

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF Monday, January 23, 2011 MEETING

Board Members Present: Jerome Williams, Acting Chairperson; Mayor Scott Avedisian; Stephen Durkee; Maureen Martin, Anna Liebenow; and Margaret Holland McDuff.

Absent: Thomas Deller and Michael Lewis

Also Present: Charles Odimgbe, Chief Executive Officer; Todd Gleason, (Outside Counsel); 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 December 19, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Vice Chairman Jerome Williams called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. and asked if the Board members had an opportunity to review the minutes of the meetings held on December 19, 2011 and the Board members indicated that they had. Ms. Mandly interjected that she had made two minor changes to the minutes and read the two changes. Ms. Martin made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Durkee seconded the motion and the minutes of the meetings held December 19, 2011 were unanimously approved as

amended.

Agenda Item 2: Vacancy in the Office of Chair Created by the Resignation of Thomas Deller

Mr. Williams said that Thomas Deller had tendered his resignation as the Chairman of the Board; however he remains on the Board as a valued member. Mr. Williams commented on the work, time and dedication Mr. Deller has given to RIPTA during his tenure as Chair and he thanked him on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Williams noted that there is now a vacancy on the RIPTA Board and asked that pursuant to § 39-18-2(e) of RIPTA's Enabling Act and Article III of RIPTA's bylaws that the Board address the issue of the vacancy for the office of Board Chair and opened up the floor to nominations. Mr. Durkee nominated Mayor Scott Avedisian. Margaret Holland McDuff seconded the nomination. No other nominations were received and a roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously and Mayor Scott Avedisian was elected Board Chair.

Mr. Williams congratulated the Mayor on his election and applause ensued. Mayor Avedisian assumed the role of RIPTA Board Chairman. Mayor Avedisian thanked the members of the RIPTA Board of Directors for their vote of confidence and also thanked Tom

Deller for his years of hard work as a member of the board saying he is pleased to know that Mr. Deller will continue to serve as a member as his experience and expertise is needed to fulfill the mission of RIPTA.

The Mayor stated that the biggest priority for this Authority is to balance the budget and gain labor agreements with our unions and neither of these priorities will be easy to meet.

He noted that Charles, the staff, our board, and our talented employees have already taken a potential \$4.6 million deficit and reduced that to about \$1.9 million. And this \$1.9 million is before the recent personnel changes were made. This is a remarkable turn around and everyone involved deserves credit. In addition, he said meetings were held with Governor Chafee last Friday to discuss the possibility of some funding coming to RIPTA during the supplemental budget process now underway at the State House.

The Mayor said that resolving the rest of our deficit will take a commitment from our employees, the Board, our CEO, the Governor, and the leadership and members of the General Assembly. He stressed that RIPTA seeks to not only resolve this deficit with everyone participating, but to do so in the upcoming budget year and that budget is even more daunting due to federal cuts which could mean RIPTA a \$10 million budget gap.

Next he discussed labor peace and said we stand committed to reaching agreement with all of our unions. He has seen firsthand the dedicated efforts of our employees. Much like every city and town, RIPTA employees have been asked to do more with less and he does not expect that to change. However, we are all recommitting ourselves today to finding common ground. I am very happy to report that Jerry Williams has agreed to be even more involved in resolving our contracts, and the Governor has vowed to give us temporary assistance in areas where we see a need for more skills and talents.

Mayor Avedisian said we recognize that there are other issues that we need to resolve such as brining the Open Doors issue to a quick and complete resolution. Director Mike Lewis has agreed to not only steer this issue through RIPTA but has also agreed that he will reach out to the other members of Governor Chafee's cabinet to make sure that Open Doors is being welcomed into all departments and agencies in the state.

The Mayor noted that quite honestly, as much as we need the General Assembly, the Governor, our board, our capable CEO Charles, and our employees to assist in moving RIPTA forward, we also desperately need DARE, the RIPTA Riders, The Coalition for Transportation Choices, and the Sierra Club – just to name a few of our partners – to remain vigilant and committed to the cause of public transportation.

Mayor Avedisian said that armed with our long term plan, guided by the desire to turn our deficit into a surplus, and tempered with the fact that we know that there are difficult days ahead; this Board looks forward to getting to the agenda at hand.

He finished his remarks by again thanking Tom Deller for his efforts, and Governor Chafee for his interest in RIPTA.

Agenda Item 3: Public Comment

Mayor Avedisian moved on to public and noted that comments will be taken but generally the Board does not respond, however they reserve the right to do so now or after the meeting.

The Mayor recognized Bob Batting former RIPTA Board member distributed a Wall Street Journal article from January 2012 which discussed a streetcar system implemented in Buffalo, NY which he said wreaked havoc on downtown Buffalo. He said he is against the proposed streetcar system in downtown Providence and cited the lack of funds. He said to move forward with this project and burden the city and the state with financing it would be irresponsible and a lost opportunity.

Mr. Batting then commented on the use of overtime at RIPTA. He said

he received a call from an employee who told him one person put in 70 hours on the road in one week and if this is factual, he believes this is wrong and illegal.

Finally Mr. Batting stated that Board needs the support of the Governor and the State House and in his opinion it would make sense to consolidate agencies such as the Bridge and Turnpike Authority, the Airport, RIPTA and RIDOT.

Barry Schiller a former RIPTA Board member spoke next about passenger wellbeing as it relates to the Pawtucket hub which will be eliminated. He said this will result in no place to wait for the bus indoors, no bathroom facilities, no schedule information and no security, which is particularly concerning when it is dark out. He asked that management and the Board work with Pawtucket city officials to keep this hub open.

Almas Kalafian spoke next and said she has been a paratransit rider for 15 years and used fixed route prior to that and she said that it was not till Sen. Tassoni spoke and the Open Doors program was discussed that paratransit got any attention. She said she wants the fixed route system enhanced which will lead to more and better paratransit service. She said she has also met with the CTC group to discuss this issue. She then thanked the CEO for bringing in the Open Doors program which highlighted this issue.

Grant Dulgarian was recognized and he said that paratransit is fed by the fixed route service his sense is that the cost of paratransit is going up and this should be looked into. Next he asked a question about the ridership data in the CEO report and if he could get a copy of same. Ms. Mandly asked Mr. Dulgarian to contact her after the meeting and she would get him the information.

Paul Harrington, President of the Amalgamated Transit Union spoke next and congratulated Mayor Avedisian on his election to Board Chair. He then made a remark alleging the CEO wanted to undermine efforts by the CTC and called this disappointing. He talked about what a great program Ride is and the relation of taxi service to same. He believes less use of taxis would financially benefit the Ride program.

Next he commented on the layoff notices and said it is his understanding that 21 employees are to be let go and he listed the various position. He said this is disappointing and in his opinion puts the riders at risk and said the eliminated positions are needed.

Joseph Cole a RIPTA bus operator spoke next and agreed with Bob Batting on the street car issue. He then said buses run hand and hand with paratransit.

Abel Collins of the Sierra Club congratulated the Mayor and expressed his appreciation for getting a resolution passed. He said

those who support RIPTA need all the help we can get and he said he looks forward to working with the Mayor in his new capacity.

Frank Plutzner a RIPTA employee commented on the cuts in utility jobs. He said the new building on Elmwood was already short staffed to begin with in his opinion and he can't see how the work can be completed with 7 less people. He feels more are needed to keep the building clean and the vehicles fueled.

Tom Cute a RIPTA employee spoke next and commented on the job reductions which he called a grave mistake. He said it is not right to put street supervisors back driving a bus due to their extensive experience and he feels the street supervisors are needed to keep the system and riders safe and to avoid delays. Regarding the utility workers, he feels having less will result in dirty buses and he urged the board to stop these cuts.

Agenda Item 4: Chief Executive Officer's Report

Charles Odimgbe addressed the Board to give his CEO report and began by congratulating the Mayor on his election to Board Chair. Next he asked if there were any questions regarding the ATMS, ARRA and E-Team reports given to the Board and hearing none moved on.

Mr. Odimgbe gave an update on the new Revel software which will help us manage the paratransit operation better. He said this

software will help with scheduling which will in turn get more people on each vehicle and the more passengers on board the less expensive the trip. He acknowledged that this may cause rancor among the drivers as it will increase trip time, but we need to do more with less. Later in the meeting this procurement will be presented.

Next Mr. Odimgbe discussed page C-5 of the CEO report which relates to bus breakdowns and mean distance between failures. He said as we get newer buses in service these numbers will improve.

The CEO noted that the next meeting falls on President's Day and after a quick discussion among the members it was determined that Ms. Mandly would contact them after the meeting to determine if the date would change. Mr. Odimgbe then encouraged the members of the newly created Labor subcommittee to convene a meeting. He then asked Anna Liebenow to explain the issue with ADA announcements.

Ms. Liebenow explained the ADA announcement law and procedures on fixed route service. Basically the drivers call out the stops and crossroads so blind drivers will know where they are along the route. She said this procedure is monitored monthly and usually we are at about 70% compliant although some drivers come in at zero compliance. As Chair of the ATAC Committee she is very frustrated with the compliance rates of zero and even though an automated system will be implemented, compliance must improve in the

meantime. She spoke today to bring this matter to the attention of the other Board members.

Mr. Odimgbe remarked that ADA announcements is an on-going problem and he understands Ms. Liebenow's frustration as the law insists on 100% compliance and he too is disappointed that some drivers refuse to comply. He will be working with Ms. Liebenow and staff to correct this issue. Ms. Holland McDuff suggested ADA announcements be added to the KPI's and Mr. Odimgbe agreed.

At this point Ms. Holland McDuff left the meeting.

Next Ms. Martin reported that she and Michael Lewis and Charles Odimgbe had attended the DARE meeting as requested by that group to discuss the Open Doors issue. She said about 30 members of DARE were present and were very articulate in expressing their dismay that the program had been discontinued. She said the meeting lasted about 90 minutes and the DARE group requested that the two employees be reinstated, that RIPTA issue an apology and that RIPTA institute a policy to hire individuals with criminal records.

Mr. Odimgbe also remarked on the meeting and said that he is still working to resolve this issue, and has also committed to a more palatable diversity program.

Agenda Item 5: Strategic Planning Committee Report

Steve Durkee Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee reported that the Committee had met earlier in the month and the new members were in attendance and the initial focus of the meeting was introductions and bringing new members up to speed on the initiatives the committee had accomplished in 2011 and on setting out a progress plan for 2012. He said that the committee also heard an update on the core connector project and asked Amy Pettine to address the Board and give them that update as well.

Ms. Pettine said RIPTA is nearing completion of the 18-month Core Connector Study, the purpose of which was to study the feasibility, cost and benefits of constructing an urban circulator in Providence. The intent was to conduct more detailed planning and environmental analyses for a project that would connect the state's most significant educational, medical, employment and cultural destinations. Additionally, the Study produces the documentation that would be required if RIPTA and the City decide to pursue future federal funding to support the design and construction costs of an urban circulator project. These federally-required documents include an Alternative Analysis (AA) and Environmental Assessment (EA).

She said the streetcar idea came out of Transit 2020 and is part of the RIPTA Strategic Plan & Vision approved by Board one year ago. Extensive stakeholder and community involvement was sought in order to educate, gather feedback, and generate consensus on route,

vehicle and finance decisions. She then listed the various meetings and groups staff met with to accomplish this which totaled 55 meetings, presentations and forums

Ms. Pettine said they are hearing great interest in the mobility and economic benefits that a streetcar would bring. She said that while many see the benefits, they consistently stress that we need to continue working to further develop consensus on a finance plan and to further develop project concepts.

She said the finance plan is still a work in progress, but a key principle is that RIPTA cannot support (beyond fare, advertising and federal maintenance revenues) unless larger funding picture solved. Streetcar would make that final downtown connection, enhancing overall viability and attractiveness of RIPTA's statewide system. She added that this project fits squarely with one of the current centerpieces of the state's economic development strategy and the projected streetcar-induced development projection of \$1.1 billion over 20 years is virtually the same as the \$1.2 billion in development that the study area has realized in the last ten years. She said this would mean \$3.6 million in new development, 6,000 new jobs and 2,000 new residents.

She finished by saying that the Board will be asked to approve the plan at the next meeting, which is required to end the comprehensive FTA study requirement and necessary to keep the project moving and

be prepared for federal funding opportunities. She said the upcoming TIGER funding though not formally required is a prerequisite of TIGER and this is a great way to demonstrate that locals acknowledge and support the results of the comprehensive planning process.

The CEO acknowledged there are sentiments for and against the streetcar project, however he recommends that the Board complete the work we started on this project and complete the preferred alternative. He stressed the Board will have ample time to continue to evaluate this project and how to fund it, but it is necessary to complete this phase of the study. Steve Durkee agreed and said the Strategic Planning Committee will continue to study this project as well as their meetings to be held quarterly. Committee member Maureen Martin agreed that future funding is key and reminded staff members that work needs to progress on public/private partnerships and more PR is needed.

Agenda Item 6: Finance Committee Report

This agenda item was tabled as the Chair was not present.

Agenda Item 7: Bus Pass Policy Revision

Mark Therrien and Anne LeClerc addressed the Board to discuss the bus pass policy revision. Mr. Therrien said the Board would be asked to approve the updated policy for the Bus Pass Program for seniors

and people with disabilities. He said RI law requires RIPTA to provide a no-fare and half-fare bus pass program for seniors and the disabled and this policy outlines that program developed by RIPTA to comply with the change in the authorizing legislation. Ms. LeClerc then discussed each of the changes to the policy set forth on the first page of the Board report and described the public hearings held to discuss same and the changes made subsequent to those hearings.

Ms. LeClerc said the previous policy was restrictive by having specific procedures mandated in the policy. The policy should set the overall direction and goals for the bus pass program, but procedures such as what documentation is acceptable or the locations for obtaining a bus pass should be separate from the policy.

Following staff remarks Ms. LeClerc said that staff recommends that the Board approve the revised bus pass policy as presented. Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the revised policy and Mr. Durkee seconded the motion. The bus pass policy revision was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 8: RFP 12-03 Architectural Design Services for Solar Energy Roof Repair 269 Melrose Street

Roger Mencarini and Lilly Picchione addressed the Board to discuss the architectural design services for solar energy roof repair at 269

Melrose Street. Mr. Mencarini said the Board is requested to award a contract to Brewster Thornton Group Architects of Providence to provide architectural design services for a solar energy project and roof repairs at the transportation building at 269 Melrose Street. The cost of this contract is \$181,000 which includes a 6% contingency and services will include structural analysis, solar energy and roofing alternative analysis, prep of bid documents and construction administration.

Ms. Picchione discussed the background of the project set forth on page 1 of the board report and the funding for the project. Mr. Mencarini then gave the details of the procurement procedures. Mr. Odimgbe asked the Mr. Mencarini read the alternatives section of the Board report contained on page 2 and Mr. Mencarini read that section aloud and again read the recommendation to award the contract for \$180,000 to Brewster Thornton Group.

Mr. Williams asked questions related to experience of the potential vendors and the solar aspect. Mr. Mencarini will send the board further information on the solar aspect of the project. After this discussion Mr. Durkee moved that the contract be awarded as recommended by staff. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 9: Design & Development of Rapid Bus Signal Priority and Corridor Improvements Phase II

Amy Pettine and Greg Nordine addressed the Board to discuss the design and development of rapid bus signal priority and corridor improvements phase II. Amy introduced Mr. Nordine then said this project is being done in three phases, which she described and then said the Board is being asked to approve phase II and award a bid to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, in the amount of \$277,593 for phase II traffic signal prioritization and corridor improvements. Mr. Nordine then gave an overview of the background of the project as set forth on page 1 of the staff summary.

Mr. Williams asked questions relating to the timing of the project and Ms. Pettine said this phase will take about 6 months and the next phase would complete approximately fall of 2013 and all this is being done in tandem with the ATMS project. Following this discussion Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the award of the contract for development of rapid bus signal priority and corridor improvements phase II to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin as recommended by staff. Ms. Martin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 10: IFB 12-10 Smart Cards

Maureen Neira addressed the Board to discuss the procurement for Smart Cards and said the Board is requested to award a contract for the purchase of fare media smart cards to the lowest qualified bidder AB Note NA. This is a one year contract with up to four annual

renewals to be exercised at the sole discretion of the Authority. The estimated annual cost is \$12,964 for a total of \$64,820 over the five years.

Ms. Neira then read the justification section of the board report and asked for questions. Hearing none Mr. Williams made a motion that the procurement for Smart Cards be awarded as requested by staff to the lowest qualified bidder AB Note NA. Ms. Martin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 11: Operation Management Software

Mark Therrien addressed the board to discuss the award for operation management software for Ride as mentioned by Mr. Odimgbe earlier in the meeting. Mr. Therrien said the Reveal Management Software automates many of the controls developed to analyze and problem solve service issues. The individuals who began this company worked closely with Routematch in the development phase and Routematch has now retired its own management module in favor of contracting with Reveal. The software is fully integrated with Routematch which RIPTA currently uses and is being used successfully at several locations.

Mr. Therrien said that implementation of this software will provide an operations management tool for Ride and the cost includes training and assistance with runcutting, analyzing service trends affecting

efficiency and scheduling and dispatching effectiveness. He then listed the justifications on page 1 of the Board report and finished by saying we have been demoing the software for 3 months and were able to reduce costs by about \$125,000 by removing trips from taxis to lower cost vans. He said we project significant opportunity to reduce costs through reduction of scheduled overtime and lower fuel costs. The software will also provide data in real time and result in less staff time processing and cleaning data for data analysis.

Mr. Therrien answered a few questions from the board relative to driver feedback. The CEO interjected that this software will help us determine how to schedule more people on each vehicle which lowers costs and keep the system maximized. He acknowledged that some riders will spend a longer time on the bus. Ms. Martin asked if implementing this software will replace workers and Mr. Therrien said it will not displace the work, but it will change the work.

Following this discussion Ms. Martin made a motion that the procurement be awarded to Reveal Software as recommended by staff. Mr. Durkee seconded the motion and asked that the progress of this software be added to the KPI's. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 12: Executive Session Pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) for Discussions and/or Action Related to Collective Bargaining

Mayor Avedisian asked for a motion to convene to executive session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) for Discussions and/or Action related to Collective Bargaining and Mr. Williams made the motion. Ms. Martin seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken. The motion to adjourn to executive session passed unanimously.

Following the Board's return to open session Mr. Williams made a motion to seal the minutes of the executive session. Mr. Durkee seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 13: Adjournment

Stephen Durkee made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jerry Williams seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Mandly

Recording Secretary