



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 17, 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; Heather Schey; and Marcy Reyes

Absent Members: Peter Alviti

Also Present: Scott Avedisian, CEO; Chris Fragomeni, 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 1:30 p.m., indicating that quorum was present.

Agenda Item 1: **To Consider for Approval the Draft Regular Meeting Minutes of the April 12, 2023 Meeting.**

Mr. Leach makes a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2023 meeting. Ms. Wilcox seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Crowley; Ms. Schey; Ms. Reyes; Mr. Kells; and Mr. Benoit.

Agenda Item 2: **Public Comment**

1. Michael Tillinghast:
 - a. Feels that the no fare bus pass pilot program should be extended. He believes that by expanding the bus pass program it will save tangible dollars for riders. Mr. Tillinghast believes that there is a way, if RIPTA and the state work together to find a funding source.
2. Patricia Raub:
 - a. Commends RIPTA for their work keeping Kennedy Plaza free of garbage and debris. Thinks the plaza is looking better and better.
 - b. Ms. Raub recognizes that there is more police presence in the Plaza. She would like to see them out, walking the Plaza more. Right now, Ms. Raub says that their presence is mostly in the substation or in their vehicles.
 - c. Expresses that the customer service window in Kennedy Plaza should be re-opened now that there is a significant police presence on scene.

3. Terri Wright:
 - a. Advocates for marginalized communities. First thanks RIPTA for their help launching the no fare pilot program, as well as the work the Agency did throughout the pandemic. Would like to see the pilot program continue because it makes a huge difference in the lives of those who need transportation the most.
4. Diana Gray:
 - a. She is 73 years old and has been riding RIPTA since she was 5 years old. RIPTA buses are essential to her community. She would like to see as many buses made free as possible- even if every bus and bus route cannot. The more free buses, the better for those who need them most.
5. Joe Cole:
 - a. Plans to ask Mr. Alviti to recuse himself from voting.
 - b. Appreciates the Executive Compensation Committee for suggesting a contract extension for Mr. Avedisian.
 - c. Mr. Cole expresses his concerns over the pending legislation that would combine RIPTA with RIDOT. The drivers do not want to become part of RIDOT.
 - d. Ridership is coming back to pre-pandemic levels; the R-Line is exploding; all transportation is doing so well that RIPTA could definitely use more service.
6. Randall Rose:
 - a. Continues to express his hesitation for the Dorrance Street Transit Center. Mr. Rose believes that he still does not have the answers he is looking for and believes the language in the RFP is flawed.
 - b. He believes that the current contract does not contain a guaranteed maximum price.
 - c. Mr. Rose expresses his concern over the use of the off-ramp.
 - d. Mr. Rose would like RIPTA to do more outreach with riders. Mr. Rose believes that most riders are against this move and that the Agency is moving forward despite what the community wants.
 - e. Mr. Rose states that the Dorrance Street Transit Center is a financial disaster waiting to happen.
7. Reverend Duane Clinker:
 - a. Would like to see the free-fare pilot program continue.
 - b. He and those who attend Matthewson Street Church believe the need is there to make ridership free.
 - c. Would like to see more no fare pilot bus passes handed out to those who need them and are verified through the church.
 - d. He would like and believes that Rhode Island could have the best bus system in the country.
8. William Bolen:
 - a. Mr. Bolen spoke about his personal experience and how having the ability to ride the bus for free would drastically change his life. Right now, he does not have a bus pass, but asked the Board to consider handing out more to those who are in need.
9. Robert Paolo:
 - a. A member of the Matthewson Street Church.
 - b. He does not qualify for other RIPTA programs.
 - c. Mr. Paolo struggles to get to work and doctors' appointments, but a free bus pass would be a game changer for him.
10. Joseph DeSousa:
 - a. Mr. DeSousa speaks on behalf of those who still need a no fare bus pass. He was able to get one at the beginning of the pilot and knows how important it is for people to get around.

- b. The passes are invaluable to those who use the bus to get to appointments, shelters, community meals, etc.
11. Peter Nightingale:
- a. Professor of Physics at the University of Rhode Island.
 - b. He works with the Poor People’s Campaign
 - c. Speaks about “Policy Murder” which is the result of the creation of circumstances that send people to the grave early
 - d. We all need to take a closer look at the implications of how not extending the free-fare program would negatively impact the most vulnerable in the community.

Agenda Item 3: 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
- 4. Financial Update:
 - a. Christopher Durand, RIPTA’s Chief Financial Officer, reviews and presents the monthly financials for the Authority.

Agenda Item 4: Renewal of Cyber Insurance Policy

James O’Brien, Claims Director for RIPTA, presents the request.

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

Agenda Item 5: Healthcare Stop Loss Renewal

Christopher Durand, Chief Financial Officer for RIPTA, presents the request.

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

Agenda Item 6: Line of Credit Renewal

Item is held.

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

Agenda Item 7: Presentation: Financial Plan Scenarios

Christopher Durand, Chief Financial Officer for RIPTA, makes the presentation on behalf of RIPTA.

Agenda Item 8: ADA Accessible Taxis IBF 23-11

Christopher Durand, Chief Financial Officer for RIPTA, presents the request.

Ms. Wilcox makes a motion to approve. Ms. Schey seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes

by Mr. Leach; Mr. Crowley; Mr. Benoit; Ms. Reyes; and Mr. Kells.

Mr. Crowley exits the meeting.

Agenda Item 9: CCRI Bus Stop Enhancement Project, Michael Baker International, Inc.

James Canty, Executive Director of Project Management and Jack Plouffe, Project Manager for RIPTA present the request.

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

Agenda Item 10: Hazardous Waste Management RFP 23-23

Peter Ginaitt, Environmental Health and Safety Officer for RIPTA, presents the request.

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

Agenda Item 11: Change Order 4 for Transit Signal Prioritization

James Canty, Executive Director of Project Management for RIPTA, presents the request.

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

Agenda Item 12: Summer Service Adjustments

Ed Brown, Director of Service Planning and Scheduling for RIPTA, makes the presentation on behalf of RIPTA.

Agenda Item 13: High-Capacity Transit Project

Sarah Ingle, Director of Long-Range Planning for RIPTA, makes the presentation on behalf of RIPTA.

Agenda Item 14: Resolution for Funding RIPTA

Christopher Durand, Chief Financial Officer for RIPTA, makes the presentation on behalf of RIPTA.

Agenda Item 15: 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)(2) sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation; and R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5 (a)(1) sessions pertaining to job performance.

Voted: 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)(2) pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation.

The Board, staff, and counsel entered executive session at 3:53 p.m.

The Board, staff, and counsel exited public session at 4:06 p.m.

Attorney Fragomeni 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. Kells seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Leach; Ms. Reyes; Ms. Schey; and Mr. Benoit.

Agenda Item 16: Adjournment – 4:23 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Crowley, Secretary