

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

(May 6, 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 1:00 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. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Wunderman said that the Bay Area Council is heavily involved in economic recovery in the Bay Area. Of one thousand Bay Area residents from a March Bay Area Council poll, 38 percent responded that they would be commuting to work 5 days, down from 58 percent pre-COVID, 16 percent responded that they would not be going to the office ever again, up from 10 percent pre-COVID, and 33 percent were going to work in the office less than before the pandemic. On the issue of transit, 35 percent said taking transit was either very safe or somewhat safe and 38 percent said taking transit was very unsafe.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Director Intintoli reported that ridership is increasing and that while he was at the Vallejo waterfront one day, a passenger commented that the staff was doing a wonderful job on the boats.

Director DelBono said that comment pertained to the WETA staff. He expressed appreciation for the regular communication of the monthly updates and news clippings.

Director Alba said it was encouraging to see the recent increase in ridership and rates in vaccinations.

Chair Wunderman noted that traffic is backed up on all bridges and that there is a shift in congestion with a lot of traffic midday reflecting some of the scheduling changes being made.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF

Executive Director Murphy thanked the Board for the deserving compliments of staff and the Blue & Gold Fleet (Blue & Gold) team adding that Blue & Gold has been very flexible helping to put together the schedule for the relaunch of ferry service in July.

He reported on the work of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Blue Ribbon Task Force (Task Force) 1) Assemblymember Chiu's bill is on its way to the Appropriations Committee after unanimous approval in the Assembly Transportation Committee with some pending amendments, and 2) WETA is preparing to transition to 3-foot social distancing to accommodate growing ridership after approval from each of the counties WETA serves.

Mr. Murphy said that MTC was working on guiding principles that transit operators will be supporting to determine how the \$1.7 billion from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) would be allocated. He added that there will be a June workshop where transit operators will be presenting their plans for relaunching service and the associated financial challenges.

Lastly, Mr. Murphy shared that WETA received a \$200 thousand grant from the California Energy Commission to support the shoreside infrastructure study. He added that approval of the grant award would take place in July.

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

Planning & Development Manager Kevin Connolly provided an update on the Monthly Ridership and Recovery Report. Mr. Connolly reported that there was double digit ridership increases throughout the system, noting an 80 percent capacity on the 4:30 p.m. departure to Vallejo. He followed up with Mr. Murphy's comment that the move to 3-foot social distancing should address this capacity issue in the interim before new service is added.

Mr. Murphy stated that the relaunch of service and promotion of the pandemic recovery program would be presented as an agenda item in response to Chair Wunderman.

Program Manager Lauren Gularte explained that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is unable to accept WETA's alternative compliance plan until the draft regulation is written into law in responses to Director Intintoli.

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

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Director Intintoli made a motion to approve the consent calendar:

- a. Board Meeting Minutes – April 1, 2021
- b. Authorize Release of an Invitation for Bid for Dredging and Marine Construction Services for the Terminal Dredging - Vallejo Project

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.

7. APPROVE AMENDMENT TO THE FERRY SERVICES OPERATION TRANSFER AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF ALAMEDA FOR THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MAIN STREET AND HARBOR BAY TERMINALS

Senior Planner/Project Manager Chad Mason presented this item recommending approval of an amendment to the Ferry Services Operation Transfer Agreement with the City of Alameda for the Main Street and Harbor Bay Terminals.

Mr. Mason recognized City of Alameda (City) Planning, Building, and Transportation Department Head Andrew Thomas and Planning Technician Brian McGuire and thanked them for their assistance with the agreement and their partnership.

Mr. Mason said that the purpose of the amendment was to update certain aspects of the 2011 Transfer Agreement and define the rights and responsibilities of WETA and the City for day-to-day management, operations, and long-term maintenance, repair and replacement of landside assets and improvements at the Main Street Terminal and Harbor Bay Terminal consistent with the preferred arrangement executed in the 2020 Seaplane Lagoon Ferry Terminal Operating Agreement. The amendment includes the City's ability to institute parking fees and determine the amount of the fees and be fully responsible for bicycle facilities and routes and improvements in transit connections.

Mr. Mason clarified that charging for parking would be within the City's sole discretion and that the intent was to primarily cover the operational and maintenance costs that were being implemented at the City's parking facilities citywide in response to Chair Wunderman and Director Intintoli.

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

Director DelBono made a motion to approve the item.

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

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

8. TREASURE ISLAND FERRY SERVICE PROJECT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Senior Planner/Project Manager Michael Gougherty opened this item recommending approving the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WETA and the Treasure Island Mobility Management Authority (TIMMA) and introduced San Francisco County Transportation Authority Deputy Director for Capital Projects Eric Cordoba and Senior Transportation Planner Priyoti Ahmed to present the item.

Mr. Cordoba thanked the Board and WETA staff for the opportunity. Ms. Ahmed shared her presentation and provided an overview of the Treasure Island redevelopment project and an update on the ferry feasibility study. She said that the project will be constructed over 15 years from initial occupancy to full build out in 2036. The Treasure Island Mobility Management Agency was established to accommodate this huge growth and to plan and deliver the transportation component of the project.

Mr. Murphy clarified that ferry service in 2022 was a broad timeframe but that the study would provide information for when demand in service might be sufficient to justify WETA operations.

Mr. Gougherty closed the presentation sharing major goals and highlights of the MOU, acknowledging the need for future agreements and the funding constraints, and next steps.

Ms. Ahmed said service to the East Bay would be considered through interlining but was not part of the scope of the study at this time, and Mr. Cordoba added that staff would work with WETA to understand the interline opportunities and abilities to bring people to the East Bay in response to Director Moyer.

Director Alba said that she appreciated the efforts on equity and affordability.

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

Director Alba made a motion to approve the item.

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

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

9. MISSION BAY FERRY LANDING PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Murphy introduced this informational item discussing the challenges and potential solutions considered by the Board appointed task force and the steps need to be taken to comply as a recipient to federal funding which would have schedule impacts.

Mr. Murphy invited Mr. Connolly to share his presentation on the various timeline options. Mr. Murphy said that there have been previous efforts to streamline the environmental clearance process including having National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance from one federal agency satisfy NEPA clearance for all federal agencies but that such a change would likely not take place in time to benefit the Mission Bay project. He added that this project had received NEPA clearance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) but that NEPA clearance through the USACE was not a pathway for accepting Federal Transit Administration (FTA) monies which requires its own NEPA clearance.

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

10. PANDEMIC RECOVERY PROGRAM MARKETING AND OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

Public Information & Marketing Manager Thomas Hall presented this informational item on the marketing and outreach campaign developed to promote the Fiscal Year 2022 Pandemic Recovery Program (Program).

Mr. Hall shared his presentation on the primary objectives of the campaign using strategy, tactics, and creative concepts to implement the roll out the campaign.

Director Intintoli said that placement of advertising should be considered for the larger North Bay communities of Benicia, Fairfield, Napa, and Vacaville.

The directors expressed their thanks, excitement, and appreciation of the campaign.

PUBLIC COMMENT

PROP SF Alex Kryska voiced his support of the rate structure and schedules.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No further public comments were shared.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

- Board Secretary

END