

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

[October 12, 2023]

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair James Wunderman called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Wunderman, Director Jessica Alba, and Director Pippin Dew were in attendance.

Chair Wunderman led the Pledge of Allegiance. He welcomed directors, staff, and meeting guests and noted that the meeting was being conducted in person and by videoconference and was being recorded. He advised guests about offering public comment and how guests could sign up to speak throughout the meeting.

3. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Wunderman reported that WETA and the Bay Area Council jointly held an event on board the MV *Dorado* promoting the future of a San Francisco north south waterfront route. He said that the event was attended by 80 to 100 leaders, including city and transportation officials, and that Director Alba participated. He thanked Government and Regulatory Affairs Manager Lauren Gularte and Bay Area Council Vice President of Public Policy Emily Loper for organizing the event.

Chair Wunderman said that he looked forward to hearing about the success of Fleet Week.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Director Alba stated that she was excited to have the opportunity to speak about the short and long-term vision of electrification and decarbonization at the event.

Director Dew reported that she, along with Ms. Gularte and WETA attorney Katherine Tsou of Hanson Bridgett LLP had attended the Alameda Economic Forecast event hosted by the Alameda Chamber & Economic Alliance. She shared that Congressman John Garamendi honored 53 women from the 8th Congressional District of California who are leaders and visionaries in their communities at his 10th annual Women of the Year event.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF

Executive Director Seamus Murphy congratulated and recognized Director Dew as a 2023 Women of the Year Honoree. He added that Ms. Gularte was named as one of the top women in maritime by *Marine Log* magazine. He thanked Ms. Gularte for her work in securing grants and creating more funding opportunities.

Mr. Murphy welcomed new employee, Accountant Diana Altangerel, who most recently was doing accounting work for capital projects at Habitat for Humanity.

Mr. Murphy reported that the *Sea Change* has been operating on its own power and that most of the repairs have been completed, but the vessel requires a refuel of hydrogen having exhausted the first fueling. He added that the vessel had received some certifications but needed crew training and

refueling three more times to receive the official certificate of inspection. He thanked Blue & Gold Fleet for their management of this project.

Mr. Murphy provided an update on the Regional Network Management Council activities and said that the Council consists of large and small operators, and he would be serving on the Council as WETA's representative. He said that he hoped that there would be progress made that would support the 2026 transportation regional funding measure being planned.

Chair Wunderman reported that a recent study by the Bay Area News Group and Joint Venture Silicon Valley was troubling and that according to that poll, Regional Measure 3 would not come close to passing in today's world. Chair Alba commented that the questions were focused on commuter rail and commuter transit and said that questions directed towards a more seamless all day, all weekend coordinated service might result in another outcome.

Mr. Murphy added that an Assembly Constitutional Amendment (ACA) was approved by the State Legislature for a ballot measure to lower the voter threshold required for local taxes that would make the 2026 transportation regional funding measure more achievable.

Mr. Murphy provided five written reports and offered to answer questions.

Mr. Murphy introduced Transportation Planner Gabriel Chan to provide the monthly operations and ridership report. Mr. Chan reported on-time performance at 97 percent, up 2 percent from August and that ridership was still on track with year-to-date budget and ridership projections. He stated that it was a record-breaking week with Fleet Week with similar reports by Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), but that WETA did run into challenges with boarding times and leave behinds.

Director Alba commented that Vallejo's longer route be considered for lower reported on-time performance. Mr. Chan stated that a buffer was built into the schedule for Vallejo.

In response to a comment by Chair Wunderman, Planning and Development Manager Kevin Connolly said that WETA does not typically count the number of leave behinds but that the crews on shore estimated the number on the Richmond scenic journey at approximately 300 on Saturday and 100 on Sunday.

Mr. Connolly added that there was only one boat for the special excursion and that staff would look into the data and performance for future improvements. Mr. Murphy explained that the Richmond scenic route was something new that Public Information and Marketing Manager Thomas Hall marketed effectively. Mr. Murphy added that Customer Experience Specialist Rafael Regan walked the line to inform the passengers of the potential leave behind. Chair Wunderman suggested a future agenda item on this topic to discuss and generate some options.

Mr. Hall provided a brief update on the summer marketing campaign which included a video and audio campaign, the social media influencer campaign, and the billboard campaign. He stated that the social media influencer campaign using TikTok and Instagram targeting the Latino community and younger audiences had good engagement. WETA gave away 525 round-trip tickets to folks who were engaged with the content. He concluded his report and said that a full presentation on the creative concepts and visuals will be presented by consultant MacKenzie Communications next month.

Mr. Murphy thanked the Bay Area Council and Ms. Loper for coordinating the waterfront tour. Mr. Murphy said that he tracked the travel time from the Bayview to Fisherman's Wharf at about 15 minutes. Chair Wunderman said he was excited to see several San Francisco neighborhoods from a different angle that he was involved in planning at one time.

Chair Wunderman noticed that year-to-date bridge tolls revenues totaled 6 percent. Chief Financial Officer Erin McGrath confirmed that bridge tolls revenues were drawn down based upon expenses.

Chair Wunderman commented that a little over one percent of the \$384 million dollars allocated nationally by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) would be coming to California and that did not seem fair. He asked if there was anything that could be done collectively to bring in more money.

Mr. Murphy said that the federal coalition that is part of the California Transit Association has been communicating with FTA staff about grants currently pending. He noted that the coalition had discussed how poorly California had performed on all of the low and zero-emission discretionary grant programs and that it was not just the ferry-related grant programs.

Operations and Maintenance Manager Timothy Hanners said that the new commuter class high-speed vessels were the MV *Dorado* and *Delphinus*.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Wunderman suggested removing Item 6b – Authorize Pile Removal Agreement with the City of Alameda for the Alameda Main Street Ferry Terminal Refurbishment Project for discussion. He asked if anyone wanted to remove any additional items, and none were identified.

Director Alba made a motion to approve the consent calendar:

- a. Approve Board Meeting Minutes – September 12, 2023
- b. Item 6b Removed from Consent Calendar
- c. Authorize Release of a Request for Proposals for the MV *Dorado* Jet Work and Drydock

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Dew seconded the motion, and the consent calendar carried unanimously.

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

7. AUTHORIZE PILE REMOVAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF ALAMEDA FOR THE ALAMEDA MAIN STREET FERRY TERMINAL REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Chair Wunderman pointed out the complications related to the pile removal and asked Mr. Connolly to comment on it. Mr. Connolly credited Chad Mason for managing the project and said that unforeseen regulatory requirements are assumed going into any project.

Director Dew made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2023-38 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Alba seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

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

8. AUTHORIZE AGREEMENT WITH UBER FOR ALAMEDA MAIN STREET TERMINAL RIDESHARE PROGRAM

Principal Planner Michael Gougherty presented this item recommending the following:

1. Authorize the Executive Director to execute an agreement with Uber Technologies, Inc. (Uber) for an amount not to exceed \$60,000 for the Alameda Main Street Terminal Rideshare Program that will coincide with closure of the terminal for rehabilitation, and

2. Authorize the Executive Director to take any related actions to implement rideshare trip vouchers for the Alameda Main Street Terminal Rideshare Program.

Mr. Gougherty noted that this was WETA's first direct partnership with a rideshare agency. He said that this partnership would entail covering the entire cost of rides originating on the main island of Alameda and ending within a small radius of the Oakland Ferry Terminal during certain hours while the Alameda Main Street Terminal is closed for construction.

Mr. Gougherty explained that Uber's shared/carpool type rides was preferred by the City of Alameda to minimize congestion on surface streets. Chair Wunderman asked if Alameda had any metrics about traffic congestion impacts and said that the carpooling requirement can be time consuming and dissuade its use.

Mr. Murphy expressed predicting rideshare matches was impossible and that many people may go unmatched.

Director Alba suggested offering some data points and pickup points.

Director Alba made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-39 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Dew seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

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

9. ADOPT FARES FOR TEMPORARY SERVICE BETWEEN MISSION BAY AND SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO

Mr. Murphy presented this item recommending adopting a Zone One adult fare of \$4.60 (\$2.30 Discounted) for temporary service between Mission Bay and South San Francisco to operate during the closure of the Alameda Main Street Terminal.

Director Alba made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-40 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Dew seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

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

10. AUTHORIZE THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION FOR \$700,000 IN REGIONAL MEASURE 3 CAPITAL FUNDS

Grants Manager Jennifer Raupach presented this item requesting authorization to file an application with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for \$700,000 in Regional Measure (RM) 3 capital funds to support the Mission Bay Ferry Landing project.

Ms. Raupach said the Capital Program of the RM3 Expenditure Plan includes the Ferry Enhancement Program, totaling \$300 million. WETA is the designated recipient of funds under this program and the landing project is an eligible project. She added that this phase of the project would include initial engineering and electrifying the terminal.

Mr. Connolly clarified that value engineering was not just a cost-cutting exercise but involves potentially changing the design and permitting requirements.

Mr. Murphy added that WETA budgeted \$6 million optimistically for the project, noting that that WETA would need to show that the project was fully funded to secure additional RM3 funds.

Chair Wunderman recalled discussing WETA committing \$25 million for the project in anticipation of RM3 surviving legal challenge, and the City of San Francisco also committed \$25 million which was later rescinded. He expressed his concern that, with RM 3 funds now available to WETA, WETA would be seen as the "Bank of WETA" fully funding projects when projects should be partnerships with other entities.

Director Dew made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-41 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Alba seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

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

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No further public comments were shared.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

- Board Secretary

END