

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

*(April 17, 2023)*

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority met in special 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 2:02 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair James Wunderman, Vice Chair Monique Moyer, Director Jessica Alba, Director Jeffrey DelBono, and Director Pippin Dew were in attendance. Director Alba stated that she was participating remotely via videoconference because a contagious illness prevented her from attending the meeting in person.

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.

He reported that Executive Director Seamus Murphy would not be in attendance and thanked Vice Chair Moyer and Director Alba for all their work on the Business Plan.

**3. BUSINESS PLAN WORKSHOP #2**

Planning and Development Manager Kevin Connolly introduced the item and acknowledged the Board Subcommittee Vice Chair Moyer and Director Alba, the advisory committees, and the public on behalf of the project team. He encouraged the Board to provide input at any time.

Mr. Connolly shared the group presentation which included an update on Regional Measure 3 (RM3), the four network expansion concepts, the evaluation results of the service visions against the six focus areas, and next steps.

Mr. Connolly stated that since the resolution of RM3 was delayed, the availability of RM3 was not incorporated into the service vision. He noted project candidates for RM3 capital funds and said that the Business Plan would assume the availability of RM3 as a potential funding going forward. He noted that WETA was required by legislation to submit a five-year RM3 expenditure plan to access the funds.

Mr. Connolly presented the service visions that were presented to WETA's stakeholders.

1. Current Baseline Network - 10 terminals, 6 routes, and 16 to 26 vessels
2. Plan Bay Area Network - 14 terminals including Treasure Island, Berkeley, Redwood City, and Mission Bay, 11 routes, and 22 to 42 vessels
3. Core Network – 18 terminals, 17 routes, and 36 to 59 vessels
4. Coverage Network – 26 terminals, 25 routes, and 67 to 87 vessels; requiring additional maintenance facilities

Mr. Connolly shared the 2050 service vision that is being recommended by staff noting that cost effectiveness was a significant consideration in today's environment where transit is struggling for ridership.

Mr. Connolly introduced Principal Planner Michael Gougherty to present the results of the evaluation. Mr. Gougherty began by summarizing the Network Concept which included the projected service levels along with the annual operating cost. It was noted that potential savings associated with electrification and small vessel deployment were not considered and that operating costs are a very high level and were based on the current WETA service model.

Mr. Gougherty presented the findings for expansion beyond the Plan Bay Area concept and the rationale for an optimized core network service vision.

Chair Wunderman suggested that building housing closer to the bay could have less of an environmental impact due to a more temperate climate and asked if housing development by the bay could be measured as part of the environmental impact. Vice Chair Moyer said that the service vision was devised to have the flexibility and agility to respond to opportunities.

Mr. Gougherty shared a slide on the 2050 futures comparing travel behavior to transit policy and the key takeaways which found that the ferry networks perform best under the "Chart a New course" and "Tack to the Wind" futures which support all day service.

Mr. Gougherty stated that the consultant and facilitator of the public outreach process, CivicMakers, was unable to attend the meeting due to illness, and that he and Transportation Planner Gabriel Chan would be reporting on the outreach process and the results of the online public survey.

Vice Chair Moyer commented that the ranking methodology that the chart displayed is confusing because the numerical ranking and graphic reflected the most important factor as the least important.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Chan invited Mr. Gougherty to lead the discussion for feedback, comments, and questions.

The Directors thanked staff for their work and presentation on the business plan.

Chair Wunderman stated that all scenarios were valid but that he personally favored a more aggressive stance. Mr. Gougherty responded that public outreach would continue but that the online survey was closed.

Director Dew remarked that none of the plans reflected any connections between Vallejo and Larkspur. She asked why Vallejo to Oakland was considered but not Vallejo to Richmond. Mr. Gougherty said that the Vallejo to Larkspur service could be explored if the demand existed and that consultant Fehr & Peers identified the Oakland corridor with higher demand.

Director Dew also favored a more aggressive approach while being fiscally responsible. She suggested that RM3 be used to explore other pilot projects.

Director DelBono was glad to hear that there is a focus on equity and costs and was leaning towards being more aggressive with a focus on the North Bay service area.

Vice Chair Moyer expressed her gratitude for Mr. Connolly, Mr. Gougherty, Mr. Chan and the project team for their tremendous amount of work, logical approach, and acceptance of feedback. She agreed that pilots could be done to leverage the different vessel types. Vice Chair Moyer commented that being mindful of the populations within WETA's service area would assist WETA staying true to its mission of emergency response.

Vice Chair Moyer said that she was concerned that the respondents to the survey were current riders and to be mindful of future riders. She thanked the members of the public for dedicating their time and energy to the project.

Director Alba thanked the entire project team and consultants for the extensive public outreach and appreciated seeing the impact of their input in the process. She asked that the survey responses be weighed against the region to determine whether the results are being captured accurately.

Chair Wunderman stated that he worked on two major Bay Area extension projects – Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) to the San Francisco International Airport (SFO) and the Oakland airport connector. He commented that the BART to SFO is not ideal and wondered if WETA considered working with the airport planning staff to get more people on different modes of transit.

Mr. Connolly responded that WETA ran a pilot with SFO approximately four years ago through a shuttle transfer from South San Francisco. He added that the airport was going through expansion at the time and that the purpose of the pilot was to understand utilization. Chair Wunderman asked that airport service be considered and offered to organize a group of stakeholders to study this service, including the Executive Directors of the Oakland and San Francisco airports who are members of the Bay Area Council Board.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Berkeley resident and Save the Berkely Pier member David Fielder wanted to notify the Board members of the growing resistance to siting a high-capacity ferry terminal at the Berkeley pier.

Kelly Hammargren expressed her concerns about the environmental impact of expansion on tidelands and wetlands and the suggested developments affected by global warming.

San Francisco Community Group member Howard Wong said the costs to build and rebuild infrastructure for other methods of transit and for emergency flexibility make the ferry system a good economic investment.

Hercules Mayor Alexander Walker-Griffin commended the staff and team on the plan and emphasized that Hercules be added to the core group.

Chair Wunderman stated that the Board wanted WETA to coexist and not present any harm to the environment.

Director DelBono verbalized that cost sharing language, including fiscal expectations for new expansion to be considered, be added to the Business Plan.

Director Alba said WETA is working with the region and as a partner to determine what makes the most sense for expansion.

Before closing the discussion, Mr. Gougherty shared the next steps leading up to the final Business Plan implementation.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Wunderman noted that WETA received a letter from City of Alameda Planning, Building and Transportation Director Andrew Thomas supporting the Plan Bay Area Network approach.

Finally, Chair Wunderman congratulated WETA and Blue & Gold Fleet for the recent high ridership numbers and commented that WETA would be successful in any direction.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at 3:34 p.m.

- Board Secretary  
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