



Special Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

9:30 a.m.

**Transportation Conference Room
269 Melrose Street, Providence, RI**

Members Present: Peter Alviti, Board Chair; Robert Kells, Board Vice Chair; Patrick Crowley, Board Secretary; James Leach; Normand Benoit; Heather Schey; James Lombardi; and Vincent Masino.

Absent Members: Marcy Reyes.

Also Present: Scott Avedisian, CEO; Edward Pare, III, Esq., Board Counsel; Christopher Durand, Chief Financial Officer; Jamie Pereira, Chief of Security; Steven Colantuono, Chief Legal Counsel; Roy Rivers, Executive Paralegal; members of RIPTA's staff; and members of the public.

Call to Order: Mr. Alviti calls the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., indicating that quorum is present.

Agenda Item 1: **To Consider for Approval the Draft Regular Meeting Minutes of the Special Board of Directors Meeting of January 18, 2024.**

Mr. Crowley makes a motion to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2024, meeting. Mr. Kells seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Director Alviti; Mr. Benoit; Mr. Leach; Ms. Schey; Mr. Lombardi; and Mr. Masino.

Agenda Item 2: **To Consider for Approval the Draft Executive Session Meeting Minutes of the Special Board of Directors Meeting of January 18, 2024.**

Mr. Crowley makes a motion to approve the executive session minutes of the January 18, 2024, meeting. Mr. Benoit seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Director Alviti; Mr. Kells; Mr. Leach; Ms. Schey; Mr. Lombardi; and Mr. Masino.

Agenda Item 3: **Public Comment / Board Discussion**

1. Melanie Lawhead: Expresses support for the new paratransit pilot program and advises the Board she uses paratransit to get to work daily and that the program is important for riders.
2. John Flaherty: Expresses opposition to any further action on the new transit hub. States that the budget proposal from the Governor's office are not sufficient and the service crisis should be addressed instead of the new hub.

3. Patricia Raub: Expresses opposition to the moving of the transit hub; states money should not be spent on a new hub when Kennedy Plaza is already a hub; and that the money should be used to help the fiscal cliff and expand service. She further states that it seems as though RIPTA is being kicked out of Kennedy Plaza.
4. Barry Schiller: States that the General Assembly knows that ridership is low and RIPTA needs to build ridership. He provides the following suggestions: 1. Using Earth month as an opportunity to get the word out and offer one free day, week, or month. 2. Distribute schedules by zip code. 3. Offer free fare in the East Bay during the Washington Bridge crisis. 4. Market the Statehouse to promote transit for state employees and provide more through routes to the Statehouse.
5. Randall Rose: States that the hub project is opposed by riders and the transit community; that there are problems in the contract and negotiation process was not successful. He suggests that the contract needs more public vetting. Advises that the contract forbids from imposing a maximum price; that there is a newly added provision dealing with hazardous materials and New Wave is not able to deal with hazardous materials; that New Wave should not be involved with site selection; and lists numerous problems with the contract.
6. Grant Dulgarian: Thanks the Board for their service. States that the most important thing is to increase ridership. He suggests that before entering into any agreement, RIPTA should engage the services of a third party to determine if moving the hub would have an effect on ridership.
7. Rochelle Lee: Urges the Board to give more consideration before entering into a contract and to keep the perspective of riders and engage in public input to allow the public to provide meaningful information.
8. Kim McMawney: Questions why RIPTA would move the hub from Kennedy Plaza. She suggests public education of the project before entering into any contract to move the hub; and recommends RIPTA find out the potential impact on ridership as well as figure out the advantages and disadvantages.

Agenda Item #4 is moved to the end of the meeting.

Agenda Item 5: Request for Approval of the Paratransit Expansion Pilot Procurement

James Canty, Deputy Chief of Planning and Project Management and Brooks Almonte, Executive Director of Paratransit, presents the request.

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to approve the request. Mr. Kells seconds; and Ms. Schey and Mr. Lombardi vote in favor of the motion. Director Alviti; Mr. Crowley; Mr. Leach; and Mr. Masino oppose the motion and the motion does not pass.

Agenda Item 6: Request for Approval of Awarding a Preliminary Services Agreement for the Joint Business Development Project.

Chris Durand, Chief Financial Officer and John Chadwick, Executive Director of Procurement and Inventory make the request.

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to approve the request. Mr. Lombardi seconds; and the motion passes with favorable votes from Director Alviti; Mr. Kells; Mr. Crowley; Mr. Leach; Ms. Schey; and Mr. Masino.

Agenda Item 4: Discussion regarding engaging outside lobbying.

Steven Colantuono, Chief Legal Counsel and Chris Durand, Chief Financial Officer discuss various options for lobbying.

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to formulate an RFP for a lobbyist firm for the 2024 year with a one-year renewal option in 2025. Mr. Kells seconds; and Ms. Schey and Mr. Leach vote in favor of the motion. Director Alviti; Mr. Crowley; Mr. Lombardi; and Mr. Masino oppose the motion and the motion does not pass.

Agenda Item 7: Adjournment - 11:21 a.m.

Mr. Crowley makes a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lombardi seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Director Alviti; Mr. Kells; Mr. Benoit; Ms. Schey; Mr. Leach and Mr. Masino.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Crowley, Secretary