



Minutes of the Gulf Coast Rail District Board Meeting – December 12, 2023

A meeting of the Gulf Coast Rail District Board of Directors was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at Houston TranStar and via video conference. In attendance at the meeting were Directors Angelique Bartholomew, Ronald A. Beeson, Stephen Gilbreath, Veronica Chapa Gorczynski, Kendrick Jones, Jon Keeney, Carol Abel Lewis, Robert Maldonado, Jr., Bruce Mann, and Jean Mann. Absent were Directors Robert A. Fry, Jr., Allen Owen, and Jeff E. Ross. Written notices of the meeting including the date, hour, place and agenda for the meeting were posted with Harris County, with the Secretary of State, and at the Gulf Coast Rail District office located at Houston TranStar in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. The inaudible portions of the recording were removed from these minutes.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: We will happily call ourselves to order today (2:00 p.m.). We have quorum, so we're delighted for all of you who are in the room, as well as those who are joining us via the web. Thank you. So, I am Dr. Carol Lewis, presiding officer of the Gulf Coast Rail District. I'm going to call our meeting to order. It's December 12, 2023. Today's meeting is being conducted with options to participate in person or by video conference. The meeting is located at Houston TranStar, 6922 Katy Road, Houston, Texas. We are in Briefing Room 216. The video conference is conducted through Microsoft Teams. That link can be found in the meeting invitations, the agenda, and in our public postings. Our meeting is open to the public. The public has the opportunity to address the board during the public comments period with a limit of three minutes per speaker. If you wish to address the board, please just lift your hand and we will acknowledge you. Board members may participate by video conference in accordance with provisions of section 551.127 of the Texas Government Code applicable to a governmental body that extends into three or more counties. Based on Open Meetings Act requirements, Gulf Coast Rail District Board members participating in the Microsoft Teams will need to be seen and heard throughout the meeting for attendance and to record votes. Therefore, members calling in via telephone will not count for quorum or voting. As required, I'm physically present for the board meeting and ask Director Keeney if he will conduct the roll call for us.

Director Jon Keeney: I'll be glad to. Ronald Beeson?

Director Ronald Beeson: I am on virtually.

Director Jon Keeney: Thank you, sir. Robert Maldonado? No.

Director Jon Keeney: Veronica Chapa Gorczynski?

Director Veronica Chapa Gorczynski: Hi, present. Good afternoon.

Director Jon Keeney: Thank you. Stephen Gilbreath?

Director Stephen Gilbreath: I am here.

Director Jon Keeney: Thank you. Jeff E. Ross?
Chairperson Carol Lewis: He's not here.
Director Jon Keeney: No.

Director Jon Keeney: Carol Lewis?
Chairperson Carol Lewis: I am here.

Director Jon Keeney: Excellent. I'm here, I think.

Director Jon Keeney: Bruce Mann?
Director Bruce Mann: Present, thank you.

Director Jon Keeney: Angelique Bartholomew?
Director Angelique Bartholomew: I'm present.

Director Jon Keeney: Thank you. Allen Owen? Nope. Kendric Jones? Nope.

Director Keeney: Jean Mann?
Director Jean Mann: Here.

Director Jon Keeney: Thank you. Robert Fry? Nope.

Director Jon Keeney: And let's see who came in late. Mr. Maldonado?
Director Robert Maldonado, Jr.: Here, here.

Director Jon Keeney: Excellent, thank you, got you. We do have a quorum, Madam Chair.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright. Thank you so much for that. I would like to confirm that we did have the meeting posted as of Friday, Ms. Patke, correct?

Ms. Lisa Patke: Yes.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: In compliance with the Open Meetings Act. We will now go back to Director Keeney for discussion and possible action on our November 14th minutes.

Director Jon Keeney: Do we have any corrections or additions to our minutes of November 14?
Hearing none, all those in favor?

Board: Aye.

Director Jon Keeney: Any opposed? It's unanimous, Madam Chair.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright, wonderful, thank you for that.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: I would like to ask for a report from Mr. Banos, please, to let us know what's going on.

Mr. David Banos: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is David Banos and I'm giving you the bookkeeper's report. Bookkeeping report dated for today. Past the cover page, you have a cash flow for your checking account, beginning balance \$107,324. We do have one check listed here, 2684; however, we do have two additional checks on this report. They were received after we had advanced out the report last Friday—2685, that's for Municipal Accounts for \$641.80 and

also check 2686, that's for Transportation Advocacy Group for \$700. Those checks will be reflected on next month's report. Ending balance on this account minus those checks not included, it's \$107,227.74. Yes?

Chairperson Carol Lewis: I'm sorry. Have you completed?

Mr. David Banos: No, not yet.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Please complete, we'll hold the hand until later. Go ahead, please. Please complete.

Mr. David Banos: Account balances for the District show a grand total of \$1,518,565. The next couple pages, page four is the actual versus budget, and this is for the month of November 2023, and also your cumulative for the year on the far right-hand side. Actually, second from the left. Next page is the same report, and this is for your grant and professional contract services and in-kind pro bono items. And the balance of my report is the grant status report, which has not changed since we presented it last month. That's all I have. Let me know if you have any questions.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright. Are there any questions for Mr. Banos? Okay. Seeing none, we will advance.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Let me see if there's a motion for item number six to ratify payments, Resolution 23-24.

Director Bruce Mann: So moved, Bruce Mann.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay, Mann. Is there a second?

Director Veronica Chapa Gorczynski: Second, Chapa Gorczynski.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Thank you. All in favor?

Board: Aye.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Any opposed? Alright, thank you. That motion carries. Thank you so much, Mr. Banos. Most appreciated.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: We will now go to our public comment section. Mr. Mazoch is in the room as well as... Could you introduce yourself?

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: Joseph Tijerina.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Joseph...?

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: Tijerina.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Tijerina, thank you.

Ms. Lisa Patke: Before you move to that, I just want to note that Kendrick Jones has joined us online virtually.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Perfect, thank you so much for that. Mr. Mazoch, would you like to have comment?

Mr. Dominic Mazoch: Yes, I know I have three minutes starting now. A couple questions. Last month at the METRO board meeting, the board of directors—I could be wrong on this, but if memory serves me right—decided to go from having an ex officio on this body to having a full-fledged person representing the board on this group. I know you can't snap fingers and make things go next day, I understand that, but is there going to be a timeline when that change will come up? Are we getting any reports from the Surface Transportation Board about rail congestion because of the Canadian Pacific Kansas City merger? Why to me that's a concern is, since now CPKC has a straight-line shot from Mexico all the way to Canada, some traffic which was being diverted to the Union Pacific at Laredo and coming up the I-35 rail line corridors – well, guess what? You know where that will traffic end up? Right here, it's like right here. We all know our Houston Terminal was already... has always been behind the curve for a long period of time, even when Southern Pacific had equal majority, this area has always had bad rail congestion. And lastly, railroads are private property, I understand that, but maybe building something like the Alameda Trench that bypassed a bunch of rail crossings and grade separated a lot of good things. We can't do it here because, number one, the expense; number two, the cost. Elevating the lines is also a cost and an individual thing. Maybe with this group HART, the railroad, H-GAC, maybe we need to start to encourage the railroads at these outer yards, like up the corridor, we have Lloyd Yard, maybe on Kansas City, I mean Canadian Pacific Kansas City down at Rosharon, Glidden on the UP, so on and so forth, where if the terminal here in Houston can't take the train, they would have a yard where a train could wait, and the train could not enter the Houston Terminal unless there was room for it. With that, I have no other comments, I'm sending it back to you, Chairman. Thank you.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright, thank you. Mr. Tijerina, we'd like to ask you if you'd have a comment, and then we will acknowledge Ms. Williams online.

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: Say that last part again.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: We're asking as a member of the public who's at the meeting would you like to have comment to the board.

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: I concur with this guy.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay, alright. Ms. Williams?

Ms. Lindsay Williams: Hi, my name is Lindsay Williams and I'm the president of the Eastwood Civic Association. Thank you always for letting me attend and letting me speak today. Residents continue to express deep concern for the trains stopping and blocking intersections in the East End. Notably, there have been two blocks in the last two weeks impacting children walking to Lantrip Elementary and people walking to public transport on the Green Line located on Harrisburg. At a recent Super Neighborhood meeting, the Center for Pursuit, an organization located on Harrisburg, has also expressed concern for the welfare of special needs residents living in their facility who have to be transported by ambulance if they get stopped walking in the neighborhood and can't get back to the center safely. So, I'm just here to continue advocating for residents in the East End and amplifying their voice. So, thank you again for letting me say hello and being here today.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Thank you very much. Is there anyone else who is representing the public who wishes to have comment? Okay, Mr. Tijerina, now you'd like to?

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: I'd like to concur with this woman because I live in the same neighborhood she does.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay, alright, so we will note your concurrence on both speakers. Alright, is there anyone else? Alright, thank you. If not, we'll go on to item eight, where we'll discuss and hopefully act on our budget for the 2024 fiscal year. If you look in your packet, the page is there, I think it's page 30 in your packet. I would call a couple things to your attention as we go through the budget. The first is that you will note anticipated income from each of our member entities, the invoices have gone out this month, so we will be looking forward to that income. You'll notice a difference from \$137,884 and some change with our actual 2023 to our proposed budget of \$238,000. As you continue down the column, you'll notice that the funds that had been set aside for West Belt will go away because that will be reflected in the City's budget because they were the awardee for the grant we got from the Biden Infrastructure Plan for those grade separations on the east side of town. So, those will come off of our books and go to theirs. The other thing you see there is the City of Houston in-kind contribution which covers our executive director, and then they host our web domain, so that's what you see there as well. Under the expenses, you did receive the packet so I'm sure people have sort of looked at it, but the two things I'll point out are the money for our project manager which we approved last April, and so that person will come on as of January 2nd. Ms. Parker will elaborate on her report later on in the meeting. And then the other thing you see is the money for the social media consultant which will go up from the \$17,750 to what Ms. Parker is authorized for, not to exceed the \$25,000. So, we'll have a little bit more conversation about that both now, if you'd like to as we talk about the budget, and on item nine when we authorize our social media consultant. So, those are the items that I think I would call your attention to and see if there's any discussion about that budget. Questions, comments, thoughts?

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: I have a question.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Only the board at this time.

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: Oh, I'm sorry.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Thank you.

Mr. Joseph Tijerina: Pardon me.

Director Jon Keeney: Looks reasonable.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright, well if there is nothing additional, we would love a motion and we'll vote on that item.

Director Jon Keeney: Move to accept.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay, Keeney.

Director Angelique Bartholomew: Second.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Second, Bartholomew. All in favor?

Board: Aye.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Any opposed? Alright, great, thank you. That passes. We're going to look forward to an exciting 2024 with the things we have planned and continuing items we began this year.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: The next item we have is number nine, discussion and possible action on Resolution 23-26 authorizing executive director to negotiate a contract for the social media consultant. We had conversation about this, I guess, deep conversation two meetings ago. There were follow-up actions, including a survey of you all, and our team led by Director Bartholomew has made a recommendation. I'll ask her at this point if she'd like to summarize where we're going forward and a little bit about the contract, and then we would advance that for your vote.

Director Angelique Bartholomew: For the most part, we engaged in an RFQ with regard to qualifications for media and marketing to really review the opportunities to have a broader audience and to really solidify our presence in the market through what is today the only other option, and that's through Social Media and Marketing. So, our contract was shared, it was negotiated. We asked for a best and final, and our consultant came down, I believe, a couple of hundred dollars, and we are really excited to be able to engage her at this time, especially going into the new year with branding and opportunity to video and everything that will bring us into the current. So, thank you so much for passing that. I think we've got a very skilled consultant on board. And thanks for your survey. It was an anonymous survey and that allowed us to kind of stay out of it, so it was good.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Wonderful.

Director Angelique Bartholomew: That's it.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Jean Mann.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Director Mann, online. Yes. Can you help, Lisa? We can't hear her yet.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Still on mute.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Just a minute. You're still on mute. See if Lisa can help with that. I don't know if she can unmute you.

Director Jean Mann: Sorry.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: It's okay.

Director Jean Mann: Sorry.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright.

Director Jean Mann: I don't know that I got the survey, but I just have a couple of questions about the contract. When you say the videos and all that, is this company going to create the content, meaning the graphics, the videos, all of it for this price?

Director Angelique Bartholomew: Yes, the social media content. The contract was actually shared, and I can actually share the response with you so that you're able to look through the steps and the phases of work that will begin, and the milestones so that you'll understand at what phases, what will be done, and how our input will be taken to develop the content and curate video that we will be able to use throughout the process.

Director Jean Mann: Okay. I saw the contract but what wasn't clear is what social media platforms are they going to be on?

Director Angelique Bartholomew: I'll share her agreement. She selected, I believe we have both Facebook, Twitter, and the option of Instagram, but they chose three social media outlets, both vendors, but that will be shared with us and discussed with the board prior to executing because we don't currently have a social media presence at all.

Director Jean Mann: Oh, interesting. Okay.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright, thank you. Director Maldonado?

Director Robert Maldonado, Jr.: I got a question, Ms. Bartholomew. What happens after the six months? It's a six-month contract, is that right?

Director Angelique Bartholomew: Yes. So, this will allow us to ramp up the social media and then we are able to solicit for additional monitoring and continuing to post and posting. So, you usually bring on, after you've established the presence and the branding and develop the following, you bring on a compliance or a content developer to put it really in software, and it spits out the content that you've developed. So, hopefully that can come on board afterwards. I don't really have a range for that, but you do want to continue to have that presence in posting and following. But this puts us out there.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: So, point being, we would be at a point at which we would make a decision about where we would proceed after at the end of six months.

Director Jon Keeney: If we like it, don't like it.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Exactly.

Director Angelique Bartholomew: Yes.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Exactly.

Director Jon Keeney: Good job.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Anyone else? Okay, if not, can we have a motion?

Director Jon Keeney: Move to accept.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright.

Director Angelique Bartholomew: I second.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Keeney and Bartholomew. Alright, thank you. All in favor?

Board: Aye.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay, any opposed? Wonderful. We thank our Marketing Committee led by Director Bartholomew for taking us to this point. I think we're going to be excited about it because we, GCRD, we do a lot, and we've made a lot of advancements, and we're not known enough in the community. We need to really increase that, especially as we're going forward with things that we want to do with THE HART plus our other corridor work that we're doing. So, thank you very much. Most appreciated. I think this is something we're really going to be happy with.

Director Jon Keeney: I agree.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright, wonderful. So, now we are on to item 10, report from Executive Director Parker. So, I'm going to tell you, I'm laughing because you know our minutes are verbatim. So, if they weren't, one would take out the wonderful, right?

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright, Ms. Parker.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Thank you so much. Good afternoon to everyone. First, let me say thank you to all the committees. This year you've done excellent work. It's made my job a little easier to be able to push forward our efforts here at the Rail District, and so we're excited about moving forward.

I have a short piece on today. Next slide, please, Lisa. Our project manager selection is one of the two things we're talking about today with social media consultant, the other is project manager. We're glad to have Barbara Koslov with us. She has a wealth of knowledge—40 years plus experience in the transportation industry. She's agreed to be our project manager going forward. We will start that contract in January. So, you see her experience there, and I just pulled out snippets, really. She served as the past transportation director for Judge Emmett, the past BayTran executive director, worked for METRO. She's worked for various consulting firms, participated on task forces and committees all related to transportation and freight. So, she will be a great asset to us, and thank you all so much for approving that position to help me kind of run on a little bit longer, I'm grateful for the help. Any questions on that for project manager?

Director Jon Keeney: It's good news.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Thank you so much. Our next slide has to do with the concurrent ordinance, and Mr. Mazoch made reference to that in his comments. Yes, these bullets represent our update, and I'll kind of bring you up to speed. The third concurrent ordinance is... anytime there's a change to the Rail District's chapter, we have to go back to our member entities to make this change.

Mr. Dominic Mazoch: Okay, okay. I knew there was something.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Mr. Mazoch, I know you couldn't help it, but public comments are past us already.

Ms. Katherine Parker: So, I'm helping him to kind of bring him up to speed. So, we're removing METRO as ex officio member and seeking the addition of them as a full board member. And so, Lisa, if you can click to that next slide, that's METRO's resolution that was approved at their November board meeting. That includes them becoming a full board member and the annual payment as a part of the fee structure that we discussed for all of our member entities. So, from that standpoint, what's on my plate next is to work with each of the member entities to sign their piece of this ordinance. Galveston and Waller have done that already, so the City of Houston will be last. Fort Bend, Harris, and Montgomery – Fort Bend and Harris have it on their next Commissioners Court, and we'll see about Montgomery whether they'll have it on there. I've been working with this for a while, and they have been waiting on us. So, I've asked them to do a last-minute hurl for their last Commissioners Court meeting, to put it on the agenda, and some of them have been able to do that, others may not be because this is the closeout of the year. I

appreciate their patience, but we're very close. Once all those documents come in, then the City of Houston will package it with the mayor's signature as the last, and then that becomes a change to our concurrent ordinance and will go out to each of the member entities.

So, that first change, like I said, is METRO. The second change, if you'll go back to the original slide, is the update of the SB1990 legislation that changed and added on advanced transportation options. Basically, from the '87 legislature, we added it to our toolbox. Then some cosmetic changes. We're updating Galveston Transit District to Gulf Coast Transit District, who has a seat on our board as ex officio. And then lastly, the designated appointee to the Port of Houston in the past has been the chairman. So, we were able to make that change so that we can have an appointee, who Director Mann serves as that appointee from the Port of Houston, so it does not require that the chairman be that appointee. So, those are the changes that will happen and will be approved by each of our member entities to bring this up to speed as far as the concurrent ordinance.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Katherine, I was going to say ask for any questions.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Any questions or concerns on that? It's been on our docket for a minute, so I wanted to refresh your memory.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: So, I would like to say that I really appreciate it. I think you probably do recognize how much Katherine has been carrying as the single person with all of the items that we have on the table, and over the year with THE HART, the intensity has increased much. So, we're very excited about her getting some support. You know what that means, it means that everybody will do more. It doesn't mean that Katherine will do less, it means that everybody will do more. Sorry about that, you all, but I like truth. So, we're really excited about that. I want to thank all of our member entities for helping us move forward with the METRO designation. We've been working on that probably about a year. A lot of things happened before it could actually layer into place. So, I'll just tell you from their standpoint, they wanted us to approve the fee structure before they signed on. So, when we got that done in August, then that allowed their wheels to start turning. And so, as Ms. Parker said, we had the City and all of the counties primed the whole time. So, it's one of those things, you've got them primed and now the trigger is pulled, so now you're trying to get on everyone's agenda again before December 31st. So, thanks to everyone. We're really excited about METRO coming on in that way, and again, lots happening that I think fares well for our GCRD board moving forward. We're going to be really looking forward to getting a lot done by the time we sit here in December 2024. Alright. Anyone else on those items that Ms. Parker's presented thus far?

Director Bruce Mann: I'll just echo what you said. Setting up THE HART has been a lot, and I know you have worked a lot on it, and we've come a long way in a very short time. I just publicly want to say great job. You've done a lot of work. It's taken a lot of work by a lot of folks. We wouldn't be as far as we are without your work in that, so thank you.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate all the help.

Director Bruce Mann: Wonderful!

Ms. Katherine Parker: That'll be on there verbatim.

Director Bruce Mann: That's going to be in the minutes now.

Ms. Katherine Parker: And just really having willing partners really makes the difference. That's great.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Great. Alright, thank you.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Anybody else? Alright. And my last piece is the Annual Report Strategic Plan, and I will send this out actually to each of the board members. I just wanted you all to see that our web designer is working on it. I asked that she get it to me for this last board meeting. So, the Strategic Plan Group, I would like for you all to read through that before I send it out. You can click to the next. But the annual report, as you know, represents 2023 basically in review. So, we've gone through and talked about the RCE, we've talked about the West Belt, we talked about our priorities, and there's also a list of our new board. So, that will be information that you can take back to your respective entities, so they know what we've done for the past year. And then also the strategic plan gives us our five-year goals and outcomes. Also, the map that we had discussed is a part of that document as well. So, I'll send that out definitely before the end of the year, but I would like for the group that worked on the strategic plan first to put your eyes on it then I'll send it out. But I wanted to have you all see this before the end of the year.

Director Jon Keeney: Great, thank you.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: So, about the strategic plan, I want to thank Director Gilbreath for the patience of going through, I don't know, probably six iterations of that map. He was so patient and thank you.

Director Stephen Gilbreath: You're welcome.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Because honestly, the first four were us tweaking, and then at the end... I'll just tell the truth. Director Ross came back from wherever he had been and looked at it. He made a lot of corrections, and he was right on a lot of points he made. He was 100% right. I don't know why I hadn't seen it. I thought we were through, Director Gilbreath, and then we had to go back one more time. So, he was most gracious in going through all those iterations with us. And so we look forward to you all seeing what we will have on that as soon as we kind of go through the final sort of dotting I's and crossing T's. Director Keeney was a real impetus in us getting moving on that strategic plan. He got on the board, and he said, "Well, where's your strategic plan?" And so it was like, "Well, it's in Ms. Parker's and my head," which was not a good answer. So, we sat down, Director Mann as well, and got all of that on paper. So, I think we had pieces of it in different places, but it wasn't aggregated into a single place. So, most appreciative of this board and all of your contributions to helping us move forward and taking us to that next step. So, we're looking forward to you all seeing both of these items.

The annual plan, as Ms. Parker said, number one, it will be online and a part of what we present in our social media pages as well as the strategic plan. But then also it's something that you can have with people you talk to in your own organizations and entities that you represent to make them aware of what we've done. Because no matter what's on social media, I'm really kind of struck and remember that when we had Hurricane Rita, it's been a long time now, almost 25 years, in 2005, A&M did a report and they surveyed what made people leave and it was

watching their neighbors and talking to their neighbors. So, no matter what we put on the news or the media, the most important representation we have is ourselves. So, the more tools we give you in spreading the word, the better off I think our organization will be. So, thank you for that. Alright. Well, that's all of Ms. Parker's report. I'm delighted to be joined in the room by Director Jones and appreciate him. Really, I know that it's not easy for him to get to the meetings from Waller County, but really appreciate it.

Director Kendric Jones: If you could put rail or something right here in this area... No, I'm joking.

Director Kendric Jones: But it's always this last stretch.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: The last little piece.

Director Kendric Jones: Yes.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay, well, that'll give us something to work on.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: So, now we're on to item 11, announcements from me. The first thing is the extension of Westpark. That's what 1093 means, the extension of Westpark. I will make a point that tomorrow, the Transportation Advocacy Group, December 13th, is hosting a press conference—it's at three o'clock. They will be bringing forth at that press conference attention to the Memorandum of Understanding that's been signed by Fort Bend County, METRO, Harris County about that corridor extension. So, that's going to happen tomorrow afternoon at 3:00. So, again, make you aware of that. The other item listed here is the next meeting. It's listed as January 9th, but Ms. Parker brought to my attention that neither she nor I will be here. We'll both be at the Transportation Research Board Conference Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., and I suspect Tyson Moeller. Will you be there too?

Mr. Tyson Moeller: Yes.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: So, a number of us will be in Washington, D.C. on January 9th at TRB we call it—Transportation Research Board. So, we will have to do something else that day. We talked about whether we would try to delay the meeting a week. That's always difficult because it's hard to get a quorum when we're not on our regular day. So, Ms. Patke, we might flesh it around and see if we do think we can get a quorum a week later. If not, we will probably just delay and come back in February. We won't try a lot of dates. In other words, we'll see if we can do the following Tuesday. If it doesn't work, then we'll just wait until the second Tuesday in February. So, that's it for me. I don't know if anyone else has any questions, comments, or anything for the good of the order before we dismiss for today, but I wish everyone a wonderful—that's one of my words—holiday season, whatever you celebrate—Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, anything else. Enjoy. Be safe with your families. Have a great New Year—New Year's Eve and new year coming, and we look forward to seeing all of you back when we get back in 2024. Commissioner... not Commissioner, Director... Well, you're both a commissioner and a director, so that worked.

Director Kendric Jones: Either one is fine. Not to damper the mood. Waller County does think right now it is a great thing that METRO will be coming on board, but some surrounding

counties called and were concerned about that, not wanting METRO to bully smaller areas that are represented upon this board in the future for the high-speed rail.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay.

Director Kendric Jones: Keeping that in mind.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright, so appreciate that point being made. Anyone else? Okay.

Director Bruce Mann: Motion to adjourn.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Okay, motion to adjourn.

Director Angelique Bartholomew: Second.

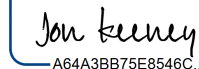
Chairperson Carol Lewis: Second, Bartholomew. Alright. All in favor, yea?

Board: Aye.

Chairperson Carol Lewis: Alright. We are adjourned (2:36 p.m.)

ATTEST:

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Jon Keeney, Secretary
Gulf Coast Rail District

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