

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

(January 10, 2019)

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) met in regular session at the Craneway Pavilion in Richmond, CA.

1. CALL TO ORDER – BOARD CHAIR

Chair Jody Breckenridge called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Breckenridge, Vice Chair Wunderman, Director Anthony Intintoli, Director Jeffrey DelBono, and Director Nick Josefowitz were in attendance.

3. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Breckenridge welcomed attendees and reminded guests about the new Richmond ferry service launch celebration event that was scheduled to begin after the Board meeting. She said that she has continued to speak with state government and private entities about green initiatives and looks forward to sharing more about that as those discussions continue.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Vice Chair Wunderman welcomed attendees and said that Directors were very excited about launching the new Richmond ferry service that day. He said that the passing of Regional Measure 3 by Bay Area voters in June of 2018 would allow even further expansion if the measure is able to survive the threats of several lawsuits challenging its validity. Vice Chair Wunderman said that in his conversations with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission about the Measure he remained optimistic. He added that he had joined the WETA Board to help make it into a cutting edge, world class transportation agency and continued expansion and green technology objectives will help to make it so. Vice Chair Wunderman further pointed to a letter he had sent to WETA Directors on hovercraft technology possibilities for WETA ferry service.

Director Intintoli congratulated the City of Richmond on the new ferry service.

Director DelBono said he would like to see WETA sponsor trips from Richmond to San Francisco for economically disadvantaged youth riders and indicated that he would work to further develop this concept. Chair Breckenridge agreed that the idea should be further explored.

Director Josefowitz said he was also very excited about launching the new Richmond service.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF

Ms. Rannells shared her written report with Directors. She noted that more than 400 passengers had ridden the new Richmond ferry service that morning. Ms. Rannells said that the launch of the new Richmond service had been achieved with the help of many entities, and she was very happy to see this day finally arrive.

Chair Breckenridge asked for an update on Treasure Island ferry service planning developments. Planning & Development Manager Kevin Connolly said that the City is presently in the process of identifying their specific transportation plans related to the Treasure Island development. He said WETA staff had continued to meet with the planning team regularly and had recently learned of two target dates; the residential unit buildout-driven date of approximately 2023 or 2024 for ferry service to be operational, and the optimistically ideal date of 2021, when the Board of Supervisors would like to see a working ferry on the island. Mr. Connolly said that WETA's regular meetings with the planners would continue.

Director Josefowitz said he would like to see a representative from the San Francisco County Transportation Authority make a presentation on the progress and plans for the Treasure Island development at a future Board meeting.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

- a. Board Meeting Minutes – December 13, 2018
- b. Approve Actions Related to Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project Enhancements
- c. Approve Amendment to Agreement with FOTH Infrastructure & Environment, LLC to Provide Additional Engineering and Construction Management Services for the Ferry Terminal Dredging Projects

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

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

7. OVERVIEW OF SMALL VESSEL EXPLORATORY STUDY

Mr. Connolly presented this informational item on the recent exploratory study to identify opportunities for WETA to pursue possible development of a small vessel fleet and services. He explained that the study was tasked to identify specific routes best suited for small vessel services and potential pilot routes where small vessels could be used to test market potential for ferry service.

Mr. Connolly introduced Anthony Bruzzone, Associate Principal from Arup North America (Arup) who, along with Lauren Dong from Arup, helped facilitate the Small Vessel Exploratory Committee's work. Mr. Bruzzone presented a slideshow for the Board of the Committee's findings thus far. There followed a robust conversation with general comments and concerns shared by Directors, including;

- the careful assessment of a community's geography when considering small vessel potential;
- the interest to connect existing public transit to WETA ferries;
- hub and spoke service ideas for North and South Bay communities;
- the possibility of contracting out the operation of smaller vessels;
- the passenger experience on smaller vessels;
- the interest in building less expensive terminal facilities faster than has been done historically, while still assuring public safety and ADA accessibility at all facilities, and;
- the interest in exploring hovercraft technology.

Directors agreed that the work to date was a good first step and that these efforts represent an exciting opportunity for future WETA service expansion. The Board directed staff to continue refining the work and to bring it back to Directors for discussion at a future date.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

City of Richmond Mayor Tom Butt said he was very happy that Richmond ferry service was launching. He said that it has been a full twenty years since the Richmond City Council first passed a resolution to institute ferry service. Mayor Butt thanked Ms. Rannells and Directors for their partnership and efforts to bring the ferry service to Richmond at last.

Dave Shoenthal of the Point Richmond Neighborhood Council said his wife commutes into San Francisco and is thrilled that the ferry has arrived in Richmond. He thanked Directors and the City of Richmond for bringing the new service to the City.

Sun Power Senior Director of Product and Brand, Mike Tonsing thanked the City of Richmond and WETA for bringing the ferry to Richmond. He said that many of Sun Power's 200 employees live in San Francisco and will be commuting via the new ferry service. Mr. Tonsing noted that WETA had been a great partner throughout the construction work on the terminal, grounds and parking lot.

Marsha Mather-Thrift, Executive Director of the Rosie the Riveter Trust, said that the museum has recently experienced an increase in visitors – from 20M to 70M visitors annually. She explained that the National Park was located exactly where guests of the meeting were presently sitting. Ms. Mather-Thrift said that she was very excited about the ferry and in partnering with WETA to add future weekend service to bring even more visitors to the museum to learn about Richmond's rich and vibrant waterfront history.

Matt Lewis from Visit Richmond said he worked in the tourism office for the City of Richmond and was very happy to be promoting the new ferry service to visitors.

Brandon Evans of the City of Richmond Economic Development Commission extended an invitation to Directors to come out and talk with the Commission about WETA's service offerings and future plans for expansion.

Richmond City Councilmember Demnlus Johnson III welcomed WETA to Richmond and thanked Directors and Mayor Butt for their partnership and work to bring the new ferry service to the City. He said he was very excited about the new service, the possibilities it will afford Richmond residents, and most especially the cars that will be removed from Highway 80 commute traffic because of it.

Chair Breckenridge acknowledged receipt of three letters received by the Board since the last meeting including:

- A December 18, 2018 letter from City of Richmond Mayor Tom Butt requesting that WETA use RM3 funds to supplant Measure J funds earmarked by Richmond to support the new Richmond ferry service in order to provide the City of Richmond the flexibility to leverage Measure J money to fund other ferry-related projects and/or services in West Contra Costa County.
- A January 7, 2019 letter to the Board from the Bay Area Council, signed by Vice Chair Wunderman in his capacity as a WETA Board Director, detailing the potential benefits of hovercraft technology and requesting that WETA conduct a study on its use in the Bay Area.
- A January 9, 2019 letter, from City of Alameda Senior Transportation Planner Rochelle Wheeler, expressing support for WETA's small vessel study and encouraging WETA to consider a pilot route between Alameda and Jack London Square to test out the viability of smaller vessels.

All business having been concluded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

- Board Secretary

END