

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF Monday, August 18, 2014 MEETING

Board Members Present: Jerome Williams; Stephen Durkee; Peter Ginaitt and Mark Susa

Absent: Mayor Scott Avedisian, Director Michael Lewis, Maureen Martin and Margaret Holland McDuff

Also Present: Raymond Studley, CEO; Todd Gleason, Outside Counsel; Marie DiToro, Recording Secretary; and other members of RIPTA's staff, and members of the public whose names are on the sign-in sheet.

Mr. Williams states that currently the Board does not have a quorum due to Mayor Avedisian being called out unexpectedly. Mr. Williams announced that the meeting would be temporarily adjourned until a quorum is present, which he expects when Mr. Susa arrives shortly; however he would still like to move forward with a discussion of those items on the Agenda not requiring approval and he further noted that anything up for approval will not be done at today's meeting. Accordingly, the Board members present will still go through the agenda to hear all updates and provide the public in attendance an opportunity to speak in public comment, and will re-adjourn the meeting upon Mr. Susa's arrival, at which time a quorum will be present. Having said that, Mr. Williams moves on to agenda item two and asks if there is anyone who would like to speak in public comment today.

Agenda Item 2: Public Comment

(Board members take public comments under advisement, but do not respond except for clarifications. Members may follow-up on public comments in writing post-meeting as permitted by applicable law.)

Mr. Cole, Vice President of the ATU and a Bus Driver would like to state one of his concerns is the 49 Camp Street route. He understands this elimination is part of the COA; however as a Union Representative and a Bus Driver they generally do not like to see any routes cut. There is so little service over there at this point, it does service Miriam Hospital and the hours really do not service the high school in the morning, however it does provide a few trips in the afternoon. He hopes that there would be consideration to keep it running.

The second item of concern for Mr. Cole is in regards to the R-Line. Generally, they think it is running really well and are pleased with it; however, the drivers are having a lot of problems with the R decal that was put on the near side of the bus stop because it is blocking the vision of the drivers to see who is in the bus stop. This is very difficult for the drivers and it slows them down a bit. He thanks the Board for their time.

Mr. Grant Dulgarian would like to speak in regards of Route 49 matter. It says on the agenda it is a service reduction, he asks if the definition of service reduction is elimination or just reduction? Mr. Williams responds that it is posed as elimination. Mr. Dulgarian continues that he is glad that it will not be voted on today. He attended a public hearing last week and asked the RIPTA staff how much

it cost to run the service and the answer he received was \$200,000 a year to run that line at ten (10) hours a day. He believes the reason this line takes ten hours a day is because it is run as a separate bus line as opposed to most lines which go to Kennedy Plaza. He is hoping that there can be a middle ground that can be met on this line without eliminating it completely. When he was a kid growing up this line was extensive. For decades he suggested that the line extend to Miriam Hospital. A few years ago, RIPTA finally decided to do this. However, by this time the line had already changed drastically and the direct line downtown no longer existed. He suggests that the route get straightened out and he welcomes the opportunity to discuss this further.

Mr. Ray Watson, Executive Director of the Mount Hope Neighborhood Association of Providence located on Camp Street would like to discuss the Route 49 elimination as well. He has come to the meeting today as a representative for the neighborhood, in particular the senior population to express his concerns about the outreach that was done. He understands that a public hearing was held downtown at the URI Kingstown Office which is very difficult for many of the seniors to get to. He did call and leave a message at RIPTA expressing his concerns about that however it was a week and half later and by that time the ball was already rolling. He decided to attend the meeting. It was advertised from 6-8 pm at the URI building, however when he arrived at about 7:50 pm the meeting was shut down already and no one was there. The physical make up of the neighborhood needs to be considered. If seniors catch the North Main Street bus they are forced to walk up a very steep hill and if they catch the Hope Street bus then they will have to walk up and down a steep hill, which is not good for them as well. They had no idea that this was being proposed and are concerned that it was not presented with an opportunity for them to come and express their concerns. They are concerned about the decision being made based on a market-based rather than need-based approach and it makes them feel like their needs are not really valued as taxpaying seniors. If the 49 route is taken out what does he tell the seniors in terms of how they will be serviced and their needs met? He thanks the Board for their time.

With no further public comment, Mr. Williams moves on the next Agenda item, the CEO Update.

Agenda Item 3: CEO Update

Mr. Studley states that he will provide the ATMS update because Ms. LeClerc is on vacation this week. RIPTA has scheduled a meeting with Xerox Senior Staff and Attorney on August 26, 2014 to meet with Mr. Studley, Mr. Salzillo, Ms. LeClerc and Mr. Tierney. Xerox had two installers on the property and one of them left the employment of Xerox and has not been replaced as of yet. That leaves only one Xerox employee to complete the installations. He is trying to do the best he can with continuing new installs and fixing current problems in existing installations. Mr. Studley is hoping to come up with a resolution with Xerox on the 26th.

Mr. Studley states that the construction at Kennedy Plaza is ongoing. The plaza has been torn apart and he thinks things are going well. Within the last two weeks, in conjunction with RI Foundation and Lamar, temporary bus shelters were erected along Exchange Terrace and benches on Sabin Street in front of the convention center. Benches are also located at Parcel 12 so passengers have an area to sit.

Next week the Planning and Marketing department will be out in full force with the radius reduction of 3 miles to 2.5 miles for the Providence School students starting in a couple of weeks.

There will be an influx of students back in the plaza and with all the changes the staff will be out there educating high school and college students where to go.

The new deadline for completion for Kennedy Plaza is November 1, 2014.

Mr. Durkee states that there was a conversation with Ms. Pettine that there would be an effort to get the new berths on East Approach completed ahead of normal schedule. Mr. Studley responds that there was the idea of moving the berths off Sabin Street and this was put on hold because East Approach is dug up now and it would be a 3-4 week process to complete, putting the time frame in September, and RIPTA is hoping that all key vendors will be in agreement and move the shelters at that time. Mr. Durkee stated that is a great plan.

Mr. Studley announced that with the retirement of Mr. Clupny, RIPTA has hired a new Environmental and Safety Affairs Officer, Michael Vignale. The Board welcomes Mr. Vignale to RIPTA.

Mr. Susa then arrives to the meeting. With the arrival of Mr. Susa, the Board now has a quorum. The adjourned meeting is now called back into session and Mr. Williams officially calls the meeting to order. He would like to go back to Agenda Item One for Board Approval.

Agenda Item 1: **Board Approval of the July 21, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Durkee makes a motion to approve the July, 21, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Susa seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 4: **Route 49 Service Reduction**

Ms. Pettine states that she is before the Board today to seek approval for the elimination of Route 49. She states that the elimination of Route 49 is part of the series of COA recommendations that the Board voted on in June of 2013. Technically, the Board has already approved the elimination of Route 49. When the COA was conducted, Route 49 did have more service, so the planning department proposed that elimination by reducing the service last September. This historically has been one of the lowest performing routes in the system. It had the connection to Miriam Hospital for about ten (10) years and that did not help the route generate ridership to keep it in service guidelines. One of the early recommendations of the consultant was to remove this. Ms. Pettine states that there is a tricky geography in that neighborhood and it certainly would be difficult for people with accessibility issues, however, very few people are riding.

Because so much time has passed since the COA's approval to eliminate Route 49, RIPTA wanted to hold another Public Hearing specifically on this route to make sure the customers were aware of the elimination. Two meetings were held. One meeting was held during the day and one in the evening. The minutes of these meetings are attached in the paperwork the Board have been given. The evening meeting was more heavily attended than the daytime. The statistics are on the map attached as well. There is minimal service provided on Camp Street at this time due to the reduction implemented last September.

Mr. Williams asks if the geography of the area would prevent or be highly difficult for someone to get to one of the other Route Lines nearby. Ms. Pettine responds that it is tricky. The walk distance is certainly within reason for transit. There are sidewalk issues especially in the winter. It is well

within the ADA Corridor so that would be an option for people and any other folks that would qualify for service with Logisticare. For fixed route service, although there is the slope and has a vulnerable population it was still a reasonable walking distance and more importantly it carries so few people.

Ms. Pettine continues to say, not to respond directly to public comments, however earlier in the meeting numbers were thrown out there on how much the route costs and she wants to make sure the Board understands the cost of the service were estimates that the staff gave out at the meeting. She does not believe that cost is correct at this point due to the reduced service in place already. Mr. Therrien states that the true cost is the use of the vehicles that really could be used someplace else which is in need of more service.

Mr. Ginaitt asks if this is a full size vehicle that is used to service nine people and Ms. Pettine responds yes. He asks if there are other vehicles or service that can be provided to that area instead. Mr. Therrien responds that the driver assigned to this route would be assigned to another area as well however the attached other work would need the bigger bus. Mr. Ginaitt states that this would eliminate all front door service and Ms. Pettine responds yes. They would have to use R-Line or another route to get them in walking distance of the hospital. Mr. Therrien responds that there are few visitors that use the service, however there are no Miriam Hospital employees using it. Mr. Ginaitt states that this is a problem walk.

Mr. Durkee wonders if there can be some variation of this route which has nothing to do with the hospital, however would hit the neighborhood that the few passengers who do ride it could still get service.

Mr. Therrien states through the history of this route RIPTA has tried service in the neighborhoods, many people complained that the buses were on those roads. Tried to encourage employees of the Hospital to take the bus and no one took it. There have been many changes to this route over the years to increase ridership and it has never increased.

Mr. Ginaitt states that his concern would be more focused on making sure that there would be front door service to the Hospital for any patients that need to get there.

Mr. Williams questions if there could be some level of service for that area and asks Ms. Pettine and Mr. Therrien to take another look and see if there are any other avenues that RIPTA has not thought of yet to provide service to this area. Mr. Studley mentions that maybe there is something through the Flex Service that could provide that area service and that they will take a look at this and come back before the Board in September with their findings.

Mr. Williams agrees with Mr. Durkee's earlier comment, where are the riders and is there something RIPTA can do to provide some service.

Mr. Durkee understands that this is getting away from the absolutely stated goals from the COA which he supports one hundred percent. He understands that these have been difficult conversations through the COA process. The one distinction here is the geography of this area. That has to play into a bigger conversation.

Ms. Pettine understands, however would like to find a way to increase the ridership with any process that is put into place.

Mr. Williams understands how difficult it is to make some of these changes, however today the Board would like to take one more look at this and maybe there are none; however he would like to table this till next month or for however long is needed to do proper research.

Mr. Durkee makes a motion to table this for a later Board Meeting. Mr. Ginaitt seconds this motion and it passes unanimously.

Mr. Ginaitt also mentions that it may be helpful to actually see a daily accounting of ridership on this particular route. Mr. Ginaitt states that the Board is here to do the best thing for RIPTA; however this is one area that deserves a second look.

Agenda Item 5: Revised FY 15 Operating Budget with Finance Committee Approval

Ms DiLauro states that the Revised FY 15 Operating Budget was brought before the Finance Committee on August 6, 2014. She will be more than happy to answer any further questions that the Board may have.

Mr. Williams states how much he appreciates how quickly Ms. DiLauro responded via email to the questions that came out of the Finance Committee meeting. He states that they are so pleased at where RIPTA is at verses previous years and appreciates the hard work that Mr. Studley and his team have put into this.

Mr. Williams states that by the end of the meeting the Finance Committee approved the Budget to be brought before the Board for final approval.

Mr. Studley states that the FY 16 Budget will have to be to the State by October 1, 2014 and are scheduling a Finance Committee meeting to go over in detail then bring before the Board for final approval at the September Board Meeting.

Mr. Williams appreciates all the hard work on the FY 15 Budget and will review the FY 16 as well.

Mr. Ginaitt thanks the Finance Committee for taking the additional time and effort to review the Budget in detail.

Mr. Durkee makes a motion to approve the FY15 Revised Budget. Mr. Ginaitt seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 6: IFB 15-01 Paint Booth Inspection, Maintenance & Repair

Mr. Mencarini states that they are requesting an award of contract to Managed Air Systems, LLC of Bloomfield, CT for Paint Booth Inspection, Maintenance and Repair. This is a one year contract with up to four (4) annual renewal options to be exercised at the sole discretion of the Authority. It is grant funded 80 % from grant RI90-X058 and 20% from the Maintenance Operating Fund. They estimate the contract will cost \$40,000 per year for inspections, maintenance and repair with four

(4) option years bringing the total cost to \$200,000. This would provide a safer and more efficient working environment and will be performed in accordance with the Rhode Island Fire Safety Code. There is some training involved.

Mr. Ginaitt asks if consideration was given to response time with one company in Pawtucket and one in Connecticut. Mr. Mencarini responds that the IFB is the lowest cost responsive and feels that RIPTA will receive a similar response time from Connecticut. Mr. Mencarini states that RIPTA always appreciates local competition.

Mr. Ginaitt makes a motion to approve the award of contract as presented today. Mr. Durkee seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 7: Adjournment

Mr. Durkee makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ginaitt seconds and it passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie DiToro
Recording Secretary