experiencing extremely hot temperatures. He reminded everyone to stay hydrated while outside. He also stated you should be cautious when you are out walking your dogs. Outdoor surfaces such as concrete sidewalks can become extremely hot and can burn your pets' paws.



Public Comment *(limited to two minutes per speaker):*

There were no public commenters present.

Action Items:

Approval of May 29, 2025 WSTA Board Meeting Minutes:

Chairman King gave space, for any member who had not already done so, to review the minutes from the May 29, 2025 WSTA Board meeting minutes.

Dr. David Wren made a move to approve the May 29, 2025 WSTA Board Meeting Minutes. Mr. Willie Clark, Jr., made a second move.

Chairman King initiated a short vote. Following the vote, the Minutes for May 29, 2025 WSTA Board Meeting were approved.

Resolution Authorizing the Procurement of Gillig 29' Clean Diesel Buses for the Winston-Salem Transit Authority:

Mr. Jeff Fansler spoke about WSTA's aging fleet and how badly they need to be replaced. WSTA has forty-five Fixed Route buses in its fleet. Currently there are twenty-four hybrid buses in the fleet that have served beyond their useful life. As a reminder, we know that the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) defines useful life as serving twelve years and/or five hundred miles. There is a lot of capital planning that must be done behind the scenes to replace an aging fleet that is twenty-four buses behind the replacement schedule. Mr. Fansler has tasked himself and his staff with expediting the process. The City of Winston-Salem (The City) has documented its intentions by allocating annual support for bus replacement in a capacity that has never been done before. This is the reason WSTA is so behind schedule replacing the vehicles that have reached useful life.

Your packet includes a capital plan with strategic plan goals. The plan nods to the City's commitment to allocating intentional resources to fleet replacement. The leverage, because the fleet is so expensive, is instead of replacing them with more hybrid buses, the City of Winston-Salem would like to replace them with clean diesel buses.

There are benefits that come with making this change. The most notable is the cost. A clean diesel bus costs ~ \$700,00 vs. \$1.2 million for a hybrid electric bus. There is a shorter delivery time—6-12 months—compared to hybrid—up to 16 months. Our hybrid buses are thirty-five.' The diesel buses being proposed for our fleet are a tiny bit smaller; they are twenty-nine.' Diesel buses will provide improved reliability that equates to reduced road calls. Also, there is an environmentally friendly component to consider. The new clean diesel buses have reduced emissions.

Dr Suneel K. Parvathareddy moved to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Procurement of Gillig 29' Clean Diesel Buses for the Winston-Salem Transit Authority. Dr. David Wren made the second move.



Following a short vote, the Resolution Authorizing the Procurement of Gillig 29' Clean Diesel Buses for the Winston-Salem Transit Authority was authorized by the WSTA Board.

Resolution Adopting the Extreme Weather and Special Events Fare Policy Changes for the Winston-Salem Transit Authority:

Mrs. Kelly Garvin said for the past few days the city has been under a heat advisory. Prior to this the city was hit with a heatwave in June. During the June heatwave the City received several calls to action regarding helping their neighbors and friends get to cooling centers around the city. Staff looked at weather patterns, the heat index, what quantifies the heat index and those types of metrics to see what can be done.

It was determined that severe weather, as is specified within the action item, is when the temperature reaches ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit and the heat index is at or above one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. During the winter months, severe weather is when the temperature drops below twenty degrees for four consecutive hours during the day. This is when the City Manager will implement free rides.

This will not affect the pattern of the routes. It only allows individuals, without means, the opportunity to board the bus to get to a cooling or warming station. There has been communication in the past with the Mayor and City council regarding matters such as these. Last week when the calls came into City offices, we had the conversation again and were allowed to implement fare-free rides when the temperature reached alarming degrees. During the discussions, it was decided to make this a formal policy so when such things happen. DOT ran some numbers to see what the impact might be on revenue according to how often we may have these events, and the impact was minimal. We anticipate not having more than ten such events throughout the year. The impact is minimal on revenue from sales; but there is a greater impact on community engagement and our willingness to help the community get to where they need to be during these times.

Mrs. Garvin opened the floor to questions. Dr. Parvathareddy inquired about the buses traveling in icy and snowy weather. Mr. Fansler explained that there are snow routes and schedules for safe operations during inclement weather. The policy being presented is a separate from a “snow” response and involves critical life factoring for those that may be unhoused and need transportation to a place they can get imminent relief from the extreme elements.

Chairman King asked about the special events portion of the resolution. Mrs. Garvin stated in addition to free fares for extreme weather, often community agencies have events that they would like fare free transportation provided. For example, on election day fare free routes are provided to polling stations. Sometimes the hours of transportation are also extended to allow transportation back from the voting polls. This resolution will umbrella both request types. The requests to funnel through DOT for review and consideration and after DOT make the recommendation to the City manager with him having the authority to approve such events.



Dr Sarah Morath moved to approve the Resolution Adopting Extreme Weather and Special Events Fare Policy Changes for the Winston-Salem Transit Authority. Mr. Willie Clark, Jr., moved second.

Following a short vote, the Winston-Salem Transit Authority’s Board approved the Resolution Adopting Extreme Weather and Special Events Fare Policy Changes for the Winston-Salem Transit Authority.

Informational Items:

a) **Regional Fare Item:** Ms. Garvin reminded everyone of the plan to move to a regional fare model of transportation using Umo. This policy is going to council for approval so today it is listed as an informational item. Umo allows us to work with other transit and transportation agencies in our region. P.A.R.T., GTO, Burlington Link and High Point all use Umo. The user can navigate all these transit systems using the Umo app. This policy allows WSTA and these partners to decide how the fare revenue will be shared. To explain how this will work, Ms. Garvin gave an example. She said if she was a passenger and went to WSTA to load her Umo card with \$100.00, She gave the City of Winston-Salem \$100.00 cash money. She put \$100.00 worth of fare value on her card. Every time she gets on the bus, she taps that card. If she gets on a WSTA bus, WSTA gets \$1.00 of the fare value on her card. If she takes the P.A.R.T. bus, she will tap her card and P.A.R.T. will get whatever their fare is from the fare value on her card. If she goes to High Point and Greensboro, the same thing happens. P.A.R.T., High Point, and Greensboro never actually saw any of that cash because she spent that \$100.00 at WSTA. Therefore, what needs to happen on the backhand side is all agencies will come together and do an evaluation of their stats. What did you sell and how much did you see realized on your buses? In other words, if ninety-five percent of WSTA’s sales showed up on their buses, there is no need for them to be part of the conversation. However, if only twenty-five percent of WSTA’s sales are realized on WSTA buses, they are now part of the conversation because that is owed money, and you must figure out which of your partners are owed money. This is what this policy is about—right sizing whomever is owed money in our region when we allow passengers to use our buses by taping one Umo card. The policy allows the City Manager to enter into this sort of intergovernmental agreement with P.A.R.T., Greensboro, Burlington link, and High Point to share our revenue in this way and realize and get the actual funds for the money that was spent on WSTA buses.

Dr. Wren asked if it was not a way to track where the cards are used because it seems to him this is a convoluted way to reimburse everyone. Mrs. Garvin said this is the first thing they investigated when looking at becoming a partner. Umo does not have the technology to do this at time; however, they are working towards that goal. She said the City did some market research. They looked at other regions that are doing this and how they are doing it. Go-Raleigh, Go-Durham, Go-Triangle, and Go-Cary are all using Umo and are doing this way. Dr. Wren then asked if there was a threat of losing revenue because of a data error. Mrs.



Garvin said no because we are not talking about a lot of money. All the partners are going to have some accountability. P.A.R.T. is not the holder of all the data. They are the ones that are going to help synthesize everything together and send out the invoices. We will all have access to each other's data. We all have a voice to comment on, agree, and disagree with what is presented. We (the partners) will send our monthly sales to P.A.R.T. to do the math and they will send out the reports to say who owes who what. We then look at our reports to make sure they match up with our data and ensure we are getting our correct share.

Mr. Fansler shared another perspective to look at the matter using your home base. If the passenger's home base is in Winston-Salem, ninety-five percent of your trips will be done with WAST; therefore, again, we are not talking about a lot of money. That five percent is what is being negotiated and what we must come to terms with.

Dr. Parvathareddy asked about the fare for the different partners and how often will the partners determine what is owed. Ms. Garvin said each system has their equipment set up for their fare and when the card is tapped it will take the amount for that system. The invoices will be prepared quarterly.

- b) **Route Schedule Change:** Mr. Fansler said he wants to highlight that his job is to advocate for every dollar to fund WSTA. During the budgeting process, the City Council asked that DOT look for a \$1.3 million service reduction in the fund allocated to WSTA. He said there are not a lot of knobs you can adjust to make this happen—you have fixed route, and you have paratransit. They asked him to figure out \$1.3 million in service cuts to fit how much they would allocate the tax base allocation to fund WSTA. He commended them that collaborated with him to do the run cut. Two things were done to meet the \$1.3 million in service cuts. The end of the night service for fixed route was changed from midnight to eleven p.m. and a reduction in service hours for paratransit. Those two changes equate to about \$1.3 million.
- c) **Introduction of the New RATP Dev, USA Staff:**
 - a. Ms. Andrea Ingram, HR Generalist
 - b. Mrs. Zavia Halliday, Recruiter
- d) **Special Recognition of Employees of the:**
 - a. Mrs. Jackie Settle-Over Forty
 - b. Brandee Searcy-Employee of the month
- e) Board Vision-Tabled due to time and room temperature.

To request a hard copy of any of the documents, reports, data, etc. mentioned in the minutes for the February 27, 2025, WSTA Board Meeting, please contact: Teika Holloway at 336.793.3294 or teika.holloway@ratpdev.com

The meeting adjourned: 5:03 p.m.
Transcribed by: Teika Holloway
May 2025