



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 24, 2025
1:30 p.m.
269 Melrose Street, Providence
Transportation Board Room

Members Present: Director Peter Alviti, Board Chair; Robert Kells, Board Vice Chair; James Leach, Board Secretary; Normand Benoit; Vincent Masino; and James Lombardi.

Absent Members: Board Treasurer, Patrick Crowley; Heather Schey; and Marcy Reyes.

Also Present: Christopher Durand, CEO; Ed Pare, Esq., Board Counsel; Jacqueline Weidinger, Administrative Assistant-Executive Office; members of RIPTA's staff; and members of the public.

Call to Order: Director Alviti calls the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m., indicating that quorum was present.

Agenda Item 1: **To consider for approval the Draft Meeting Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of March 27, 2025.**

Mr. Kells makes a motion to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2025, meeting. Mr. Masino seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit, Mr. Leach, Mr. Lombardi, and Director Alviti.

Agenda Item 2: **Election of Officers**

Vice – Chair

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to re-elect Mr. Kells as Vice Chair. Mr. Leach seconds the motion and the motion passes with a favorable vote by Mr. Kells. Mr. Masino abstains from the vote, and Mr. Lombardi and Director Alviti vote no.

Secretary

Mr. Leach makes a motion to re-elect Mr. Crowley as Secretary. Mr. Masino seconds the motion and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit, Mr. Lombardi, Mr. Kells and Director Alviti.

Treasurer

Mr. Masino makes a motion to re-elect Mr. Leach as Treasurer. Mr. Lombardi seconds the motion and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit, Mr. Leach, Mr. Kells and Director Alviti.

Agenda Item 3: Public Comment

1. Walter Melillo ATU 618
 - States he is concerned about the lack of funding for RIPTA in the Governor's Budget.
 - States he is concerned for any loss of service and urges the Board to do whatever they can to support RIPTA.
 - States that RIPTA has done a lot of good and will continue to do so with the Board's support and continued funding.
2. Daria Phoebe Brashear
 - States she is excited to see what the Efficiency Study will show.
 - States that she is concerned about a stable funding source for RIPTA.
 - States that RI Football/Tidewater Stadium opens this week and she is looking forward to RIPTA's success with riders for these events.
3. Dylan Giles – Save RIPTA
 - States he testified at the Senate Finance Committee Meeting.
 - States that we should explore all funding options.
 - States he has spoken to 30 Legislatures and have sent 150 letters on RIPTA'S behalf.
 - States that RIPTA's service is a necessity for the riders to get to work, school, home, doctor appointments, etc.
4. Joe Cole – Advocate for RIPTA
 - States that Senate Bill S46 would help with RIPTA's funding.
 - States that we should be looking into alternatives for funding.
5. Mikeda Barnes – Ex Employee
 - States that she is concerned about funding for RIPTA.
 - States that she is concerned about loss of service.
 - States that she disagrees with things going on at RIPTA.
6. Grant Dulgarian – Ecology Action for Rhode Island
 - States he spoke at the Finance Committee Meeting and is concerned over the budget and how it will impact service to riders and further hiring for RIPTA.

Agenda Item 4: CEO Report

Christopher Durand, RIPTA's CEO, provides updates regarding the budget deficit. He also provides an update regarding ridership, on time performance, and bus stop improvements. No vote is taken.

Agenda Item 5: Request for Approval – Renewal of Commercial General Liability Policy

James O'Brien, Executive Director of Claims Management, makes the request.

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to approve the request. Mr. Masino seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Leach, Mr. Kells, Mr. Lombardi and Director Alviti.

Agenda Item 6: Request for Approval – Renewal of Commercial Umbrella Liability Policy

James O'Brien, Executive Director of Claims Management, makes the request.

Mr. Masino makes a motion to approve the request. Mr. Lombardi seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Leach, Mr. Kells, Mr. Benoit and Director Alviti.

Agenda Item 7: Request for Approval – Renewal of Commercial Property Policy

James O'Brien, Executive Director of Claims Management for RIPTA, makes the request.

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to approve Option #1 of the request. Mr. Masino seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Lombardi, Mr. Leach, Mr. Kells and Director Alviti.

Agenda Item 8: Request for Approval – Renewal of Cyber Liability Policy

James O'Brien, Executive Director of Claims Management, makes the request.

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to approve the request. Mr. Lombardi seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Masino, Mr. Leach, Mr. Kells and Director Alviti.

Agenda Item 9: Operating Budget and Efficiency Study Update

Christopher Durand, CEO and Nathan Watchous Deputy Chief of Finance

Mr. Durand and Mr. Watchous give an update on the Operating Budget and Efficiency Study. They also give an update regarding Finance Hearings and the budget deficit.

No vote is taken.

Agenda Item 10: Request for Approval – Award Of Contract - Towing

John Chadwick, Deputy Chief of Procurement, makes the request.

Mr. Masino makes a motion to approve the request. Mr. Kells seconds and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Benoit, Mr. Leach, Mr. Lombardi and Director Alviti.

Agenda Item 11: Board Questions and Answers

The Board of Directors discusses the Gas Tax and how it will affect RIPTA's budget deficit. The Board of Directors agree to do everything they can to help with the deficit.

No votes are taken.

Agenda Item 12: Executive Session to consider, discuss and act upon such matters as may be closed to the public pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5: (a)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation; (a)(5) Any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public; and (a)(7) A matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest. Public funds shall include any investment plan or matter related thereto, including, but not limited to, state lottery plans for new promotions.

Mr. Lombardi motions to enter Executive Session. Mr. Leach seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Masino, Director Alviti, Mr. Kells and Mr. Benoit.

The Board enters into Executive Session to consider, discuss and act upon such matters as may be closed to the public pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5: (a)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation; (a)(5) Any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public; and (a)(7) A matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest. Public funds shall include any investment plan or matter related thereto, including, but not limited to, state lottery plans for new promotions.

The Board and Counsel enter into Executive Session at 2:45pm.

The Board and Counsel enter public session at 2:56pm.

Attorney Pare reports that only one vote was taken during Executive Session. A vote to adjourn Executive Session.

Mr. Benoit makes a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Mr. Masino, seconds, and

the motion passes with favorable votes by Mr. Leach, Director Alviti, Mr. Kells and Mr. Lombardi.

Agenda Item 13: **Adjournment – 3:01pm**

Mr. Masino makes a motion to adjourn. Mr. Benoit seconds, and the motion passes with favorable votes by Director Alviti, Mr. Leach, Mr. Kells and Mr. Lombardi.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Crowley, Secretary