

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

*(January 10, 2013)*

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority met in regular session at the WETA offices at Pier 9, Suite 111, San Francisco, CA.

**1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Charlene Haught Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m. Directors present were Vice Chair Anthony Intintoli, Director Gerald Bellows and Director Timothy Donovan. Vice Chair Intintoli led the pledge of allegiance.

**2. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR**

No report.

**3. REPORT OF DIRECTORS**

No report.

**4. APPROVE 2012 – 2021 SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN**

Chair Johnson introduced this item regarding staff's request for the Board to adopt, by resolution, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority's Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) for Fiscal Years 2012-2021. She noted that the item would be taken out of order to accommodate members of the public who wished to speak.

Public Comment

Hon. Osby Davis, Mayor, City of Vallejo and member of the Solano Transit Authority, thanked the Board and Executive Director Nina Rannells for considering and including Vallejo's comments in the SRTP. He stated that the City was committed to ferry service in Vallejo, and that although there had been some bumps during the transition of the service to WETA that the City was dedicated to increasing ridership, sustaining service levels, and facilitating the growth of the service through projects such as the Vallejo Transit Center and the new parking garage. He emphasized the City's commitment to work with WETA in any way that they could regarding the service.

Public Comment

Hon. Elizabeth Patterson, Mayor, City of Benicia and Chair, SolTrans, noted that her experience with a consolidation of a transit agency gave her an appreciation of the challenges WETA had faced and that Benicia was glad to be a part of the process. She said that one commitment Benicia was making to the project through RM2 funding was the new \$1.3 million intermodal transit center, which would facilitate regional transit connections to destinations such as Vallejo's new parking garage. Ms. Patterson said that the City stood ready to continue discussions with WETA regarding the ferry service and closed by thanking Vice Chair Intintoli for his communication with the cities regarding ways that they can work together with WETA during this process.

Public Comment

Hon. Pedro Gonzales, Mayor, City of South San Francisco, spoke in his capacity of co-chair of Water Transit Advocates for San Mateo County. He noted that twelve years of hard work had finally paid off with the debut of South San Francisco ferry service in June 2012 but that unfortunately ridership had not met expectations and that many were now questioning the viability of the service. He said that the Water Transit Advocates had worked tirelessly to promote the service and were committed to continuing to work with WETA to find ways to make the service succeed. Mr. Gonzales said that he was proud that South San Francisco was among the first nine sites to be identified for a

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new ferry service. He said that several meetings and activities were underway to identify solutions to promote the new service and that he looked forward to seeing continued growth in ridership over time.

Public Comment

Hon. Rob Schroder, Mayor, City of Martinez, thanked the WETA Board and staff for listening to the cities' concerns and for the inclusion of their comments in the SRTP. He noted that Martinez was the county seat of Contra Costa County and home to numerous county facilities including the Office of Emergency Services, which was particularly relevant to WETA's mission. Mr. Schroder said that he continued to look forward to working with WETA staff and the City of Antioch on the challenges in bringing ferry services to their communities, noting that future ferry service was part of Martinez' economic development plan and well as a key part of their intermodal transit station.

Public Comment

Hon. Wade Harper, Mayor, City of Antioch, emphasized his appreciation for WETA's willingness to be responsive to the cities during the process and for the inclusion of the cities' comments in the SRTP. He asked that WETA's Community Advisory Committee meet more frequently and again thanked WETA for their engagement through the process.

Public Comment

Paul Kamen, Naval Architect and member, Berkeley Waterfront Commission, stated that the ridership numbers on the South San Francisco service had been dismal. He said that looking at farebox recovery was disingenuous because it hid the actual dollars being spent, stating that from the informal numbers he has seen that the subsidy was well over \$100 for each one way trip. Mr. Kamen said that he could not see how a public agency could justify this and that it may be time to scale back WETA's entire program. He went on to say that he was skeptical of the "emergency" part of Water Emergency Transportation Authority, as there were over 30 private charter vessels in the Bay which would be available during an emergency and that what WETA's role could have been to provide vehicle ferries which could access small access ramps which would be seismically viable during a large scale disaster. Mr. Kamen said that early advocates of ferry service to Berkeley such as himself would be embarrassed by the way the program was progressing. In closing, he urged the Board to take a close look at how the funds were being spent and whether service of this scale is justified by the ridership projections.

Public Comment

John Mann, Waterfront Manager and Secretary, Berkeley Waterfront Commission, clarified that Mr. Kamen did not speak on behalf of the City of Berkeley but as a private citizen. Mr. Kamen agreed and clarified that he did not intend otherwise.

Public Comment

Diane Howard, Chair, WETA Community Advisory Committee and Co-chair, Water Transit Advocates for San Mateo County, and member of the blue ribbon task force that was responsible for the creation of the Water Transit Authority, spoke on behalf of the Redwood City Chamber of Commerce and the Water Transit Advocates. On behalf of the Chamber, she noted support for inclusion of Redwood City service in the SRTP and that WETA put service to Redwood City in a state of readiness so that in the event that funding became available the project could be moved forward. On behalf of the Chamber and the Water Transit Advocates, she asked that WETA reexamine ridership projections due to accelerated development in proximity to the site identified as the likely terminal location in Redwood City. She also thanked WETA for ongoing work on the project and continuing an open dialogue regarding Redwood City service.

Public Comment

Rich Seithel, Chief of Annexations and Economic Stimulus Programs, Contra Costa County, registered agreement with comments from Mr. Harper and Mr. Schroder. He thanked the WETA

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Board and staff for engaging in constructive dialogue and said he looked forward to continuing to do so in the CCTA workgroup.

#### Public Comment

Mike Giari, Executive Director, Port of Redwood City noted his long history of support and engagement with WETA and its predecessor agency in bringing ferry service to Redwood City. He said that the approval of this SRTP would mark WETA's transition into being an operator. He said that the Port understands the challenges of implementing ferry service, including the preparation and planning required as well as resolving funding issues. He noted Ms. Howard's indication that \$15 million in San Mateo County Measure A funding had been secured for the Redwood City project. He urged WETA to update ridership forecasts for the South Bay in order to reflect the economic activity in the region.

Chair Johnson asked Ms. Rannells for any additional thoughts. Ms. Rannells replied that the comments received on the SRTP had fallen into two categories, one expressing a concern for the ongoing support of the services currently operating and another primarily focused on continuing to look at ways to move expansion projects forward. She said that both types of comments had been addressed in changes made to the SRTP.

Vice Chair Intintoli emphasized the need for these efforts to be collaborative, noting that the most daunting challenge for both new and existing services was operations funding. He said the cities needed to work with their representatives to explore and identify new sources of operating funds rather than taking funds being used by the existing services. Vice Chair Intintoli said that the cities who were interested in ferry service should maintain hope but that they would need to be proactive in collectively securing operations funding in order to demonstrate that their services were viable.

Vice Chair Intintoli made a motion to approve the resolution. Director Bellows seconded the motion the item carried unanimously.

#### **5. REPORTS OF STAFF**

Ms. Rannells addressed several items in addition to her written report. First, she introduced Kevin Connelly, WETA's new Manager of Planning and Development. She reviewed his 12 years of recent experience in transit planning, including his most recent work as a Transit Planning Manager at Valley Transit Authority in Santa Clara County. Ms. Rannells noted that she felt he was extremely qualified for the position.

Secondly, she noted an excursion ride on December 17 with Therese McMillian, Deputy Director of the FTA. She said that staff had an opportunity to review WETA's overall program with her and to show her the location of the proposed Central Bay Maintenance Facility and to point out the general location of the proposed Berkeley and Richmond sites.

Third, she asked Keith Stahnke, Manager of Operations, to review several operation items, including the closeout of the Oakland Jack London Square float replacement, the completion of the Harbor Bay dredging project, and the completion of the main engine overhaul for *Encinal*.

Mr. Stahnke noted that a WETA vessel recently assisted in an effort to look for signs of oil spills after a tanker had collided with the Bay Bridge. Mr. Stahnke also spoke of an incident in New York which had caused damage and injury and noted that crew training on all WETA services to avoid these situations was ongoing.

Vice Chair Intintoli asked if crew could make announcements to prevent people from queuing before vessels were docked in order to increase safety in the event of an incident like the one in New York. Mr. Stahnke replied that this was not a regulation, but it was best practice. Director

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Bellows suggested that some way should be found to let passengers know that they should remain seated until the vessel was docked for their own safety.

Director Bellows noted an appreciation for an innovative approach to building a lift on the new Clay Street float. Mr. Stahnke noted that he was pleased with the result and that it had been a substantial savings for WETA.

Director Donovan asked what practices were followed during medical emergencies onboard such as the recent passenger heart attack. Mr. Stahnke said that the ferry would immediately proceed to the closest facility where that boat could be securely docked and that dispatch would arrange to have the boat met by an EMT. He noted that crews have CPR and basic first aid training as well as AED and oxygen on board to care for passengers until they are delivered to an EMT.

#### **6. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Vice Chair Intintoli made a motion to approve the consent calendar which included the minutes from the December 13, 2012 meeting. Director Bellows seconded the motion the item carried unanimously.

#### **7. RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION AND REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION**

Chair Johnson called the meeting into closed session at 2:05 p.m. Upon reopening of the meeting at 3:00 p.m. she reported that no action had been taken.

#### **8. ADJOURNMENT**

All business having concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Board Secretary

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