

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

(January 14, 2021)

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority met in regular session via videoconference consistent with California Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Orders N-25-20 and N-29-20 to ensure social distancing and help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair James Wunderman called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. He welcomed directors, staff, and meeting guests and noted that the meeting was being recorded. Chair Wunderman advised guests about offering public comment and how guests could sign up to speak throughout the meeting.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Wunderman, Director Jessica Alba, Director Jeffrey DelBono, Director Anthony Intintoli, and Director Monique Moyer were in attendance.

3. ADOPT RESOLUTIONS OF RECOGNITION FOR RETIRING STAFF

Chair Wunderman introduced this special order of business in recognition of retiring WETA staff and introduced Executive Director Nina Rannells who presented the item recommending the adoption of resolutions in recognition of Operations & Maintenance Manager Keith Stahnke and Finance & Administration Manager Lynne Yu.

Ms. Rannells said this item provides well-deserved recognition to Mr. Stahnke and Ms. Yu who will both be retiring within the next few weeks. She stated that everybody's contributions count, especially in a small organization and that she could not have led the agency to accomplish much without them by her side adding that it was a privilege to have them as her partners.

Ms. Rannells commended Mr. Stahnke for the operations and maintenance of the facilities, terminals, and vessels noting that under his leadership, WETA has built the cleanest passenger ferry vessels in the nation. She thanked Mr. Stahnke for his support and leadership, for bringing the maritime expertise to WETA, and for creating nurturing partnerships with WETA's passengers and the maritime workforce.

Mr. Stahnke thanked Ms. Rannells for the nice words and stated that he was proud of all that had been accomplished.

Ms. Rannells then recognized Ms. Yu. Ms. Rannells stated that when she was promoted to Executive Director, her first step was to bring in Ms. Yu in as the Finance & Administration Manager having worked with her at the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District.

Ms. Rannells said that Ms. Yu had navigated the very complex world of transportation and funding managing to secure almost \$500 million in federal, state, and local monies to expand ferry service in the Bay Area. Ms. Rannells praised Ms. Yu for maximizing the value of every dollar secured and

spent to the benefit of the public noting that under Ms. Yu, WETA has been lauded for its financial performance, stability, and transparency. Ms. Rannells thanked Ms. Yu for providing a strong example of responsible and effective government, her dedication, and wished her happiness in her retirement.

Ms. Yu thanked Ms. Rannells for her kind words and for the opportunity, challenges, and growth while at WETA.

Chair Wunderman thanked Mr. Stahnke and Ms. Yu for their career of dedication and service to the WETA and wished them all the best.

Chair Wunderman invited Public Information & Marketing Manager Thomas Hall to cue up a video highlighting Ms. Rannells' accomplishments as Executive Director with testimonials offered by past and present Board Members and various maritime community stakeholders.

Chair Wunderman complemented the team for putting the video together and capturing many of Ms. Rannells' contributions which reminded him how proud he was of the organization.

The Directors expressed their appreciation of the staff and thanked them for their hard work, dedication, and contributions and thanked Ms. Rannells for her leadership, support, friendship, for building a strong foundation for the WETA, and for teaching everyone how to do a peaceful transfer of power.

Ms. Rannells reflected on her 15-year career at the WETA stating that it was the best job in Bay Area transportation as the Executive Director which enabled her to plan and build a whole new service. She warmly acknowledged WETA's first Board Chair, the late Charlene Haught Johnson who took a chance and gave her the opportunity to step into the job.

Ms. Rannells thanked the Board for their kind words, support, and for recognizing and acknowledging all the hard work that she and her team have delivered. She thanked Blue & Gold Fleet (Blue & Gold), the unions, and all WETA's partners including the cities and staff for their work and support.

Ms. Rannells said she felt could leave knowing that Executive Director Designate Seamus Murphy was going to be at the helm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Various maritime stakeholders including union representatives, private partners, and staff offered their congratulations and best wishes to all and thanked Ms. Rannells for her leadership, integrity, friendship, for being an inspiration, and leaving a legacy.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU) of the Pacific Regional Director Robert Estrada read a resolution recognizing Ms. Rannells for her invaluable contributions and dedication to the creation of expanded ferry service on San Francisco Bay and wished her great success in the future which he said would be presented for passage at the next IBU Executive Committee meeting.

Director Moyer made a motion to adopt the resolutions:

- a. Adopt Resolutions in Recognition of Keith Stahnke and Lynne Yu

Director DelBono seconded the motion and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, DelBono, Intintoli, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None.

Director Intintoli made a motion to adopt the resolution:

- b. Adopt Resolution in Commendation of Nina Rannells

Director Moyer seconded the motion and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, DelBono, Intintoli, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None.

4. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Wunderman reported that the pandemic has caused everyone to put their lives in society on hold and that he personally, has lost a couple of close family members and friends to the disease which has deeply affected him. He added that it was about the future and felt confident that the vaccination program was going to take effect and enable people to return to work.

5. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

The Directors reoffered their congratulations and best wishes to retiring staff and welcomed Mr. Murphy onboard.

Director Alba reported that she had attended the Redwood City City Council Meeting with WETA staff and was happy to say that the Redwood City Ferry Financial Feasibility Study & Cost-Benefit and Economic Impact Analyses Report was approved by the Port of Redwood City and the City of Redwood City noting that an equity component had been added to the study.

6. REPORTS OF STAFF

Executive Director Nina Rannells provided five written reports to Directors and said that she was working with Blue & Gold and other Bay Area transit operators to get the frontline workers vaccinated.

Ms. Rannells reported that additional federal money was coming to the Bay Area in the amount of \$819 million and that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) had planned to allocate the money in two steps, one in January and the bulk in February and that MTC had committed to making any corrections to the assumptions MTC made with the distribution of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act money.

Ms. Rannells stated that WETA's Planning & Development staff was beginning to work on public and stakeholder outreach meetings regarding Berkeley ferry service that will begin in January and carryover into the coming months.

Ms. Rannells reported the new Gemini Class, Emission Reduction project which would replace the 2008 - 2009 Gemini class Tier 2 engines with current Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Tier 4 standards. She recognized Engineering & Maintenance Administrator Tim Hanners for taking the opportunity to successfully seek \$1 million in Carl Moyer money for this vessel repower project and for working on the application to seek additional money for the other Gemini class vessels.

Director Alba thanked Mr. Hanners for being proactive and taking the opportunity to find grant funding.

Chair Wunderman commented that it was hard to envision any improvements on a new modern boat when the MV *Gemini* was received and thanked Mr. Hanners for leading the effort.

Ms. Rannells offered to answer any questions and then invited Planning & Development Manager Kevin Connolly to provide an update on the Monthly Ridership and Recovery Report. Mr. Connolly

shared his presentation and prefaced his presentation by saying that in any normal year, ridership was the lowest at the end of December to the beginning of January.

Mr. Connolly said that there was a big spike during Thanksgiving week, but that ridership has since declined noting that WETA had experienced capacity concerns in October and November.

Mr. Connolly recommended no change in service levels and said that WETA would be meeting in February with partner West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC) to discuss a way forward for the Richmond service.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Director DelBono made a motion to approve the consent calendar:

- a. Board Meeting Minutes – December 10, 2020

Chair Wunderman called for public comments on the consent calendar and there were none.

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

Yeas: Alba, DelBono, Intintoli, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None.

8. APPROVE EMPLOYMENT OF LYNNE YU FOR A LIMITED DURATION APPOINTMENT

Ms. Rannells presented this item recommending approval of the part-time employment of Ms. Yu as a retired annuitant for a limited duration who would help with the transition to temporarily fill the needs of the Finance department and train staff. She introduced newly hired Accountant Deborah Tragsiel-Seidenberg.

Ms. Rannells said the item would authorize WETA to employ Ms. Yu consistent with the requirements of CalPERS and expected a duration of up to one year.

Chair Wunderman confirmed that this item was agreeable to Ms. Yu. Ms. Yu said she was committed to a smooth transition and would assist in the recruitment of the next Finance & Administration Manager.

Chair Wunderman welcomed Ms. Tragsiel-Seidenberg aboard.

Director Intintoli made a motion to approve the item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments and there were none.

Director DelBono seconded the motion and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, DelBono, Intintoli, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: None.

9. APPROVE TRANSFER OF THE REMAINING FEDERAL INTEREST IN THE MV SOLANO TO KITSAP TRANSIT

Mr. Stahnke presented this item recommending approval of the transfer of the remaining federal interest in the MV *Solano* to Kitsap Transit as a part of the sale and disposition of this vessel, consistent with Federal Transit Administration requirements.

Ms. Rannells reminded the Board that WETA had hoped to be able to sell the MV *Solano*; however, she said that this option to transfer a good asset that was unusable in California to a sister agency for passenger service in Washington was a win win.

Director Alba questioned whether there were any restrictions for use of the funds received, and Ms. Rannells confirmed that no restrictions existed.

Chair Wunderman said he was uneasy about the circumstances and not being able to fully benefit from the intended 25-year life noting that the vessel was going to produce the same emissions no matter where it was being operated. He added that he was concerned about the utilization of public money and not being able to get the full value as expected but was glad that the MV Solano could be used by Kitsap County.

Mr. Stanhke stated that this has been a five-year project and that the other options previously considered were not practical.

Director Intintoli agreed with Chair Wunderman and hoped that WETA would be able to address the regulations in the future.

Chair Wunderman said that he and Ms. Rannells had a meeting with the Former Chair of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to express their concern about future regulations. He said that WETA needed to be mindful of protecting the public interest in the investments while trying to accomplish state emissions reductions.

Director Alba made a motion to approve the item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments and there were none.

Director Intintoli seconded the motion and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, DelBono, Intintoli, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: None.

10. BAY AREA TRANSIT AGENCY COORDINATION, BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE UPDATE

Mr. Murphy presented this informational item on the efforts of the MTC Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force (Task Force) to improve the region's public transportation network.

Mr. Murphy invited Mr. Connolly to discuss the details of the coordination efforts of the operators.

Chair Wunderman thanked Mr. Murphy and Mr. Connolly for the presentation and provided some background on the FASTER Bay Area.

Director Alba thanked Mr. Connolly for making the point about the efficient two-hour Zoom meetings with lots of collaboration in pushing transit forward. She recognized that the implementation of policies required new revenue sources and thanked everyone for their work.

The Directors expressed their support of the concept and the work emphasizing that revenue needed to be identified to make this possible without increasing fares.

Chair Wunderman thought that there may be an opportunity with a stimulus package and thanked MTC Commissioner and Solano County Supervisor Jim Spering for his efforts.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Transbay Coalition and Seamless Bay Area Volunteer Roan Kattouw thanked the Board for adopting the Seamless Bay Area transit principles.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Coastcommute.org Community Advocate Rick Nahass expressed his support for Seamless Bay Area.

Chair Wunderman said that these efforts were important for the future thanked the speakers for their comments.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENT

Griffon Hoverwork (Griffon) Managing Director Adrian Went provided additional information on hovercraft and offered the support of Griffon to provide information to fill in the gaps in the analysis.

Chair Wunderman thanked Mr. Went for his comments.

Director Alba said she looked forward to continuing exploring and understanding the challenges.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jerry Bellows thanked Mr. Stahnke for being a great spokesman in educating the public on WETA and wished him, Ms. Yu, and Ms. Rannells the best in retirement.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at 4:13 p.m.

- Board Secretary

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