

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

[March 21, 2024]

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority met in regular session at Hanson Bridgett LLP, 425 Market Street 26th Floor, San Francisco, CA and via videoconference.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair James Wunderman called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Wunderman, Vice Chair Monique Moyer, Director Jessica Alba, Director Jeffrey DelBono, and Director Pippin Dew were in attendance. In compliance with the Brown Act, Vice Chair Moyer explained that she was joining the meeting remotely due to health issues and that no one over the age of 18 was in the room with her.

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 he and Executive Director Seamus Murphy traveled to Lisbon, Portugal to participate in the Economist's 11th Annual World Ocean Summit which focused on restoring ocean health and strategies to accelerate a sustainable ocean economy. He said that the summit was attended by government, academia, policymakers, and business leaders and that he was on a panel discussing WETA's efforts to create a zero-emission battery electric ferry system.

Chair Wunderman added that Mr. Murphy had arranged a meeting with the leaders of the ferry system in Lisbon. He said that his visit revealed similarities between San Francisco and Lisbon and their efforts to create a zero-emission ferry system.

Chair Wunderman asked for an agenda item for a process about the challenges and opportunities for creating a new maritime industry in the Bay Area including building vessels.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Vice Chair Moyer thanked Chair Wunderman for his remarks and expressed her gratitude to him and Mr. Murphy for dedicating personal and professional time looking for best practices domestically and internationally.

Director DelBono expressed interest in putting together a work group to connect with people who are interested in bringing back the maritime industry and the associated jobs to the Bay Area.

Director Dew reported that she was invited to participate in the Equity Working Group for the Solano Transportation Authority as a representative of the WETA with many conversations focused on proposed tolling for Highway 37. She said that she was happy to report and promote the Vallejo ferry service in response to a participant's comments and looked forward to the work of the committee.

Director Dew said that she would like to engage in conversations with the City of Vallejo and the Mare Island developers to repurpose and reuse existing assets.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Wunderman introduced the public comment period for items not on the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tera, representing the people in Richmond, expressed concern about the ferry parking being designated as the primary pickleball parking.

Chair Wunderman said that he and staff were having conversations and requested that an item on the issue be added to the agenda for next month.

6. REPORTS OF STAFF

Mr. Murphy provided details about the Lisbon ferry service. He said that the Lisbon ferry service operates a similar service to WETA with 7 routes and the same number of vessels in the fleet including plans for the addition of 10 electric vessels that carry 540 passengers each. He added that the 10 electric vessels only go 11 knots which is less costly and complex to deliver and noted that the Lisbon ferry service had 140 administrative staff and 300 crew.

Mr. Murphy thanked Representative John Garamendi and Senator Alex Padilla for requesting FY 2024 Appropriations and Congressionally Directed Spending in the amount of \$3 million for the reconfiguration of the Vallejo Ferry Terminal which will minimize dredging needs.

Public Information and Marketing Manager Thomas Hall said that WETA would be formally welcoming MV *Delphinus* on Monday, March 25 with speeches by dignitaries and a community ride following the christening ceremony. Mr. Murphy noted that the MV *Dorado* consumed 40 percent less fuel than the *Pyxis* class and expected the same of the MV *Delphinus*. Mr. Hall said that heaters and vinyl screening were added on the upper deck to provide a more comfortable ride along with improved bike storage.

Mr. Hall said that the schedule for San Francisco Bay Ferry will be updated effective April 8 with one major change in a midday trip from San Francisco to Vallejo to better accommodate the work schedules of the construction and service industry workers. He said that staff worked with its contract operator, Blue & Gold Fleet to advance regional efforts with bid changes every January and August to ensure better schedule coordination among Bay Area transit operators along with two additional bid changes outside of those ranges.

Mr. Murphy provided an update on Senate Bill (SB) 125 State Transformation Task Force that was appointed by the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA). He said that the Task Force was exploring ways that transit should be transformed to increase ridership and to deal with the various issues and challenges that transit agencies are trying to navigate post pandemic. The task force was created as a part of legislation that provides additional funding to bridge the gap between the expiration of federal funding and potential new sources of funding that would be available through approval of a regional revenue measure. He noted the challenge of ridership recovery, system integration, and achieving the State's greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Chair Wunderman said that the cost for public transportation in Brighton, United Kingdom for locals was zero to negligible but that he could buy a day pass easily as a foreigner or pay fares by credit card without any advanced preparation.

Government and Regulatory Affairs Manager Lauren Gularte reported that Senator Scott Wiener held a press conference to announce SB 1031 which included a bill studying the consolidation of transit by Senator Aisha Wahab and incorporated SB 925 authorizing legislation to allow the Metropolitan

Transportation Commission (MTC) to put a regional transportation measure on the ballot with a minimum \$750 million per year to stabilize transit system's operations.

Operations Analyst Joe Ramey reported an increase in on-time performance and a slight decrease in service reliability for January and February compared to the same period in 2023. He said that 120 trip segments were cancelled compared to the 7,800 trip segments that were provided stating that the cancellations were due to a series of vessel mechanical issues.

Engineering and Maintenance Administrator Jeffery Powell said that WETA has categorized major issues to be class specific from multiple catastrophic engine and component failures, casting flaws on gearboxes, gearbox failure, cylinder head replacements, and internal leaks. He said that he was working to receive notifications and adjust maintenance schedules to prioritize keeping the vessels in service. He noted that warranties were checked for any work needed. He added that an audit of the maintenance system was currently being conducted and expected results in a few months.

Mr. Hall stated that WETA activates a page on its website which provides information for alternatives methods for getting to San Francisco from Vallejo in the event of service cancellation. Vice Chair Moyer wanted to make certain that time was spent on outreach and getting out notifications. Mr. Hall said that riders are receiving prompt notifications through WETA's text and email subscription for real-time alerts and that Customer Experience Specialist Rafael Regan was conducting monthly audits on the timing, language, and routes on the alerts. She thanked Mr. Hall for reaching out to the impacted passengers.

Transportation Planner Gabriel Chan reported that WETA was ahead of budget in terms of ridership year to date carrying about 160 thousand passengers over the month of January with farebox recovery at 23 percent systemwide.

Chair Wunderman congratulated and thanked FBB Federal Relations for their work on the appropriations request and their work to expand the public ferry coalition.

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

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

Chair Wunderman thanked staff for the reports.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Director DelBono made a motion to approve the consent calendar:

- a. Approve Board Meeting Minutes – February 8, 2024
- b. Receive the Federal Single Audit Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023
- c. Authorize Release of a Request for Proposals for the MV *Argo* Repairs and Drydock

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

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

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

8. APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO AGREEMENTS 19-013 WITH MAVRIK MARINE AND 19-012 WITH AURORA MARINE DESIGN RELATIVE TO INCLUSION OF NEW TIER 4+ DIESEL PARTICULATE FILTER TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Murphy introduced the item stating that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) issued new Commercial Harbor Craft (CHC) regulations requiring that CHC vessels be equipped with US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certified Tier 4 + Diesel Particulate Filters (DPF) engines for any engine rated over 600 kW.

Mr. Murphy reminded the Board that WETA was able to adopt this new technology and increase the budget as a result of appropriations in FY 2023. He thanked Construction Manager Aurora Marine Design for their assistance on the zero-emissions program and management of the DPF technology on Tier 4 engines highlighting that WETA would be first worldwide to adopt this technology.

Mr. Murphy stated that the resolution required clarification and read aloud the alternative language in the updated resolution noting that \$100 thousand of the \$350 thousand for Aurora Marine Design was for additional work related to the project delays and unrelated to the DPF technology.

Operations and Maintenance Manager Timothy Hanners presented this item recommending authorizing the following actions relative to inclusion of Tier 4+ Diesel Particulate Filters in the engines for new vessels under construction:

1. Approve an amendment to Agreement No. 19-013 with Mavrik Marine in an amount not to exceed \$1,650,000 for modification of the vessel propulsion package to include EPA Certified Tier 4 + Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) propulsion engines and authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute the amendment and take any other related actions to support this work.
2. Approve an amendment to Agreement No. 19-012 with Aurora Marine Design authorizing additional funds in the amount of \$350,000 to provide additional construction management services associated with the modification of the propulsion package to include EPA Certified Tier 4 + DPF propulsion engines and authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute the amendment and take any other related actions to support this work.

Mr. Hanners noted that the delivery dates for vessels 3 and 4 were February and October 2025, respectively.

Mr. Hanners said that the DPF would add some weight with a slight decrease in speed but that passenger capacity would not be impacted and that the funds were equally divided between both vessels.

Mr. Hanners said that the engine manufacturer for the MV *Dorado* and *Delphinus* had no plans to add DPF technology to their engines but that WETA was able to pivot and change engine manufacturers before awarding contracts for vessels 3 and 4 to include DPF technology. He added that WETA would monitor whether the engine manufacturer of the MV *Dorado* and *Delphinus* would develop DPF technology.

Director Dew made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-07 approving this item.

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

Vice Chair Moyer seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

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

9. APPROVE CONTRACT AWARD TO EXEMPLIFI LLC FOR WEBSITE REDESIGN PROJECT

Before the presentation of the item, Mr. Murphy informed the Board that WETA had received a protest from a proposer. He said that WETA's procurement rules authorize the Executive Director to review the protests and assess whether to accept or reject the protest. He stated that WETA rejected the protest from the other bidder and was recommending proceeding with the recommended award.

Digital Communications Specialist Alexis Matsui presented this item recommending approving contract award to Exemplifi LLC for the website redesign project. Ms. Matsui stated that WETA had received 32 proposals, 21 of which had met the minimum requirements. She noted that WETA had received several well qualified proposals all under budget and that the selection panel had a unanimous first choice with excellent references. She shared her presentation about Exemplifi, the website redesign project timeline, and snapshots of some of their transit client work.

Ms. Matsui introduced Exemplifi Founder Vinod Pabba who added that Exemplifi was founded by Stanford technologists.

Ms. Matsui stated that the contract included the initial website redesign and launch, three years of maintenance, support, and hosting. Mr. Pabba said there would be 24/7 support, that the site would be fully compliant and accessible, and that there was no limit to the number of languages but that five tended to be the average.

Director Dew requested that Tagalog be included for Vallejo's very large Filipino community.

Director Alba made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-08 approving this item.

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

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

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

10. AUTHORIZE RELEASE OF A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTANT TO ASSIST WITH PLANNING RELATIVE TO THE FUTURE OF WETA'S OPERATOR AGREEMENT

Mr. Ramey presented this item recommending authorizing release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services to assist with contract and procurement planning activities relative to WETA's Operator Agreement.

He said that this solicitation for consulting services will provide additional expertise to examine the best approach to the renewal process and contractual relationship to support WETA's staff in developing a new contract set to begin in 2027.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Working Waterfront Coalition President and CEO Bobby Winston requested that WETA prioritize workforce development in WETA's operator agreement and include workforce development provisions in the procurement planning process.

Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific, San Francisco Region Patrol Person/Business Agent Marina Secchitano said that she was working with Mr. Winston to attract and train new workers. Ms. Secchitano asked that the workforce keep their jobs and be covered under union contracts.

Director Dew made a motion to approve the item.

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

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

11. APPROVE REVISED FISCAL YEAR 2023/2024 SALARY SCHEDULE TO INCLUDE RE-ORGANIZED AND ADDITIONAL POSITIONS

Mr. Murphy introduced this item recommending approving the revised fiscal year 2023/24 salary schedule to include reorganized and additional positions. He said that a peer review of the agency was done to identify ways that WETA be reorganized to better deliver its capital program. Mr. Murphy said that WETA asked APTA to identify experts to conduct the peer review process.

Mr. Murphy introduced American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Chief Operating Officer David Carol and Jacobs Vice President, Senior Transportation Program Manager Tim McKay to present the item.

Mr. Carol shared his presentation about the peer review methodology stating that the peer review enables experienced transit professionals to voluntarily provide expert advice, industry best practices, and recommendations to transit agencies seeking to address specific issues.

Mr. Carol noted that the review was not intended as a comprehensive assessment of WETA's staffing needs but to leverage best practices and experience to recommend approaches to organizing an effective and accountable capital planning and delivery function for the agency. He said that APTA represented very small agencies to agencies with important capital programs.

Mr. Carol said that the panelists participating in the process included:

- Marian Lee, Partner, Lighthouse Public Affairs (Former Chief, Caltrain Modernization Program)
- Tim McKay, Vice President, Senior Transportation Manager, Jacobs
- Carrie Rocha, Chief Capital Officer, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
- David Sowers, Director, Terminal Engineering, Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) Ferries

The panel was moderated by David Carol, Chief Operating Officer, APTA.

Mr. Carol discussed WETA's background, the scope of review, the principles for an effective capital planning and delivery program, recommended approach, and organization recommendations. Mr. McKay provided some final comments on the recommendations as a panelist and a skilled capital projects officer.

Mr. Murphy provided the updated salary schedule and organizational chart incorporating the recommendations from the panel. He said that the organizational chart was modeled after other similar organizations and that 60 percent of the new positions would be grant funded.

Chair Wunderman thanked APTA and Mr. Carol and Mr. McKay for their work and expressed his appreciation for their kind words.

Vice Chair Moyer thanked Mr. Carol and Mr. McKay for their work and the organization and presentation of their presentation. She said that appreciated the panelists reviewing the Port of San Francisco organization because she thought it really did work well. She added that she was most excited about having a dedicated staff person for emergency response.

The Directors thanked and recognized the small staff for their extraordinary accomplishments.

Director Alba questioned whether the Emergency Response Analyst should be elevated to have clout and power to carry out the duties of the position.

Mr. Murphy said that job descriptions would be written to ensure that the positions reflect the roles, responsibilities and functions that contribute to the agency in that role and level of respect. He reminded the Board that a classification and compensation study was included in the FY 2023/24 budget but was put on hold until the completion of the reorganization work.

Mr. Carol provided some additional comments in reference to emergency management and suggested going through some exercises to understand the roles and needs. He thanked WETA for the opportunity and continued to be available to assist.

The Directors expressed support for the recommendations and thanked APTA, Mr. Carol, and Mr. McKay for their efforts.

Vice Chair Moyer made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-09 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, DelBono, Dew, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: None.

12. INTERNSHIP CAPSTONE PROJECT - PARKING AND ACCESS STUDY

Planning and Development Manager and Director of Planning Michael Gougherty introduced Transportation Intern Noelani Fixler, who was recently appointed to chair the City of Berkeley Transportation and Infrastructure Commission to present this informational item.

Ms. Fixler noted that the project she was presenting was a culmination of her research that she started in October.

Ms. Fixler shared her presentation providing some background and the purpose of the study. She noted that the onboard survey was currently the only method of understanding access to WETA's terminals but was geared more towards passenger satisfaction. Her study centered around informing current and future terminal planning and terminal access policy development, and implementation.

Ms. Fixler's methodology included manually collecting parking and access data at the Alameda Seaplane Lagoon, Oakland, and Richmond Ferry Terminals over the period of three consecutive weeks in October and comparing the data to the 2022 onboard survey. She stated that the terminals were those closest to her.

She shared her study limitations, ferry terminal bike infrastructure and access modes, ferry terminal access topologies, terminal access equity, parking and access study results, the comparison of her observed results to those of the 2022 onboard survey, and future work which included several recommendations.

Ms. Fixler said she did not look into parking capacity issues as part of her study but stated that the parking lots were busy.

Chair Wunderman asked about the option of making more parking available since the study showed that most access to the ferry terminal occurred by car. Ms. Fixler believed that paid parking and safe bike and pedestrian access would influence people's decision. Chair Wunderman commented that a parking charge would increase the cost to use public transit.

Director DelBono agreed that safe bike accessibility would be important.

Ms. Fixler noted the ease and attraction of bringing bikes on the ferry compared to BART.

Director Alba stated that building a parking structure on valuable real estate was not a good use of funds or of the land.

The Directors expressed interest in ferry-oriented development.

Ms. Fixler thanked the Board, WETA, the Planning and Development department, and Mr. Chan for coaching her through the project.

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

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

WETA Attorney Steven Miller of Hanson Bridgett LLP confirmed that the required item allowing public comments for non-agenda items had been fulfilled earlier in the meeting.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

- Board Secretary

END