

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA WATER EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

(November 9, 2017)

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority met in regular session at the Port of San Francisco, Pier 1 in San Francisco, CA.

1. CALL TO ORDER – BOARD CHAIR

Chair Jody Breckenridge called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Breckenridge, Director DelBono, Director Timothy Donovan, Director Anthony Intintoli, and Vice Chair James Wunderman were in attendance.

3. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Breckenridge reported that since the last meeting, she had spent time at the California State University Maritime Academy in Vallejo educating them about WETA services and the agency's role in the Bay Area. She said that because of its location and curriculum, the university is the premiere training facility for the agency's future workforce. She also thanked Director DelBono for his service during the recent North Bay fire disaster and noted that 2017 had been a difficult year for California firefighters throughout the state.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Vice Chair Wunderman reported that he had attended the Bay Area Council's annual dinner honoring local business leaders and said he had used that opportunity to raise \$3M for North Bay fire relief. He said he had been pleased to be the emcee at the November 1 groundbreaking event for the new WETA Richmond Ferry Terminal which, he added, had been very well attended and a great success. Vice Chair Wunderman further noted that WETA's Executive Director Nina Rannells and Planning and Development Manager Kevin Connolly had presented at the recent Bay Area Council Water Transit Subcommittee meeting on the topic of what the future of Regional Measure 3 (RM3) will hold. He emphasized that WETA needs to be very clear and vocal about what it plans to do with RM3 money so that everyone is aware of the benefits that passing the measure will bring to the Bay Area.

Vice Chair Wunderman also reported that the lease for the restaurant on the Berkeley waterfront would soon be up for renewal. He said he did not know if the lease was going to be renewed, and he understood that there was no long term funding available at this time to support WETA ferry service in Berkeley, but that he still thought it was a development worth mentioning.

Director Intintoli reported that he had attended the Solano Transportation Authority's 20th Annual Awards event on November 8 where he had accepted an award, a congressional commendation, and congressional recognition on WETA's behalf. He presented the Special Award trophy for WETA to Ms. Rannells, along with the Commendation for WETA's steadfast commitment to increase service and provide tangible enhancements to the facilities and operations at the Vallejo terminal, which annually serves over one million riders. Director Intintoli also presented the Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from the California Legislature Assembly in honor of WETA's significant contribution to improving the quality of life in Solano County by supporting transportation projects that bolster mobility, safety and economic vitality.

Director Intintoli also reported that the City of Vallejo was working on phase two of its parking facility which was expected to improve parking availability for WETA's ferry riders who park on the city's waterfront.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF

Executive Director Nina Rannells shared her written report with Directors and welcomed questions. She introduced Operations Manager Keith Stahnke who provided an overview of events on the evening of November 6 when the MV *Intintoli* lost power in both engines mid-voyage during the commute service period.

Mr. Stahnke said that the disruption had been an extraordinary occurrence, and noted that the safety of passengers and the vessel had remained the primary objective and focus throughout the event. He explained that the vessel had been forced to anchor due to two propulsion failures after its departure from San Francisco when it was more than ten miles away from its Vallejo destination. He said that the crew received substantial assistance from shore-side operations and engineering staff during the event, and that the nearest tugboat that could provide assistance was arranged within 30 minutes but was over an hour away from the anchored vessel. He said that with the slow towing speed, the MV *Intintoli* arrived at the dock 4 hours late. Mr. Stahnke said that while this was a major delay and there were many complaints, passengers had generally remained calm on the vessel during the time that it was anchored and towed to Vallejo. Ms. Rannells noted that she reviewed all comments received from passengers and that the common thread throughout the messages was a request for a refund of their tickets. She noted that WETA generally does not provide refunds to customers when a trip is completed, but that this was an extraordinary circumstance and that she recognized that we should compensate riders in some way. She explained to the Board that WETA and Blue & Gold staff were developing a means to provide a special voucher for a free round trip to compensate the affected passengers for the service disruption.

Mr. Stahnke further reported that the vessel had already been repaired and was in the middle of a 4 hour sea trial with the Coast Guard to confirm its safety and reliability, and to support its return to service as soon as possible. He clarified that the cause of the problem had been rooted in the mechanical failure of a fuel injector that had been replaced 3 days before the event, and in a sensor failure on the second engine. Mr. Stahnke added that he felt that the situation had generally been handled well, but noted that customer service and more frequent communication to passengers could be improved.

Director Intintoli said he favored the idea of giving the riders who were delayed a voucher for a free ferry ride as a gesture of goodwill and acknowledgement that the disruption was out of the ordinary for WETA service. Vice Chair Wunderman offered that perhaps a gift certificate for a dinner would also be a nice gesture to help make up for the inconvenience the riders experienced.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Hans Korve of Korve Consulting said that WETA service and vessels were becoming progressively more unreliable, and that WETA should be leasing smaller vessels from the new private ferry operators to improve service and efficiency on the South San Francisco route.

Mr. Connolly said that WETA's South San Francisco vessels were regularly operating with 65 to 70 percent passenger capacities, and that the service was actually doing very well. He further noted that the ridership continued to grow year over year, and said that WETA had increased passenger capacity on its South San Francisco vessels to support the continued anticipated growth on the route.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Director DelBono made a motion to approve the consent calendar which included:

- a. Board Meeting Minutes – October 5, 2017

Director Donovan seconded the motion and the consent calendar carried unanimously.

Yeas: Breckenridge, DelBono, Donovan, Intintoli, Wunderman. Nays: None.

7. AUTHORIZE RELEASE OF A REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR MARINE ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Mr. Stahnke presented this item to authorize the release of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for marine engineering and construction management services for passenger vessel projects. He said that over the next three years, WETA will implement several vessel rehabilitation projects and has a need to retain the services of an experienced marine engineering and construction management firm to support the development and management of this work. He explained that the services would be contracted to support the MV *Peralta* Midlife Refurbishment, the MV *Solano* Midlife Refurbishment, and the MV *Scorpio* Quarter Life Refurbishment projects. He further noted that staff anticipated being in a position to recommend award of the contract for these services in early 2018.

Director Intintoli made a motion to approve the item.

Director Donovan seconded the motion and the item carried unanimously.

Yeas: Breckenridge, DelBono, Donovan, Intintoli, Wunderman. Nays: None.

8. AUTHORIZE RELEASE OF A REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR TECHNICAL AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR WETA TERMINAL PROJECTS

Mr. Stahnke presented this item to authorize the release of a RFQ for Technical and Construction Management services for WETA Terminal projects. He explained that the RFQ will solicit qualified firms to provide expertise in design, engineering, permitting, and construction management services for WETA terminal projects. Mr. Stahnke said that the projects to benefit from the services included the Vallejo Ferry Terminal Maintenance Dredging and the South San Francisco Ferry Terminal Maintenance Dredging, and that staff anticipated being in a position to recommend award of the contract in early 2018. He further noted that maintenance dredging at the two terminals was required to ensure uninterrupted ferry service at all tidal levels, and he explained that using this process for support will allow WETA to utilize federal funding for the projects.

Director Donovan made a motion to approve the item.

Director Intintoli seconded the motion and the item carried unanimously.

Yeas: Breckenridge, DelBono, Donovan, Intintoli, Wunderman. Nays: None.

9. DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO FERRY TERMINAL EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE

Senior Planner Mike Gougherty presented an overview of the progress to date of the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project. Mr. Gougherty acknowledged the concerns raised by local businesses on the waterfront about the visual aesthetics of the project and said staff had been meeting with the group and working on solutions to meet their needs as well as the safety requirements of the project. He said a solution was in process that would allow for mobile curtains to be utilized as safety protection to shield passersby from welding arc exposure. Mr. Gougherty further explained that as Phase 2 of the project commences, future work on the project will include rebar installation and concrete pours to construct the structural deck required to support the future promenade area and access to the new gates. He said that WETA will continue to provide all interested stakeholders, including the adjacent property owners and tenants, funding partners, and ferry riders, with comprehensive and current updates regarding project progress through the WETA website, emails, and social media informational outlets.

Vice Chair Wunderman asked how much of the work was being done offsite for the project. Mr. Gougherty explained that much of the work that would normally be done onsite was being done offsite, and being brought in on barges on the bay to the work site, as a result of the small lay-down area for the construction and in an effort to mitigate disruption to business on, and public enjoyment of, the waterfront and WETA's regular ferry service at the San Francisco terminals.

10. OVERVIEW OF PROJECTED FIVE-YEAR VESSEL FLEET NEEDS

Mr. Connolly presented an overview of WETA's fleet for the five year period from 2017-2022 to provide context for upcoming recommendations for vessel investment opportunities and WETA's service planning decisions. He shared a slideshow that included new additions to the fleet and vessel maintenance schedules that will impact service. It was noted that spare vessels were scant throughout the next five years and that completion of the Central Bay Maintenance Facility was expected to greatly enhance WETA's vessel maintenance capabilities and efficiencies.

Director Donovan suggested that staff refer to spare vessels as stand-by vessels because of the connotation of the word spare. He said that the vessels not in service at a given time were not really spares, but standing by to be put into service immediately if anything unexpectedly happened to disrupt any of the regularly scheduled vessels. He emphasized that a smart ratio of standby vessels to scheduled vessels was crucial to a healthy and efficient fleet, and to running a successful and robust service.

Chair Breckenridge said that the State needs to be engaged and educated about low emission vessels. She asked what size vessels can be used in Mission Bay, and Mr. Stahnke said Mission Bay will support any of the WETA vessel sizes. Chair Breckenridge commended Mr. Connolly and staff on the vessel overview and projections presentation.

Director Del Bono asked when staff would be in a position to move forward with the first new vessel. Ms. Rannells said that staff would like to return with a recommendation for authorization to move forward as early as the December meeting. She noted that approximately \$9 million in Proposition 1B funds are available and that the balance of the cost could be covered with RM1 and State Transit Assistance reserves.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Korve said that WETA should consider if there are opportunities to coordinate with Golden Gate Ferry to procure vessels together and also suggested that WETA look into purchasing used vessels. He also asked when the Blue & Gold Fleet contract operator contract expires. Ms. Rannells said the contract will expire in 4 years.

Representing Masters, Mates & Pilots, Veronica Sanchez said that regarding emergency response responsibilities, the fact that the South San Francisco terminal can only support smaller vessels reinforced the importance of WETA service in Redwood City.

Patrick Murphy, President of WETA's contract operator Blue & Gold Fleet, said WETA has access to Blue & Gold Fleet's smaller vessels if needed.

11. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No additional public comments were shared.

All business having been concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

- Board Secretary