



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 18, 2023
1:30 p.m.
269 Melrose Street, Providence
Transportation Board Room

Members Present: Normand Benoit, Board Chair; Robert Kells, Board Vice Chair; Michelle Wilcox, Board Treasurer; Patrick Crowley, Board Secretary; James Leach; and Heather Schey

Absent Members: Peter Alviti and Marcy Reyes

Also Present: Scott Avedisian, CEO; Edward Pare III, Esq., Board Counsel; Courtney Marciano, Senior Executive Officer; Chris Durand, Chief Financial Officer; Jamie Pereira, Chief of Security; Steven Colantuono, Chief Legal Counsel; Kathy Nadeau, Chief Human Resources Officer; members of RIPTA's staff; and members of the public.

Call to Order: Mr. Benoit called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m., indicating that quorum was present.

Agenda Item 1: **To Consider for Approval the Draft Regular Meeting Minutes of the December 14, 2022, Meeting.**

Ms. Wilcox makes a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2022, meeting. Mr. Crowley seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Kells; Mr. Leach; Ms. Schey; and Mr. Benoit.

Agenda Item 2: **CEO Report**

Scott Avedisian, RIPTA's CEO, presents the CEO report. Topics included in his update were:

1. RIPTA At a Glance
2. RIPTA In The News
3. Commendations

Lobbyist Contract Question:

- a. Mr. Crowley asked for explanation about the awarding of a lobbying contract for the Dorrance Street Development project, asking why the issue was not brought to the Boards attention prior to its awarding. CEO Avedisian responded that in hindsight the issue should have been brought before the board prior to the award but it was within his authority to make the decision. Chairman Benoit stated that Mr. Avedisian discussed the decision with him in advance and that he agreed

with it. Attorney Colantuono stated that the CEO's authority to make the decision was based on a 2014 law that was signed by then Governor Chafee.

Financial Update:

- a. Christopher Durand, RIPTA's Chief Financial Officer, reviews monthly financials for the Authority.

Agenda Item 3: Public Comment

1.) Barry Schiller:

- a. Expressed several concerns and updates regarding the fiscal challenges and climate change report:
 - i. Fiscal Challenges Ahead:
 2. The end of federal relief funds.
 3. The decline of the gas tax → need to find a way to replace the gas tax as soon as possible.
 4. The need to fund the Transit Master Plan expansion of service.
 - ii. Climate Change Challenges Addressed:
 2. Can't just count on electric vehicles to reduce greenhouse emissions.
 3. Board, RIPTA staff, unions need to take a more active role to support the Transit Master Plan that focuses on getting more people to use public transit.
 4. Suggests making buses free on Earth Day on Saturday, April 22, 2023.
 5. Per passenger carbon emission is much lower when using an electric bus vs. both fuel and electric cars.

2.) Patricia Raub:

- a. Board and RIPTA staff need to get off the financial cliff as soon as possible. Feels the Board needs to take a pro-active approach and be an active advocate for RIPTA.
- b. Please that the RIPTA staff was able to meet with Transit Riders to go over some of the financial obstacles.
- c. Congratulated RIPTA for the opening of the Pawtucket/Central Falls Transit Center.
- d. Excited to hear about the Rosa Parks Shelter project getting underway.
- e. Transit Equity Day (February 3rd) at 3pm in Kennedy Plaza. There will also be a walking tour of Kennedy Plaza that highlights some of its features and history.
- f. Looking forward to seeing bus shelters repaired. Sarah Ingle asked for a list of 10, but Patricia felt that wasn't possible since so many need attention. Suggested an "Adopt a Shelter" program.
- g. Thanked RIPTA for re-opening the customer service windows for bus pass processing both at Kennedy Plaza and Elmwood.

3.) Randal Rose:

- a. Expressed opposition to the relocation of the Kennedy Plaza hub to Dorrance Street.
- b. Questioned upper management's ability to oversee/make the project successful.
- c. Expressed feeling that riders haven't been adequately included in the conversation and that the Dorrance Street project is destined to be a disaster.
- d. Feels a temporary relocation of Kennedy Plaza would be disastrous to riders and would certainly result in service interruptions for riders.

Agenda Item 4: Request for Approval: Award of Newport Resilience Consulting Services

Sarah Ingle, Director of Long-Range Planning for RIPTA, presents the request.

Mr. Kells makes a motion to approve. Ms. Wilcox seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit; Mr. Leach; Mr. Kells; Ms. Schey; and Mr. Crowley.

Agenda Item 5: Request for Approval: Award of Long Range and Capital Planning On-Call Services

Sarah Ingle, Director of Long-Range Planning for RIPTA, presents the request.

Ms. Wilcox makes a motion to approve. Mr. Kells seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit; Mr. Leach; Ms. Schey; and Mr. Crowley.

Agenda Item 6: Request for Approval: Purchase of Driver Seats from Gillig

John Chadwick, Executive Director of Procurement for RIPTA, presents the request.

Ms. Wilcox makes a motion to approve. Mr. Kells seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit; Mr. Leach; Ms. Schey; and Mr. Crowley.

Agenda Item 7: Update/Discussion: P3 Project

John Chadwick, Executive Director of Procurement; Steven Colantuono, Chief Legal Officer; and Christopher Durand, Chief Financial Officer offer an update on the P3 project.

Agenda Item 8: Executive Session to consider, discuss and act upon such matters as may be closed to the public pursuant to: R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(5) pertaining to any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public; R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(7) pertaining to any matters related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest; and R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5 (a)(2) pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation.

Upon motion by Ms. Wilcox, which was seconded by Mr. Crowley, the following vote was adopted and passed with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit; Mr. Kells; Ms. Schey; Mr. Crowley; and Mr. Leach.

Voted: To enter into Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(5) pertaining to any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public; R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(7) pertaining to any matters related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would

adversely affect the public interest; and R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(2) to consider and discuss pending litigation and legal claims.

The Board, staff, and counsel entered executive session at 3:09p.m.

The Board, staff, and counsel exited public session at 3:20p.m.

Attorney Pare reports out (1) that during the Executive Session, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-4(b), the Board unanimously voted to keep all votes taken in Executive Session, except for the vote to adjourn Executive Session, sealed so as to not jeopardize any strategy or negotiation; and (2) that the Board unanimously voted to adjourn Executive Session and return to public session.

Ms. Wilcox makes a motion to seal the minutes of the executive session. Mr. Crowley seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit; Mr. Leach; Ms. Schey; and Mr. Kells.

Agenda Item 9: Adjournment – 3:25 p.m.

Mr. Crowley makes a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wilcox seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit; Ms. Schey; Mr. Leach; and Mr. Kells.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Crowley, Secretary