

# RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### MINUTES OF Monday, January 25, 2016

**Board Members Present:** Mayor Scott Avedisian; Maureen Martin; Stephanie Ogidan Preston; Director Peter Alviti; Princess Sirleaf Bomba and Mark Susa.

**Absent:** Stephen Durkee and Margaret Holland McDuff

**Also Present:** Raymond Studley, CEO; Benjamin Salzillo, In-House Legal; Christian Capizzo, 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.

**Agenda Item 1:**      Approval of the December 14, 2015 Minutes

Director Alviti makes a motion to approve the December 14, 2015 Board Meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Preston seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

**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.)*

Mayor Avedisian welcomes Don Rhodes to speak. Mr. Rhodes is from the RIPTA Riders Alliance. He would like to mention two experiences he recently had with the Transit Authority. Mr. Rhodes states he was waiting for the R-Line bus last week and when it came into Kennedy Plaza, the driver got off the bus and after the passengers on the bus exited, the driver asked oncoming passengers to wait a moment. Out from the building at Kennedy Plaza came two gentleman and they went on the bus, cleaned it out and it was done in 3-4 minutes. This was great, however it was 8:15 pm at night and the wind-chill factor was about 10-15 below and the people have no access to this building at night. He feels that there has got to be some way that this building could be more useful. This is something that everyone should work together on.

Mr. Rhodes states that there are signs for adopt-a-highway, so why shouldn't the RIPTA Riders, RIPTA Board, and RIPTA staff volunteer to adopt-a-stop to take care of. He thinks it would be a good thing for everyone to consider. Mr. Rhodes has a handout to pass out to the Board and Mr. Schiller will speak on a few of the items. There is a letter to go to Governor Raimondo. There is something on the upcoming Board of Directors vacancies. He asks for the Board to feel free to contact him with any questions. Thank you.

Mr. Schiller is welcomed to speak next. He states that he is following up on what Mr. Rhodes just said. Mr. Schiller would like to make a couple of comments about legislation, some about building transit ridership and a brief comment about fares.

On legislation, he would like to encourage members of the Board and all RIPTA employees by supporting the Governor's proposal for Road Works. In his judgment, as a rider and motorist,

there is a need for a lot more revenue in the transportation system. It is common sense to have out of state truckers pay for some of the upkeep of the roads.

There is a letter to the Governor for more operations funds for RIPTA. In part, they are looking to address the building being closed at 7pm. Removing snow more effectively and to uphold the strategic plan that calls for extended hours of service all take operating funds.

What does it really take to build transit ridership? Mr. Schiller runs through all the potential capital projects that do not necessarily build ridership. What is needed is operating funds. The RIPTA Riders Alliance outlined a 14-point plan that was presented at a conference recently. Snow removal, icy conditions at Kennedy Plaza, speed up bus trips on all the lines by phasing in green light extensions and smart cards to speed up boarding. Look at individual bus stops where there are problems with adjacent property owners. Need to work with property owners to understand the bus passengers can be a resource and not seen only as a problem. At the State House there is barely any RIPTA presence. Kennedy Plaza still has some issues: he mentioned the building, concerns about transferring after dark to the north side of Burnside Park, lighting must be maintained, the perception of security at Kennedy Plaza is important. Maybe after 8 pm all the buses could go to the B Stop. Another issue at Kennedy Plaza is to make sure that vandalism gets removed quickly. It takes operating funds and we all need to work towards more of that.

A problem that exists and was brought to light recently with the recent fare controversy is that the bus system is seen as something for the poor. This is another reason RIPTA has only half the ridership it should have. This is a problem that can be addressed by marketing. Mr. Schiller does think it is a good idea to have a small fare so that everyone who uses the system pays something towards it.

Mr. Schiller suggests RIPTA start a committee similar to the ATAC for the Fixed Route. Post meetings about it in the terminal building and outreach through email and newsletters and try to get more rider input into decisions made at RIPTA.

This was done for the COA, but it no longer happens.

Thank you all for listening.

Mayor Avedisian welcomes Ms. Henry to speak. Ms. Henry states that she has some concerns about smoking at Kennedy Plaza. It is very prevalent there. She has a lot of concerns about crime at the plaza as well. She hears what others are saying around her and she hears that people know how much time they have to commit a crime before the police will show. This really concerns her and wanted to make this known today. She takes the bus all hours of the day, night and weekend. Today, coming to this meeting she had a rude and inconsiderate driver. There was no professional etiquette and no audio announcements on the bus to indicate when her stop was coming up.

Mayor Avedisian states that there have been a number of meetings with RIPTA staff and Providence Police regarding a police presence at Kennedy Plaza.

### **Agenda Item 3: CEO Update**

Mr. Studley states that RIPTA has put together a bus safety video. It went live this morning on You-Tube and will be presented to schools in Providence. Ms. Polichetti will show the video shortly. Mr. Studley states that along with the safety video there have been some changes to the new buses being produced. The new buses no longer have drum brakes, but rather disc brakes. Also about 7 months ago RIPTA took the bi-fold windshield out and replaced it with one solid windshield to help with driver visibility. RIPTA is also researching an audio alarm system;

it is in the infancy stages; however, when the bus makes a 45 degree turn an audio alarm will sound. It will also have a visual cue with flashing lights.

Mr. Studley states from a budgetary aspect revenues are down approximately \$1 million, however, expenses are down \$3 million. RIPTA continues to be fiscally responsible. RIPTA is working towards increasing ridership. Ms. Pettine and Mr. Studley have been meeting and looking into a Pawtucket Hub. Director Alviti put on a nice power point presentation and hopefully will present it in a month or so regarding a new transit hub.

As far as safety and security at Kennedy Plaza, this has always been a problem with 50-60 thousand people there a day. RIPTA is unable to use capital funding to pay for security issues; however, RIPTA has met with multiple downtown agencies, Providence Police and the City to work with everyone to have police presence and prevent as much crime as possible.

Mr. Studley states that the video was done by a local artist and welcomes Ms. Polichetti to present the safety video. Ms. Polichetti states that with the help of the training division and street supervisors RIPTA hones in on five safety points. Steer Production of Rhode Island with John Hope, the recording artist, this video came together to be relevant, fun and hopefully memorable so people will hone in on the safety tips and change their habits and be safe around the vehicles.

Ms. Polichetti plays the video.

Mr. Cute, 618 Union President, thanks everyone for this safety video. That addressed every concern he had as a bus driver for 35 years. This is a great piece. On behalf of the operators and union, he thanks them.

Ms. Martin asked what the plan is for distributing the video. Ms. Polichetti states that they wanted to go street level more than corporate level. They released it on You-Tube today. It will be on RIPTA's website later today. Then, RIPTA will bring this out to any schools and community centers that will take them. RIPTA along with Steer Productions created slices of this in small sections for a media campaign.

Ms. Sirleaf Bomba asked if RIPTA will show this to private schools and Ms. Polichetti responded yes of course.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Project Management Services for OneSolution Implementation**

Ms. LeClerc states that RIPTA brought in a project manager for a couple of months while she was out to assess OneSolution. It was long overdue to have someone delegated to this project. They have found that the level of attention and detail this project manager can give to this project is necessary. Ms. LeClerc is looking to keep the project manager on for an additional 860 hours for a total of \$77,400, covered 80% by grant money. RIPTA is still in the first phase of this project and sees that all hours will be needed.

Ms. Martin makes a motion to approve the contract as presented today. Director Alviti seconds the motion and passes unanimously.

**Agenda Item 5:        HVAC Replacement at 269 Melrose Street Building (Administration Area)**

Mr. Vendetti states that a Facilities Program Committee has been meeting to evaluate RIPTA's critical infrastructure equipment. RIPTA partnering with Energy Source and National Grid on the project could save us in \$45,000 in rebate savings from National Grid. This will streamline services and lessen vendor support, therefore decreasing operating costs. The equipment currently installed is considered well past its normal operational life expectancy.

Director Alviti makes the motion to approve this contract as presented today. Ms. Sirleaf Bomba seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

**Agenda Item 6:        Change Order to RFP 14-2, Scheduling & Dispatch Software for RIdc**

Mr. Therrien states that in 2014 new scheduling and dispatch software was installed in RIdc by Reveal Management Services (RMS). During the start up process the RIdc IVR (Interactive Voice Response) was abandoned due to system age and lack of vendor support. To increase customer service and control cost RIdc is seeking to install an IVR integrated with RMS software. The system will call customers with next day pick up times, permit customers to ride and use the automated system to verify and cancel trips and notify customers of vehicle arrivals just minutes prior to arriving.

Ms. Ogidan Preston makes a motion to accept the change order as presented today. Director Alviti seconds the motion and passes unanimously.

**Agenda Item 7:        RFP: 15-27 Development of the Rhode Island Bus Stop Design Guide**

Mr. Nordin states that he is asking the Board of Directors to award a contract to McMahon Associated in the amount of \$99,998.00 for the development of the Rhode Island Bus Stop Design Guide. The guidebook will be used to provide guidance during development of future roadway projects. This design guide will set minimum standards for RIPTA bus stops and will create a cohesive design language across the state. The standards established in this guidebook will also ensure bus stops are developed in an ADA-compliant fashion.

Mayor Avedisian asks about the funding. Ms. Pettine responds that the UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program) grant will fund \$80,000 of this project with RIPTA and RIDOT each contributing an additional \$10,000 each. RIPTA's contribution will be paid for from the operating budget.

Ms. Martin makes a motion to award the contract as presented. Director Alviti seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

**Agenda Item 8:        RFP: 16-09 Development of the RIPTA Quonset Transit Market Analysis & Service Plan**

Ms. Pettine introduces Mr. Seth Morgan, another Principal Planner in the Planning Department at RIPTA and he is the Project Manager for this study. Ms. Pettine states that this is another

UPWP project. \$47,468.80 funded by the UPWP Grant and \$11,867.20 Quonset Development Corporation local match.

Mr. Morgan states that he is asking the Board of Directors to award a contract to Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning in the amount of \$59,336 for the completion of the RIPTA Quonset Transit Market Analysis and Service Plan. This cost includes a \$5,394 contingency. He states the idea is to find out how to serve the major job locations in Quonset Business Park which will only grow in importance. It is challenging for RIPTA to serve with the normal service methodology because it has a large number of job sites across a large campus. It also has diverse locations where employees live all over the state. There are also a variety of shift times within the park. The report RIPTA envisions coming out of this analysis would include data collection, market analysis and transportation planning on how to set up services to function on a day-to-day basis.

Ms. Martin makes a motion to award the contract as presented today. Ms. Ogidan Preston seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

**Agenda Item 9: Approval of Amended Title VI Plan to FTA**

Mr. Salzillo states that this is the Title VI Report that RIPTA is required to submit to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) every three (3) years. Title VI basically says that RIPTA has to mitigate any foreseeable discrimination against transit riders in the community based on race, color, or national origin. The report was submitted to the Board for approval in April 2015. The board approved it and RIPTA submitted it to FTA. RIPTA has had discussions with FTA and they have asked RIPTA to revise certain information. RIPTA has made the necessary changes and now RIPTA is requesting Board Approval of this report with the necessary changes. This report includes an analysis on every bus line.

Ms. Pettine states that new regulations were released at the same time RIPTA submitted the previous plan and RIPTA was compliant under the old regulations. Ms. Griffin from FTA requested that RIPTA do an in-depth analysis on 31 major service changes, including South Attleboro. One thing that is not included in this report, but is required, is to collect minority and non-minority information through rider surveys. RIPTA promised to conclude a rider survey that would include demographic information by January 2017.

Director Alviti makes a motion to approve the Title VI report as presented today. Ms. Martin seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

**Agenda Item 10: Adjournment**

Ms. Martin makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Ogidan Preston seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marie DiToro  
Recording Secretary