

Public Hearing Procedures for The River Parishes Transit Authority (RPTA) - Revised March 2026

The RPTA will use the following procedures to obtain, record, and incorporate comments obtained in a public forum as dictated by federal protocol in the event of that recommended service changes warrant. Depending on the type and extent of the proposed changes, the RPTA will advertise a public hearing. In addition, the RPTA will include a public comment period during its monthly regularly scheduled Board meetings, as per procedure.

The RPTA Board will meet at 10 a.m. on the second Thursday of every month at the St. John the Baptist Council Chambers, unless otherwise advertised.

The RPTA Board meetings are advertised in L'Observateur and/or the RPTA website (www.rptarolls.org) prior to the regularly scheduled monthly meetings as are the approved meeting minutes which include the next meeting date. The RPTA website will include a public hearing schedule accompanied by announcements of all major or minor service changes under consideration.

I. Fare Increases or Major Service Changes -- Public Hearing Requirements

A major service change constitutes: 1) a fare increase; 2) reducing or increasing overall service provided by more than 10%; or 3) making schedule changes that comprise more than 25% of all RPTA service provided. When it is necessary to implement a major service change, a special public hearing will be called and advertised ten days in advance.

II. Minor Service Changes -- Public Comment Period at RPTA Meetings

The RPTA will review all minor service changes in a public forum at the monthly Board meetings. All changes that do not meet the definition of a major service increase or fare increase will be considered to be minor service changes. Minor service changes will not require a public hearing process, but must be reviewed and approved by the RPTA at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. Any request for minor service changes will be announced at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, and related changes will be posted on the RPTA website and on the vehicles.

Fare decreases, service increases, or special fares that are considered minor service changes will be announced at the RPTA meetings. The RPTA will hear public comment on these changes as part of their regularly scheduled RPTA meetings.

III. Emergency Changes -- Public Hearing Requirements

In the event of an emergency that makes it necessary for the RPTA to act quickly and implement changes without a public hearing or public comment period advertised ten days in advance, the RPTA Board Chairperson will confer with the other members of the Board by phone to implement the following emergency procedures. Such emergencies will include an immediate need to address an unforeseen budgetary crisis.

- Review the emergency changes with the RPTA and obtain approval.

- At least ten days prior to the proposed changes, the RPTA will announce the proposed emergency changes along with the option of a public hearing to the public by placing notices on all vehicles, sending public service announcements to St. John the Baptist and St. Charles Parishes' Public Information Departments, requesting public announcement of emergency changes by the local newspapers, and placing one ad in the major local newspaper (official journal).
- The RPTA will hold a public hearing only if it receives substantial feedback from the public and the public demonstrates a significant interest in holding a public hearing.
- If there is no upcoming required public hearing, the board can implement the emergency changes following the ten day public notification requirement.

IV. Annual Public Hearings

There will be no regularly scheduled public hearings, unless one is required to comply with federal procedure.

V. Public Notification Procedures for RPTA Public Hearings

For public hearings required in Sections I, II, III or IV above, the RPTA will notify the public as follows:

- Run ads in the major local newspapers, L'Observateur and the St Charles Herald Guide, at least one time within the ten days preceding the meetings.
- Issue official press releases through St. John the Baptist and St. Charles Parishes' Public Information Departments.
- Post notices regarding the public hearings in every vehicle two weeks prior to the hearings. The telephone number of the RPTA office will also be posted with instructions to call if there are any questions.
- Post a public hearing notice on the RPTA website, www.rptarolls.org, at least two weeks before the hearings.

VI. Procedures for RPTA Public Hearings

- Public hearings shall be advertised a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the date of the scheduled public hearing date.
- At least one member of the Board shall be present for the conduct of public hearings.
- The Chairman, Vice Chairman or in their absence another member of the Board shall preside at the hearing.
- The presiding member of the Board shall call the public hearing to order at the prescribed time.
- A summary statement explaining the topic of the hearing shall be read after which the Chair shall open the floor for comments from the general public.
- Each speaker shall provide his or her name, address and name of agency or group being represented if appropriate, for the record.

- All speakers shall address the Chair and only one person shall be allowed to speak at a time.
- Comments shall be limited to those pertaining to the topic of the public hearing.
- Speakers shall not address others in the audience.
- Each speaker shall be allowed five minutes.
- Written comments on the matter shall be received for three (3) working days after the close of the public hearing.
- All comments received shall be taken under advisement and reviewed during the course of addressing the particular matter for which the hearing was called.
- A summary of comments shall be prepared and presented to the Board.