

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF Monday, March 22, 2010 MEETING

Board Members Present: John Rupp, Chair; Edward Field; Thomas Deller; Rochelle Lee; Michael Lewis; Stephen Durkee; and William Kennedy.

Absent: Jerome Williams

Also Present: Alfred J. Moscola (General Manager); Richard Licht (Outside General Counsel); Henry Kinch; Maureen Neira; Mark Therrien; Ellen Mandly and other members of RIPTA's senior staff and members of the public whose names are listed on the meeting sign-in sheet.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of the Minutes of February 22, 2010 meeting

Mr. Rupp called the meeting to order at 1:40 and asked if the Board members had an opportunity to review the minutes of the meeting held February 22, 2010. The members indicated they had and Mr. Field suggested a change to page 11. Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting with the suggested change. Mr.

Deller seconded the motion. The minutes of the meeting were approved as amended.

Agenda Item 2: General Manager's Report

Mr. Moscola stated that by week's end he and staff must finalize the new diesel and hybrid bus purchases. He is currently finalizing the specs and designing the striping. He announced that RIPTA staff would be making a presentation to the Senate Finance Committee the next day at 2:00 p.m. and he invited the Board members to attend.

Next he introduced Mike Burke the Clerk of the Works to give his bi-monthly report. Mr. Burke reported that construction on the new building began in August 2008 and as of February 28, 1020 the building is 95.6% complete. The project is on time and within budget. Today's project completion number represents a 10 % increase since January.

Mr. Burke listed items to be completed such as the bus wash which is about 95% complete, the lifts in the maintenance building which are 92% - 94%, and the site work which is about 98%. Paving work continues in front of the administration building and a detention pond is being built and both of these will be completed weather permitting. The fences and gates are 98% complete and the parking deck still needs sealer and stripping.

He said the administration building punch list has been distributed to all the subcontractors and they are scheduled to begin their work in about two days. Correctional industries is installing the furniture in the admin building which will take a week to ten days to complete and then he will do a punch list on their items.

Substantial completion will be about the first week in April and he defined substantial completion as the date at which RIPTA can assume operation of the building. With the building 95% complete approximately 58% of the contingency funds remain.

The General Manager and Board members thanked Mr. Burke and said he has done a great job. Mr. Burke thanked the other members of his team.

Mr. Moscola reported on trip to Washington, DC with Mark Therrien to attend the APTA Legislative Conference. They met with Senators Reed and Senator Whitehouse and their staffers to discuss transportation issues and gave the legislators an update on the critical issues effecting RIPTA. Both Senators were happy with what they heard and are very supportive of RIPTA.

Mr. Moscola was unable to meet with Congressman Langevin as he was in session, but he did meet with Congressman Kennedy's staffers and give them the update to relay to the Congressman. He added that he spoke to legislators who were complimentary of

Michael Lewis and he passed those compliments along to the Director.

He reported that President Obama signed the jobs bill on March 18th and the bill contains a provision to extend authorization of public transit and highway programs through December 2010. The jobs bill, also known as the higher act bill, transfers \$19.5 billion of general funds into the highway trust fund and \$4.8 billion into the mass transit account and he said these monies will keep the capital projects moving.

Mr. Moscola said over 750 transit people from the United States and Canada attended the APTA conference and the members of APTA are working towards a multi-year surface transportation bill. Mr. Moscola said his colleagues at the conference were talking of serious budget issues similar to RIPTA's and many are considering service cuts and raising fares.

Director Lewis explained that in years past the federal transportation bill spanned 6 years allowing states to plan their highway and transit programs over multiple years. He said a one year extension makes it difficult to plan for the future and hasn't much impact.

Mr. Rupp asked what RIPTA does with this funding and Mr. Moscola said it's used for operations and ongoing projects and this extension won't affect RIPTA in the short term. Director Lewis added that

without a new bill, future capital projects will be affected. Mr. Rupp asked what could be affected in January 2011 and Mr. Therrien said preventative maintenance. He now has to reapply for the funds monthly, normally a one-time process.

Mr. Deller referenced the GM Report on the budget page under fixed route and said our annual budget estimates \$22.8 million dollars in federal reimbursements for operating assistance, CMAC, ADA reimbursement, mobility management reimbursement and preventative maintenance and noted that on January 1st we will be \$10.4 million dollars short without a new bill. Mr. Therrien added that we could have run out of money in a month had there been no extension.

Director Lewis said the extension through the end of the year from the stimulus bill actually filled in the highway trust fund which was running in the red. He said federal gas tax dollars fund transportation in this country and the highway trust fund was running a deficit. This extension used \$19.5 billion from the stimulus funds and filled the gap. He noted gas tax receipts are going down nationally, just as they are in Rhode Island and the model for funding transportation needs to be changed.

Mr. Moscola completed his report and asked Ms. Neira to discuss the gas tax yield. Ms. Neira referenced the 2-page gas tax proceeds and gas tax yield document in the Board package and the 1-page Rite

Care overview. Ms. Neira said the chart on the 2nd page illustrates the decrease in the gas yield since 2006 when it went from \$4.8 million per penny to \$4.2 million today. Mr. Deller noted that the FY 2010 and FY 2011 numbers are projections and asked if our budget number was based on our estimates or the department of revenue. Ms. Neira it's the original number set at the revenue estimating conference.

Ms. Neira said that from 2006 to 2009 we received 7 ¼ pennies and in 2010 we received the additional ½ cent from the UST fund fee and in 2010 and 2011 we received the additional 2 cents gas tax for a total of \$41 million for 2011. She reminded the Board that the additional 2 cents in gas tax was given to RIPTA to compensate for the reduction in Rite Care and she explained the significant changes made to human services programs resulting in a RIPTA revenue loss of \$5.2 million. RIPTA was kept whole by the state budget office until 2009 so we could see the effect of the changes on RIPTA ridership which was \$6.6 million dollars. She explained that other programs such as Keep Eddy Moving, fare increases, business subsidies, etc. offset the deficit, but for 2010 no subsidy is available and she anticipates receiving \$6.2 million dollars.

Mr. Rupp asked Ms. Neira to give this report to illustrate the gas tax proceeds historically for purposes of clarity because the legislature viewed the additional gas tax funds given to RIPTA as a bonus, when it clearly was not.

Mr. Field noted that in September he asked for list of RIPTA business partners and now he would like a list of potential partnership candidates as part of a marketing effort and Mr. Moscola said he would get him the list.

Next Mr. Field asked for an update on the recovery audit and Ms. Neira said the audit is almost complete and written results are expected soon. It is her understanding that he found two invoices for potential recovery.

Mr. Field asked about the hiring of a new ITS manager and Ms. Neira said the job has been advertised and resumes are being received. Mr. Santos said the job will be posted for a few weeks and resumes will be received and reviewed.

Mr. Field asked whether out of district school transportation would be incorporated into our ITS system or the Ride system. Mr. Moscola said that Mr. Scott was on vacation and he could have Mr. Scott give an update on the ITS system in April.

Finally, Mr. Field asked the status of the performance of the Dodge Sprinter which the Authority procured for testing. Mr. Moscola said since it was put into operation the Sprinter has had only one repair action and it gets about 14 – 15 miles per gallon versus 8 – 9 for a diesel Ford. Mr. Moscola said a “Buy America” waiver would be

needed from the FTA for additional Sprinter purchases. Mr. Field asked how other transit properties bypass the waiver and Mr. Moscola said they may have used operating dollars instead of federal funds for the purchase. Federal funds can be used to procure vehicles for testing.

Director Lewis asked when the next scheduled Ride vehicle purchase would occur. Mr. Moscola said he is working on the specs and we're a little behind schedule but we will begin making Flex and Ride vehicle purchases in the next couple of months.

Mr. Moscola discussed the performance and the fuel efficiency of the Sprinter vehicle further and Director Lewis suggested he contact the other transit agencies using the Sprinter vehicles for their assessment of it.

Agenda Item 3: Public Comment: Award Presentation (Rosa Parks Human Rights Day)

Mr. Moscola welcomed Bill Bateman and David Ferry from the Rosa Parks Human Rights group to present an award to RIPTA for their participation and recognition of Rosa Parks. Mr. Bateman asked Ms. Lee to join them, Mr. Moscola and Chairman Rupp for a photo of the presentation of an award plaque recognizing RIPTA for its efforts.

Mr. Bateman thanked RIPTA for its ongoing cooperation with the

community and the Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Project. He talked about the event that was held at Central High School to highlight the actions of Rosa Parks keep the history lesson alive. He thanked Mr. Moscola for coming to the event and gave him his own plaque along with another large plaque which will be hung in the drivers lobby. Mr. Ferry said a few words of thanks and presented the plaques which received a big round of applause.

Mr. Kennedy said Rosa Parks was a great American and spoke about some of her efforts to advance civil rights.

Mr. Rupp recognized Steve Farrell President of the Amalgamated Transit Union. Mr. Farrell remarked on another bill before congress and the senate and said the Bill would give transit systems of all sizes the option to use a portion of their federal transit funds for operating expenses. In particular, it would give them the flexibility to use up to 30% (currently at 10%) of their federal funds for operating expenses. He said Congressman Langevin supports the Bill as do about 95 other Congressman and they are hopeful Senators Reed and Whitehouse will give their support as well as Congressman Kennedy.

Mr. Farrell said members of the Authority are speaking to members of the Rhode Island congressional delegation in favor of this important Bill. He referenced the transit layoffs happening across the country and said the passage of this Bill would help our finances immensely. He asked the members of the Board to support the Bill and express

their support to our Congressman and Senators.

Next Mr. Rupp recognized Molly Clark from the Coalition for Transportation Choices who said the Board had been mailed invitations to their legislative briefing to be held April 9th. She said members of the CTS have been meeting with legislators to make sure we move toward a more secure, sustainable form of transportation funding. She said they also seek support for other transportation Bills such as the basic reauthorization for surface transportation along with Bills relative to walk-ability, bike-ability and other tie-ins that support transit. Ms. Clark was asked how the CTC has been received by the legislators and she said they have had a good reception and legislators are paying attention to this issue.

Former RIPTA employee Bill McGee was recognized and he began by thanking the RIPTA Board members for their time. He made comments regarding the Elmwood/Auburn bus line, service to Newport, layoffs and taxi services. Mr. McGee later asked for a copy of the budget and Mr. Moscola said to put any requests in writing and he would be happy to comply.

A Spanish speaking woman asked a question regarding RIPTA's radio/cell tower and Mr. Moscola asked the lady to see him after the meeting and he would assist her with her request.

Agenda Item 4: Budget Workshop Report

Mr. Deller gave an update on the budget workshop held March 12th saying it was a good meeting where long and short term initiatives such as premium fares and zones were discussed but these things will not immediately impact the current budget situation the Authority faces. He said much time was spent addressing the points raised by Jerry Williams and that in doing so they realized that it will be difficult to impact the FY 2011 budget at this point.

Mr. Deller said its clear much time is needed to work on the budget and put thought into what the system is, what services we provide and how we will operate going forward. He said that based on the budget workshop discussion some items were added to the Strategic Planning Committee Agenda and some items to Finance Committee. He summed up by saying the meeting went well, but there is much work ahead and he asked for comments.

Mr. Rupp discussed the referenced Ms. Neira's chart discussed earlier outlining the gas tax proceeds and fuel prices. He said at the moment there is nothing to fill the FY 2011 ARRA money hole and in support of Director Lewis he feels we need to graphically demonstrate to the legislature the true nature of the situation. He said we need to look at how we define sustainable service at this funding level.

Mr. Deller commented that it is difficult to define a standard level of

transportation due to the gas tax and how it affects the cost of operating therefore we need to demonstrate to the legislators and others that you cannot manage yourself out of this problem. He said we need to create a new mechanism for funding the system and if we don't we are destined to continually cut our services while trying to balance the budget.

Mr. Deller said a lot of work was assigned to staff and this information is needed to educate the legislators and others about what public transit is and illustrate the need for a different type of funding. In regards to the ARRA dollars, the discussion centered on leaving the ARRA dollars in the budget as originally presented to the Governor, but point out that this is a one-time fix and if we don't solve the problem services will be cut and prices will be raised in the coming fiscal year.

Mr. Rupp said we must show our projected revenues and costs and what level of service can be provided at this level and what will be cut. He added that we are a perfectly situated transit system and with very little additional investment we could grow and become much more vibrant. He said that as a Board we need to consider the troubling alternative which is to shrink if we don't have additional investment.

Mr. Kennedy commented that RIPTA is a top notch transportation agency and we need additional funding in order to implement the

recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission.

Mr. Deller said that as a Board we need to work continually over the next 6 months to determine how to fund the FY 2012 budget and we should strive to determine what our system will be if no additional investment can be had. He said budget changes and fixes should be anticipated and we must continue to work hard on the budget.

A discussion ensued among the members and Director Lewis summarized by saying all were in agreement that we need to continue to clearly articulate our financial issues and inform the general assembly and the public of the impacts such as loss of service and increased fares if our funding mechanism is not changed. He added that this is a national issue being faced by transit and transportation properties nationwide.

Mr. Rupp said he asked Mr. Therrien to compile a matrix illustrating potential timeframes for fare increases and services cuts. Director Lewis said we need to project out all the scenarios based on various revenues and factor in all variables that could impact service. In the interim he said we need to continue to try to achieve more efficiency.

Mr. Deller noted that the Board still has not agreed to leave all \$3 million in ARRA funds in the existing budget as was submitted to the Governor. He added that he supports leaving the \$3 million in ARRA funds in the budget and continuing to work on the remaining deficit

of \$1.2 million.

A brief discussion ensued and following this discussion the Board decided to have an additional budget workshop to be held at Finance Committee within two weeks. Mr. Field asked that all Board members attend the April Finance Committee meeting. He added that a change is needed in the way we make presentations and this will be worked on at the Finance Committee.

Agenda Item 5: Strategic Planning Committee Report

Mr. Deller gave a brief Strategic Planning Committee update. He said the Committee is working on a basic planning handbook with all things relating to the Board for current and future Board members. He said it has become clear that strategic planning is going to take the framework of fixed service, premium service and flex service and briefly discussed each and how some of the services could lead to additional revenue. Work needs to be done on the cost of implementing the new types of service.

He said new funding proposals for RIPTA will be studied and they will focus on how RIPTA will work with the new train service coming into Rhode Island. He remarked that Steve Devine who sits on the Committee has been very helpful in this regard. Mr. Deller is planning to meet with Mark Therrien and Anne Galbraith to set the agenda for the next meeting to be held April 1st.

Mr. Deller completed his report and left the meeting.

Agenda Item 6: ARRA Program Update

Mr. Therrien addressed the Board with the ARRA Program update and the good news that we have received all of our grants and all the money is locked in. He said the focus now is project management and job creation. He said today's project update list is the same as last month's.

Mr. Therrien gave updates on small Kennedy Plaza project bids, overhead doors, and a bid before the Board today for GSA equipment for the maintenance department. He said the biggest challenge going forward is the project reporting and job reporting which is difficult because there are numerous small projects.

Agenda Item 7: Human Services Transportation Study

Mr. Therrien and Anne Leclerc gave the human services transportation study report based on the presentation submitted in the Board package. Mr. Therrien began with a history of RIPTA's involvement in human services transportation (HST), which represents \$14 million dollars of RIPTA's budget.

Mr. Therrien described meeting with various private human services organizations to determine their transportation needs. He met with the Dialysis Directors Association and they described the process clients go through to get approval for the transportation. He then described the process by which clients get approval to use RIPTA. He said because many agencies processing is slow, they use RIPTA and we bear the cost. This cost needs to be shifted back to DHS and/or a central broker to distribute the trips. He said the cost for human services transportation in the state is unknown.

Ms. Leclerc said the study is broken into five areas objectives and approach; project management; background, need and opportunities; activities and progress and study timeline. She discussed the reasons for the study and said a few years ago RIPTA was determined to be the state's mobility manager and as such we must ensure that the mobility needs of all Rhode Islanders are being met effectively.

She discussed the cost of human services transportation services which represents 15% of our budget, \$14.5 million for RIde and \$6.3 million for ADA. Ms. Leclerc said some private human services agencies are making decisions that impact other agencies budgets by pointing clients in certain directions. This has resulted in a shift of clients to ADA.

Next she discussed the goals of the study to create an inventory of

existing resources such as federal state and local funding programs and transportation services providers, purchasers and arrangers. She said the decisions made by the arrangers and how they work and direct their clients affects the system as a whole, particularly the cost side. It is important to understand all the programs the eligibility requirements, gaps and overlaps, service parameters and standards and reporting. Standardizing these programs, especially the reporting will be very helpful. Understanding and standardizing will identify ways to improve efficiencies and effectiveness of HST.

Ms. Leclerc discussed the various consultants such as Nelson/Nygaard and subcontractors participating in the study and various status meetings they have with them and with the project steering committee. That committee consists of four state participants, Ms. Leclerc and Mr. Therrien.

She then discussed the study background further saying it was implemented due to budget constraints on funding sources. Also Rhode Island is behind other states that have moved towards community based services rather than institutional settings which lowers the overall costs, but increases the need for transportation.

Regarding opportunities and challenges Ms. Leclerc many state agencies and local providers play a role in HST but there is a lack of coordination and long-term planning. She said a reorganization of our health and human services agencies centralized much of HST

spending under DHS and the centralized system under RIDE works well. She said more can be done to take advantage of the RIDE program capabilities to make the system even more productive, efficient and responsive.

After looking at the various agencies consultant Nelson/Nygaard noted that more transportation planning is needed. She discussed the study activities and said funding inventory is nearly complete and provider inventory is underway and explained these two initiatives. Mr. Therrien said one issue with human services funding is the difference in how the agencies are funded. Some agencies receive funding by client, some by program, some by federal dollars and also state dollars. This difference in how each group is funded causes a problem.

Ms. Leclerc said that once all the information regarding each agency and their various funding is determined they will have a better picture on how to pull it all together and make the most of all the resources available. She said many of the services currently being provided are not now characterized as transportation services and this must be changed.

She said inventory of federal and state programs were conducted and about 64 different programs were identified and she discussed some of these programs. She then discussed the list of providers and arrangers to be surveyed and the method for collecting the data. Ms.

Leclerc noted that our Rlde program is actually forward thinking compared to other state's methods, but better utilization of it is needed.

Mr. Therrien commented on the Rlde program technology and spoke briefly of how our system works. Mr. Rupp noted that Rlde is a whole facet of RIPTA where more cost tracking is needed so we can show the legislature the value we are adding. Ms. Leclerc said we can't discuss where we want to go until we have a clear picture of what we are currently doing and that is the purpose of this study. She said there is a lot of money out there for HST and these funds need to be identified because there may be an opportunity to do more with the same amount of money.

Ms. Leclerc finished by discussing the timeline which she called aggressive saying the study began in January and should wrap up in June. Mr. Therrien discussed the bullets on the last page dealing with recent efficiencies made in the Rlde program and improved coordination.

Mr. Field asked if the Rlde scheduling system is capable of expanding to interact with the new fixed route ATMS system and Mr. Therrien said yes and that the Rlde system is definitely capable of growth and gave examples. Mr. Rupp said the new ATMS manager once hired needs to be familiarized with the Rlde system. Mr. Therrien and Ms. Leclerc answered additional questions relative to Rlde system

technology and the source of funding for the study and this completed their report.

Agenda Item 8: Elimination of No Fare Pass Program

Mr. Therrien reported on the Elimination of the No Fare Pass Program and said the presentation included in the Board package was initially done in response to a request by Representative Lisa Baldelli Hunt. Representative Hunt expressed a desire to introduce legislation to eliminate the no fare pass program in Rhode Island and Mr. Therrien developed this presentation with his staff to assist her in this effort.

Mr. Therrien said new electronic farebox information helps them identify the tendencies of various groups of riders using the pass and this information identified a group who ride well over 200 times a month. This group could be abusers or simply homeless people and identifying them will help show where resistance to elimination of the program will come from. He estimated elimination savings of \$1.3 million on the fixed route system, but cautioned that many of these riders are also disabled and may move to the RIdE system which costs more. For this reason he reduced the revenue potential by half of one percent or \$490,000 to compensate.

Mr. Therrien answered questions regarding the riders in this group and said the change will likely force them to buy monthly passes. He said this will impact our ridership tremendously as we could lose a

million passenger trips per year which then affects our federal income. Mr. Therrien discussed the methodology used for estimating the impact of this change. Currently 10,000 passes are used a month representing 4 million trips and we might experience a ridership loss of 1 – 2 million trips.

Mr. Therrien discussed the data in the presentation further and answered questions on the makeup of the riders, destinations and possible service reduction impacts. Mr. Rupp commented that the \$800,000 gain to RIPTA is less than we have told the legislators in the past, which is troubling. Mr. Therrien said the original figure given to the legislature was \$1.3 million but the new electronic fareboxes installed two years ago provided more accurate data which caused a change to the number.

Agenda Item 9: Update on the John J. MacDonald, Jr. Transportation initiative (h-7498 Legislation)

Mr. Therrien discussed the John MacDonald, Jr. Transportation legislation named after a deceased RIPTA Board member. Mr. Therrien testified against the legislation on behalf of RIPTA saying that while he is 100% in favor of wheelchair lifts on cabs, this particular legislation is problematic.

Mr. Therrien said the Governor's Commission on Disabilities supports a legislative solution for wheelchair accessible cabs and

last year RIPTA became involved in the issue because New Freedoms funding is available. However New Freedoms funds will likely not be in the same format in the next federal reauthorization and this could cause a problem. The MacDonald legislation requires RIPTA to buy wheelchair lifts indefinitely, although the federal funding could be discontinued. In addition we must spend the remaining New Freedoms funds by June 1st although the legislation probably won't go into effect until after we have spent the money. Finally the legislation calls for a competitive process which would override federal practices which is not allowed.

He said the Public Utilities Commission is also against this legislation because it would force RIPTA into the taxi business which requires regulation. Mr. Therrien said those with a vested interest in this issue feel a solution can be found without legislation and all parties are currently working together to do so.

Mr. Therrien explained some of the alternative options available such as wheelchair accessible vans and he discussed the other parties he is working with on this issue. He said they are working to bring a proposal forward for the New Freedoms competitive process and they have made this proposal their number one priority.

He has met with Rep. Coderre who supports the legislation and she is comfortable thus far with the alternative solution he proposed. He will continue to keep the Representative apprised as they move

forward.

A discussion ensued and Mr. Therrien answered questions regarding the legislation, the option of using wheelchair equipped vans, the title of ownership, the riders who will utilize this service, and ADA requirements. Mr. Licht stressed that the title of ownership is an important issue and asked that staff keep counsel apprised on this issue.

Tim Flynn from the Governor's Council on Disabilities was recognized and he spoke in support of the alternative option of the wheelchair accessible vans discussed by Mr. Therrien. He offered his assistance to Mr. Therrien to keep the process moving.

Agenda Item 10: Ferry Update (RFP 10-16)

Mr. Kinch addressed the Board to give an update on the Ferry RFP. Mr. Kinch reported that the Ferry RFP was put out to bid on January 5th, there was a pre-bid conference on January 27th, and the proposal receipt date was February 17th.

Mr. Kinch reported that four potential operators attended the pre-bid session but no qualified bids have been received. Based on the lack of bids Mr. Kinch recommended that the ticketing trailer located at the dock be dismantled as it costs \$575 monthly. RIPTA also owns an aluminum dock valued at about \$125,000 which he recommended

RIPTA sell or place in storage and a brief discussion regarding selling the dock ensued. Mr. Kinch commented that it is unfortunate that the Ocean State will no longer have ferry service and he suggested that the Strategic Planning Committee work to reinstitute the service in the future.

Director Lewis asked about the parking lot lease and Mr. Kinch said we only lease the lot if there is ferry service and we are not obligated to continue with the lease. Director Lewis suggested that staff put together a recommendation that protects RIPTA's assets at the dock and eliminates the costs. He opined that the dock may be a valuable asset to retain if RIPTA resumes ferry operations in the future. Mr. Durkee agreed with Director Lewis as did Ms. Lee who opined that there are other, better locations for ferry service.

Mr. Rupp instructed staff to dispose of the trailer as recommended. Mr. Kinch made a recommendation that RIPTA keep the dock.

Agenda Item 12: GSA Equipment for Maintenance Department

Mr. Rupp asked staff to move on to agenda item # 12. Mr. McGrane discussed the procurement of GSA General Maintenance Equipment and said staff recommends approval of the procurement of the equipment listed in the staff summary for use in the maintenance department. He said the items are being purchased from the Federal General Services Administration List; therefore formal bids are not

required.

Mr. McGrane said the items listed will be used by RIPTA maintenance for the upkeep of Buildings and Grounds at the various RIPTA locations throughout the state. He said the Payloader will primarily be used for snow removal which is an issue for RIPTA at its properties. At present snow is removed using the services of a contractor and they are not always available during the hours RIPTA requires and their services can be cost. The items purchased will replace similar RIPTA equipment which is now past its useful life.

Mr. McGrane said staff solicited quotations from vendors on the federal general services list which meets FTA requirements. The funding will come 100% from ARRA grants. Mr. Field asked where this purchase was on the ARRA list discussed earlier and staff located this procurement on that list as part of #8.

Mr. McGrane and Mr. Moscola briefly answered questions regarding the equipment and training on same and then Mr. Kennedy moved that the procurement of the maintenance equipment be approved as recommended by staff. Mr. Field seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Following the vote Mr. Rupp asked that staff give him a breakdown of the equipment being replaced, its age and what it is being replaced with.

Agenda Item 11: Streetcar Project Update

Mr. Therrien gave an update on the Streetcars and also the Metropolitan Transit Study Project. He said a large competitive grant was recently submitted to the FTA Bus Livability Program to pay for enhancements at Kennedy Plaza, a new hub at Rhode Island Hospital, and hub work at the top of the tunnel and the City of Providence will use their bond money to match if we receive the grant. We should have a response by May. Ms. Lee asked how long RIPTA will remain in Kennedy Plaza and Mr. Therrien responded at least 25 years.

Next he discussed initiating Rapid Bus service saying RIPTA is moving ahead with the design and development of the first Rapid Bus corridor. He then elaborated on some routes where Rapid service will be instituted and other elements such as line/stop branding, frequent bus service, traffic signal improvements, improved bus stops, shelters, and schedule information. Next he described improvements and consolidations which will increase speed of service delivery, such as bus stop consolidation, improved fare collection methods, queue jump lanes at intersections and other intersection improvements.

Mr. Therrien said this is a \$2 million dollar project but engineering design assistance is needed and he asked Director Lewis for RIDOT assistance in this area. Director Lewis quickly offered his staff's

assistance and expertise and asked to be kept apprised. A brief discussion of the cost of this service ensued vis a vis RIPTA's budget issues.

Next Mr. Therrien discussed strengthening intermodal connections and train service. He is working with RIDOT, the City of Pawtucket, and coordinating with MBTA to extend existing routes from Pawtucket to East Providence and to add a new bus top and layover area with enhanced shelters 200 feet from the train platforms. Director Lewis commented that this is a good project for Rhode Island and the right thing to do.

Finally Mr. Therrien discussed Streetcars and said the bid for the next phase alternative analysis and environmental impact assessment has gone out. Two bids have been received and he will bring the bids before the Board soon, possibly in April. He said Mr. Deller is charged with identifying the local money for this project and the TIP will have to be amended to recognize this project.

A brief discussion regarding the opening of the Warwick intermodal facility and the new Wickford Junction was held and Director Lewis answered questions. Mr. Field suggested enhanced and improved bus shelters, schedule information and advertising in and around the airport and possibly additional bus service once the intermodal facility is complete. Mr. Therrien said the airport controls this issue and said he will work with the airport on this issue.

Agenda Item 13: Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Field. Mr. Durkee seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Mandly

Recording Secretary