

SPECIAL SORTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH, 2019 – 5:00 P.M.
SORTA/METRO BOARD ROOM
602 MAIN STREET, SUITE 1100
CINCINNATI, OHIO

General Items:

Call to order
Pledge of Allegiance
Recite SORTA's Vision and Mission Statement
Hearings from citizens (*3 minutes per person*)

Action Items:

1. Proposed Resolution No. 2019-25: Authorizing the Levy of a Sales and Use Tax for the Purpose of Providing General Revenue for the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (**Kreg Keesee**)

Other Items:

New Business

Adjournment

The next regular meeting of the SORTA Board of Trustees is scheduled for
Tuesday, October 8th, 2019, 8:00 A.M., the SORTA/Metro Board Room,
602 Main Street, Suite 1100, Cincinnati, Ohio

The SORTA Board of Trustees may go into Executive "Closed" Session under the Ohio Open Meetings Act:

Section 121.22(G)(1) To consider appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee...; Section 121.22(G)(2) To consider the purchase of property for public purposes....; Section 121.22(G)(3) Conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action; Section 121.22(G)(4) Preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees..., Section 121.22(G)(5) Matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or regulations or stat statutes; Section 121.22(G)(6) Details relative to the security arrangements and emergency response protocols for a public body or a public office; Section 121.22(G)(8) To consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets...

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SOUTHWEST OHIO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. 2019-25

AUTHORIZING THE LEVY OF A SALES AND USE TAX FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING
GENERAL REVENUE FOR THE SOUTHWEST OHIO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS:

1. Our public transit system is at an important crossroad, and the choice SORTA makes will impact many of the most important initiatives currently underway in our region; and
2. Affordable and frequent public transportation is critical to the fabric of our community and will support efforts to reduce child poverty and connect Hamilton County residents to jobs, education and health care; and
3. Frequent and reliable public transportation is increasingly critical to our region's economic development efforts to compete in attracting new businesses to the region and support the growth of our existing businesses; and
4. A strong public transportation system will serve as the backbone of a network of options that will enhance the region's attractiveness to a pool of talent that increasingly demands multiple modes of transportation to experience all that Hamilton County has to offer; and
5. Investment in transit will improve on the public health disparities across Hamilton County and promote equitable and healthy outcomes for residents; and
6. Expanding access to public transportation will further enhance the Cincinnati region's standing as a leader in advancing sustainability; and
7. Quality transportation provides seniors and people with disabilities freedom to continue to engage with their community and access education and employment independently; and
8. SORTA convened the Metro Futures Taskforce, made up of representatives from across the community, which make six key findings and six recommendations that are being implemented in whole or in part by this Board; and
9. A review conducted by EY and in partnership with the business community confirmed the \$184M operating and capital deficit that SORTA faces over the next ten years and benchmarked SORTA's operational efficiency favorably among peer transit authorities; and
10. SORTA's ridership has fallen by more than 3 million rides over the last five years, a drop of more than four percent over the five year period due to dwindling resources that have necessitated cuts to frequency, span, and service, making it harder and harder for our customers to get where they need to go; and
11. SORTA has conducted and participated in community conversations over the past three years with bus riders, local businesses, community and town councils, civic associations, and

countless individuals to ensure that the Reinventing Metro plan meets the needs of the community we serve; and

12. Through more than three years of engagement with AECOM, a global engineering firm, SORTA has developed the Reinventing Metro plan to expand its bus system; and

13. The Reinventing Metro plan calls for eight new crosstown routes, 24 hour service on six major routes, fifteen minute or better frequencies and longer service hours on more than half of the routes, improved weekend service, bus rapid transit, and expanded Access service for seniors and people with disabilities; and

14. The state of local roads and bridges that SORTA's bus system operates on continues to deteriorate as municipalities and townships continue to grapple with tighter budgets; and

15. A recent analysis conducted by Stantec and commissioned by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber identified more than \$1B worth of road, bridge, sidewalk and other infrastructure projects that overlap with our bus system and are in need of maintenance, repair or replacement; and

16. The SORTA board endorsed Issue 22, the repeal of the City of Cincinnati's 0.3% earnings tax dedicated to transit contingent on a County- wide sales tax for transit being passed in 2020.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

17. That the Board of Trustees endorses and supports a 0.8% sales tax plan that would raise \$130-135MM annually and fully fund the Reinventing Metro plan and dedicate 25% of the levy funds to maintain and improve infrastructure in Hamilton County, our service area; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

18. That it is the intent of the Board to place this sales tax levy before voters to support this plan in the primary election of 2020 and no later than the general election of 2020; and

19. That the growth in SORTA's service laid out in the Reinventing Metro Plan (approved unanimously in January 2018) will be accompanied by an expansion of Metro's Access service, expanding our ability to provide improved service for seniors and people with disabilities; and

20. SORTA, in accordance with state law, will partner with the Public Works Integrating Committee to evaluate all infrastructure projects to ensure equitable distribution of funds across Hamilton County; and

21. SORTA reaffirms its commitment to seeking long-term opportunities to enhance access to transit across the entire Greater Cincinnati region by creating direct relationships with peer transit authorities such as TANK, BCRTA and CTC and elected and community leaders across the eight-county region to connect people to jobs, education, and health care in the most efficient and affordable way possible no matter where they are trying to go; and

22. SORTA will maintain its policy that no tax dollars or resources are expended on the operations or maintenance of the Cincinnati streetcar and will work to finalize the transfer of operations to the City of Cincinnati by 12/31/2019; and

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SOUTHWEST OHIO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MOTION

APPROVAL TO PREPARE BALLOT LANGUAGE

I move that the SORTA Board of Trustees directs the Interim CEO/General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer and staff to prepare ballot language for the ballot initiative to present at the November 19th, 2019 SORTA Board meeting.

MOVED BY: Kreg Keesee SECOND BY: Rod Hinton

VOTE Aye: Ms. Black, Mr. Brown, Mr. Cull, Mr. Ethridge, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Harris, Mr. Hoffmeister, Mr. McLinden, Ms. Miller, Ms. Robinson, and Ms. Wyenandt

Nay: None

Abstain: None

ABSENT AT THE TIME: None

APPROVED: September 30th, 2019

September 2019

BRIEFING ITEM- BALLOT PROCESS

STEPS:

1. SORTA Board must approve a resolution requesting a ballot initiative.
2. The Secretary-Treasurer will submit a signed Certification of Resolution with the board approved resolution of the SORTA Board of Trustees to Hamilton County Board of Elections by December 4th, 2019.
 - Note: The official deadline to the Hamilton County Board of Elections is December 18th, 2019— 90 days prior Election Day.
3. SORTA will receive a certified letter from Hamilton County Board of Elections.
4. SORTA must submit a letter to Ohio Department of Taxation with the board approved resolution and ballot language from Hamilton County Board of Elections.
5. SORTA will send a Notice of Election to media outlets in the Cincinnati area one month prior Election Day.
6. Election Day will take place on Tuesday, March 17th, 2020.

SUBMITTED BY:



Darryl Haley
Interim CEO/General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer