

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

(October 7, 2021)

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority met in regular session via videoconference consistent with AB 361 as codified in Government Code Section 54953.

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Chair James Wunderman called the meeting to order at 12:31 p.m. He welcomed directors, staff, and meeting guests and noted that the meeting was being recorded. He advised guests about offering public comment and how guests could sign up to speak throughout the meeting.

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

2. RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION

a. Public Employee Performance Evaluation

The Directors recessed into closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.

The Directors returned to open session at 1:11 p.m. with no action to report.

3. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Wunderman thanked Vice Chair Moyer for chairing the October meeting in his absence. He recognized Executive Director Seamus Murphy for Mr. Murphy's testimony before the House of Representatives Transportation & Infrastructure Highways and Transit Subcommittee on the topic of "Examining the Role of Ferries in Improving Mobility" and noted that WETA was leading the way on a whole number of things. He reported on probable changes on the indoor masking requirement, future funding for transportation, and the return to work schedule. He commended Public Information & Marketing Manager Thomas Hall and his team for the phenomenal job they were doing.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Vice Chair Moyer complimented Mr. Murphy on his testimony and presence in representing the WETA and keeping light on the importance of ferry transit. She expressed her excitement about the Giants postseason and the impacts on ridership.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF

Mr. Murphy thanked the Directors for their kind words about the testimony and for giving good policy direction to be able to promote the WETA.

Mr. Murphy reported that the Vallejo dredging project had been completed on time and on budget with minimal impact to customers. He recognized Senior Planner/Project Manager Chad Mason for his management of the project who would be working on planning the reconfiguration to the Vallejo Ferry Terminal to minimize the low tide impacts.

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Mr. Murphy discussed some of the funding happening at the regional and federal level including an additional funding opportunity and noting that WETA received \$772 thousand from Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) that was added to the first tranche.

Mr. Murphy talked about changes in the COVID protocols on indoor mask requirements and vaccine mandates. He said that the vaccine mandates announced by the Biden Administration would apply to private sector business employers with more than 100 employees including WETA's contract operator, Blue & Gold Fleet (Blue & Gold). Though this mandate did not apply to WETA, he said that WETA will be requiring its employees to be vaccinated by the end of November.

Mr. Murphy introduced WETA General Counsel Steven Miller from Hanson Bridgett LLP to talk about another COVID protocol, AB 361, requiring the Board to take action on a regular basis to maintain virtual meetings. Mr. Miller reported that the Executive Order N-29-20 relaxing the Brown Act teleconference restrictions had expired and that AB 361 permanently amended the Brown Act to allow WETA to conduct virtual meetings as long as there is a state-proclaimed state of emergency and local officials impose measures promoting social distancing. He said that the Board would need to adopt findings each month that meeting in person would present an imminent safety risk for attendees to meet safely in person and that the Board would see an item on this for the November meeting and at each meeting thereafter.

Mr. Murphy updated the Board on the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Harbor Craft Rules language and on the funding opportunities of the Chase Center/Pier 48 Ferry Terminal adding that the temporary terminal that was supporting the Vallejo dredging project was back at Pier 48.

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

In response to a question from Director Del Bono, Mr. Miller said that Blue & Gold indicated that it was planning on complying and cooperating and that there did not seem to be a need to use the contract as a tool to require vaccinations or testing. He added that requiring vaccination should be considered on a case by case basis consistent with WETA's statutory powers under its enabling legislation and the specific need to protect the safety of WETA's facilities, systems, and customers. Mr. Murphy reminded the Board that companies with more than 100 employees would be covered by the federal mandate.

Mr. Murphy invited Planning & Development Manager Kevin Connolly to report on ridership and recovery. Mr. Connolly reported that WETA was ahead of schedule of where it expected to be and that ridership was highly dependent on weather. He noted a lot of occasional and recreational ridership midday and on weekends. He said that for Fleet Week, there would be no enhancement of transbay service because of the increases in services already implemented but that there would be enhanced Ferry Building to Pier 41 shuttle service.

He stated that South San Francisco service would be introduced on November 8 as biotech commuters plan their return to office on a gradual basis over the next few months. Mr. Connolly said that Blue & Gold's monohulls would be utilized for baseball service because of the demand and conflicts with basketball. Lastly, he noted that with the exception on the Harbor Bay and South San Francisco service, there would be schedule changes on all the other services

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

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6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Director Intintoli made a motion to approve the consent calendar:

- a. Board Meeting Minutes – September 2, 2021
- b. Authorize Update of Signature Authority for Local Agency Investment Fund Account
- a. Authorize Release of a Request for Proposals for a Real-Time Transit Information System

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

Vice Chair Moyer seconded the motion, and the consent calendar carried unanimously.

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

7. APPROVE LEASE AGREEMENT WITH THE PORT OF SAN FRANCISCO FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE AND BERTHING SPACE AT PIER 9

Mr. Murphy presented this item recommending approval of a five-year lease with the Port of San Francisco for administrative office and berthing space at Pier 9 and authorizing the Executive Director to execute the lease agreement.

Director DelBono 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.

8. WETA ZERO EMISSION STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Murphy introduced this informational item to inform development of a plan to transition ferry operations on San Francisco Bay to zero-emission vessels emphasizing the use of electric propulsion systems and resolving the technical and regulatory barriers to implementation.

Mr. Murphy turned the item over to Mr. Mason who along with Aurora Marine Design (Aurora) Principal Shaun Green and Arup Senior Energy Consultant Ewan Frost-Pennington shared their presentation on the feasibility of zero-emission vessels outlining the goals, the workflow stages, study responsibilities for funding and management, and next steps. He said that both he and Operations & Maintenance Manager Timothy Hanners would be managing the study while Aurora would be working on the vessel and route analysis and Arup on the shoreside infrastructure analysis and stakeholder coordination.

The Directors thanked staff and the study team for their important and valuable presentation.

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

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No further public comments were shared.

10. RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION

- a. Public Employee Performance Evaluation

Chair Wunderman thanked everyone and closed the open session of the meeting. The Directors returned to closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957 at 2:20 p.m., and Chair Wunderman noted that any outcomes would be reported at the next meeting.

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The Directors returned to open session at 2:47 p.m. with no action to report.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

- Board Secretary

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