

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF Monday June 20, 2011 MEETING

Board Members Present: Thomas Deller, Chairperson; Jerome Williams; Stephen Durkee; Michael Lewis; Maureen Martin, Anna Liebenow; and Margaret Holland McDuff.

Absent: Mayor Scott Avedesian

Also Present: Charles Odimgbe, Chief Executive Officer; Steven Richard (Outside Counsel); Maureen Neira; Ellen Mandly; and other members of RIPTA's staff and members of the public whose names are on the sign-in sheet.

Agenda Item 1: Vote on May 19, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Deller called the meeting to order at 1:43 p.m. and welcomed the new Board members and said Mr. Odimgbe would be contacting them to set up orientation meetings.

Mr. Deller asked if the Board members had an opportunity to review the minutes of the meeting held May 19, 2011. The members indicated they had and Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the

minutes of the meeting as presented. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The minutes of the meeting held May 19, 2011 were unanimously approved as presented.

Agenda Item 2: Public Comments

Mr. Deller asked for public comment and reminded those present that public comment is not a question and answer session, rather an opportunity for the Board to hear comments from the public and to take those comments under advisement.

Mr. Deller recognized former employee Bill McGee who said he had worked at RIPTA for 35 years before retiring. Mr. McGee began his lengthy remarks by stating he is dissatisfied with the current beach bus service. He feels the beach bus should run seven days a week from five different areas. He said this is the type of service RIPTA used to provide. Mr. McGee then talked about the crowds at both Kennedy Plaza and the beach parking lots and the need for police presence at certain times to control the crowds heading to and from the beach.

Mr. McGee said it was wrong to eliminate the standby vehicle and service truck previously assigned to Kennedy Plaza. He then criticized the purchase of cabs to assist in transporting disabled riders in the Ride program. He said that it is his opinion that this method makes no sense, particularly because the cabbies are not

trained RIPTA drivers.

Mr. McGee finished by asking if the Board had any questions for him. They did not.

Next Mr. Deller recognized John Flaherty from the Coalition for Transportation Choices (CTC) and a member of the RIPTA Strategic Planning Committee. Mr. Flaherty said the CTC feels the transportation bill does nothing for transit and he encouraged the members of the Board and those present to join he and other transit advocates in their efforts to get an amendment to the bill. He said the amendment must be done by Wednesday.

Sterling Clinton the project director for a group called Youth 4 Challenge Alliance spoke next. Ms. Clinton said lack of access to transportation limits students ability to get to school safely, engage in after school activities and find after school employment. Ms. Clinton passed out a flyer discussing the Youth 4 Challenge Alliance concerns in more detail and each Board member received a copy (and a copy is attached to these minutes). Group members Lindsay Paiva, Israel Okunlola, Anna Donkor, Johanna German, Alex Ok and Peter Chung attended the meeting and took turns reading from the their youth bill of rights, which they distributed.

The Youth 4 Challenge attendees said state legislation has decreased funding for Rite Care resulting in the disqualification of many

students who had previously received free bus passes through their health insurance plans. These students now struggle to find access to transportation. The group spoke at the Board meeting to raise the Board's awareness and ask for assistance in their efforts to decrease student barriers to transportation needed to attend school and other activities.

Ms. Clinton said she hoped we can come together as a community to rectify this problem. She thanked the Board for the opportunity for the group's members to speak and said they will likely attend future Board meetings to discuss this topic.

Mr. McGee asked to be recognized a second time and when recognized said it had come to his attention that drivers had been suspended without receiving a hearing. He said this is against the law the drivers should be given a hearing.

Mr. Deller thanked all the commenters for their remarks.

Agenda Item 3: Chief Executive Officer's Report

Mr. Odimgbe began his report by discussing fixed route ridership which has risen when compared to the same period last year, but year to date is still struggling. He noted our revenue miles and hours continue to increase meaning the ridership increases are adding additional costs to the system. This is reflected in the passengers

per hour and passengers per mile ratios which are showing decreases. He said a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) is included in the 2012 fiscal year budget as a way to help us understand why ridership is slow to increase despite several indicators pointing to more latent demand for service. Later in the meeting the new the new capital improvement program containing the COA is up for approval.

Next he discussed Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and said the KPI's indicate a drop in miles between failures. We have been struggling with this issue despite having added 73 new vehicles to the fleet. The numbers went up last month, but have since dropped by over 2000 miles. A review of paratransit shows an even greater reduction in miles between failures which he deemed unacceptable. He said he and staff will continue to look for the reasons why this is occurring.

Mr. Odimgbe said staff has staff has managed to reduce the potential budget deficit down to approximately \$4.6 million, however, the uncertainties surrounding whether the agency's deficit will be funded still remains. Currently RIPTA is not included in the Governor's budget that was approved in the House Finance Committee. Mr. Odimgbe said it is imperative that we clearly communicate the Authority's intent to operate on a balanced budget – meaning we will reduce services by approximately 6% to 10% to address the \$4.6 million dollar deficit. Mr. Odimgbe intends to initiate the service reduction process immediately, because the longer we wait, the

deeper the cuts, however consistent with his remarks at the last Board meeting, he and staff will take every precaution to minimize impact on our riders as much as possible.

He reiterated Mr. Flaherty's suggestion during public comment that an amendment to the budget be put forth by Wednesday. He expressed frustration over the lack of funding and stressed that RIPTA is not a welfare service – but an important economic vehicle as 70% of our riders are using RIPTA to commute to work.

Mr. Odimgbe noted that due to our current deficit RIPTA will be unable to embark on any new projects and/or introduce any new services such as those contemplated in our newly adopted Strategic Plan.

Next the CEO said that later in the meeting Lilly Picchione and Maureen Neira would discuss the new capital improvement program. He said the goal is to provide the Board and stakeholders with an opportunity to see our capital program needs for the next five years. He said constructive feedback is welcome.

Mr. Odimgbe said staff had begun the process of prioritizing their actions to be consistent with those in the new strategic plan. The goal of this effort is to make sure we are supporting the goals and objectives outlined in the strategic plan, as well as properly allocating adequate staff resources to ensure successful implementation.

Mr. Deller commented that it is very important that the service standards are updated and revised as part of this effort. He reminded those present that the Strategic Planning Committee had taken a two month hiatus to allow staff the time to complete this project. He will be working with RIPTA staff on the revisions.

Next for the benefit of the new Board members Mr. Odimgbe explained the ATMS project saying it is a new automated transportation management system that will make the arrival of the buses more predictable. He then briefly elaborated on the ATMS project status sheet contained in the board package.

Mr. Odimgbe reported that he had attended the APTA bus and paratransit conference along with a member of the RIPTA IT Department and the trip was very informative, especially for the IT employee. They were able to view demonstrations of maintenance management software that RIPTA is considering and got first hand feedback from actual users of the products.

Next the CEO reported that he, Mark Therrien and Maureen Neira had traveled to New York City Transit to meet with some of that agencies most senior executives to hear about the many cost savings initiatives that agency put in place saving them millions of dollars.

Mr. Odimgbe said the main take away from the meeting was that every little bit counts. Based on information received during this trip he has since instituted a nonrevenue vehicle inventory and a

printer/copier/fax inventory to ensure we have proper asset allocation in these areas.

Mr. Odimgbe reported on the Senate Commission and House Finance Committee meeting reports. He said Michael Lewis is also a party to these meetings where a 35% share of the motor vehicle fee proceeds was available as part of the Governor's budget to fund various aspects of transportation and transit. Unfortunately, RIPTA did not receive any of the funds in the Governor's budget. He said it is now incumbent upon the Authority to raise the funds needed to cover the \$4.6 million dollar budget deficit for FY 2012. This completed the CEO's report.

Mr. Deller commented that in the near future the Board members will be asked to serve on various committees of the Board.

Agenda Item 4: FY 2012 – FY 2017 Capital Improvement Plan

Mark Therrien, Lilly Picchione and Maureen Neira addressed the Board to discuss the FY 2012 – FY 2017 Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Therrien began by saying staff is changing the way they do budgeting at RIPTA and the plan before the Board today is driven by need and must be submitted to the State yearly and follow the TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan). This is how we procure all of our federal funding. In the past the planning department had driven this process but the finance department has now taken the lead.

Lilly Picchione spoke next saying the capital improvement plan will help staff and the Board to evaluate and prioritize projects. She then began discussing the document in more detail beginning on page one which outlines capital projects for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2011 and includes federal funds and specific categories of local matching funds. She said page two of the table provides an estimated budget and year of expenditure for implementation of projects between FY 2012 – 2017. Ms. Picchione said each project lines up to a goal in the RIPTA strategic plan. She said that the major cost drivers are vehicle purchases and the projects included in the capital improvement plan are the basis for state capital fund requests.

Ms. Picchione stressed that this is a living document and it will change over time. She stressed that every project over \$50,000 will come back before the Board for discussion and approval.

Mr. Odimgbe discussed some of the bottom line figures. Ms. Neira noted that at present we have \$690,000 budgeted in local match for the capital improvement plan, leaving us \$98,600 short of the \$789,400 required to fully match the FY 2012 capital budget. She described some of the funding RIPTA lost which contributed to the shortfall. Staff answered questions from the Board members regarding the plan, including federal funding and local match requirements and the date for submission. Mr. Williams asked what happens if the needed matching funds for a particular project could

not secured. Mr. Odimgbe answered that the existing projects would be reprioritized.

Mr. Deller noted that if the Board voted to approve the plan today, they must do so with the knowledge that the capital improvement plan will change over time. He asked staff if the plan required approval today, or if the Board could wait until the July meeting. Mr. Therrien said the plan must be submitted to the state by July 8th. Ms. McDuff asked if any of the individual projects in the plan had already received Board approval and Ms. Picchione said yes project #32 - ITS had been approved along with bus purchases at the November Board meeting. Mr. Lewis asked if there were SAFTEY-LU constraints and Mr. Odimgbe said no and referred him to page 2 of the plan for clarification.

The CEO and staff answered various other questions then Mr. Odimgbe summed up by saying this plan is based on our anticipated needs and shows the direction and priorities of the Authority regardless of whether funding is received. Mr. Williams complimented staff on the format of the plan.

Following this discussion Mr. Durkee made a motion to approve the FY 2012 – FY 2017 Capital Improvement Plan as presented by staff. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Research and Planning Consulting

Mr. Therrien addressed the Board to discuss the procurement of the Research and Planning Consultant. He said that the Board is requested to award the remaining contract to provide on-call research and planning consulting services. This was a one-year contract with up to four annual renewal options to be exercised at the sole discretion of the Authority. The first year was awarded in November of 2010 and the cost over the remaining life of the contract is \$400,000. This project is 100% federally funded.

Mr. Therrien said staff is asking for the full four year approval to upgrade our training and also to assist with the implementation of the taxi project and other initiatives set forth in detail in the board report form contained in the board package.

Following a brief discussion Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the award of the Research and Planning consultant as requested by staff. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 6: Motorola Solutions Contract

Paul LaFlamme addressed the Board to discuss the procurement of a Motorola Solutions Contract. He said this contract with Motorola Solutions will provide an extension to the existing RI statewide communications network and replace existing mobile radios on all fixed route, and selected supervisor and maintenance vehicles and

add a high performance data systems overlay to the existing core network. The cost is \$4,267,600 and includes supply and installation of the necessary hardware and software and a 6% project contingency. Mr. LaFlamme said this project is 100% funded by a transit security grant.

Following a brief discussion Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the award of the Motorola Solutions Contract as requested by staff. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 7: Executive Session Pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) for Discussions related to Collective Bargaining

The Board chose not to convene the executive session.

Agenda Item 8: Adjournment

Mr. Lewis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Mandly

Recording Secretary