

# City of San Antonio



## Minutes Governance Committee 2023 – 2025 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg, Chair  
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6  
Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

10:00 AM

City Hall

The Governance Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Media Briefing Room at 10:04 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

**Members Present:** Ron Nirenberg, *Mayor, Chair*  
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*  
Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Member*  
Manny Pelaez, *Member*  
John Courage, *Member*

**Members Absent:** None

### Approval of Minutes

#### 1. Governance Committee Meeting on January 22, 2024.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of the January 22, 2024 Governance Committee meeting. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Courage  
**Absent:** Pelaez

### Briefing and Possible Action on

#### 2. Consideration of four Reappointments to the VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Trustees. [Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk]

Mayor Nirenberg introduced the Item and mentioned that all VIA Metropolitan Transit Board Members being considered were for reappointment. He noted that Javier Paredes was unable to attend the meeting, but had provided a written statement.

The committee interviewed Athalie Malone, Laura Cabanilla and Melanie Tawil and thanked them for their service. A major concern from the Committee was expansion of public transit service, timely service, service to persons with disabilities, and shade at bus stops.

Mayor Nirenberg closed the interview process by commenting that the VIA Board was a strong governing team ready to implement the transit agency's plan.. He noted the failure of the street car initiative and loss of public confidence a dozen years ago. Mayor Nirenberg commented that there was a lot on the line for implementing the Advanced Rapid Transit (ART) and asked the board members to ensure that construction began this year to provide a strong foundation for the future of public transit. Mayor Nirenberg stated that the ART was the backbone of the system adding that Transit Oriented Development (TOD) would create momentum, but more community involvement was needed to move VIA to the future and build the rest of the system.

Mayor Nirenberg congratulated Catherine "Cat" Hernandez for her recent appointment as the City's Director of Transportation and encouraged VIA to include her in all discussions to ensure a strong relationship between the City and VIA. He expressed optimism for the future and supported the reappointment of all applicants.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if there were other applicants and inquired about the labor seat. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre reported that the City Clerk's Office had opened the applications to all including reappointments and it was recommended by the Mayor to interview those for reappointment. Mayor Nirenberg added that a recommendation for the labor seat was forthcoming from the Central Labor Council and would be brought to the Committee at a later date.

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 10:47 AM. to discuss the reappointment of the VIA Metropolitan Transit Board of Trustees pursuant to the Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (personnel matters), and to discuss related legal issues, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

Following Executive Session, Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 10:53 AM. and announced that no official action had been taken in Executive Session.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda moved to recommend and forward the reappointment of Laura Cabanilla, Javier Paredes and Melanie Aranda Tawil for the at-large seats and Athalie Malone for the Transportation Disadvantaged Representative seat on the VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Trustees.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda moved to Approve. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

**Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

**Approved**

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*Ron Nirenberg  
Mayor*

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**Debbie Racca-Sittre**  
*City Clerk*