



GRTA/GDC BOARD MEETING

Minutes

December 13, 2000

245 Peachtree Center Avenue, Suite 900, Atlanta, Georgia

All notice having been duly given, the regular meeting of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority Board/Governor's Development Council Board was held at 245 Peachtree Center Avenue, Suite 900, Atlanta, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT*:

Joel Cowan, Chair
Walter Deriso, Vice Chair
Andrella Baylis
Sharon Gay
Eric Hovdesven
Shi Shailendra
John Sibley
James Stephenson
Ken Thigpen
Richard Tucker
Michael Tyler
Carolyn Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Tom Phillips
John Williams

*A quorum was present.

The Board Chairman Joel Cowan welcomed Board members and visitors and convened the meeting at 1:20 p.m. The Chairman recognized the new MARTA General Manager Mr. Ford, and stated that Mr. Phillips and Mr. Williams would be absent. The Chairman asked Mr. Sibley to present the opening meditation and moment of silent reflection. The Chairman then requested that everyone stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

The minutes of the October 27, 2000 (Special Called Meeting) and the November 8, 2000 Board Meeting were approved.

APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA FOR December 13, 2000

The agenda was approved with the addition of Resolution 00.12.02 (action item) setting the Executive Director's salary. The Chairman also stated that there would be an action item coming from the Admin Committee concurrent with their report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cowan noted three persons had registered for Public Comment and explained the public comment process and that a three-minute limit per speaker would be in effect. Presentations were offered by:

John Sullivan, Vice President, Equity Office Properties who oversees 4.5 Million sq ft of office space with 14,000 workers, and 325 companies. His clients primary concern is traffic congestion which has caused customers to leave the area. They often ask when will improvements be made, and he in turn asked that the Board approve the resolution for the expansion projects in the Ashford-Dunwoody area.

Mr. Ted Turner, Operations Manager, Hewlett Packard, who expressed his concerns related to traffic and related congestion in the Perimeter Summit business area.

Mr. Bryan Hager, Georgia Sierra Club who commented on the GA 400/Northern Area Study. He asked that the Board endorse a planning process that will add value and that GRTA will not be able to meet that goal in a compressed timeframe. He suggested that the Board support the staff recommendations of a 22 month study.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESOLUTION

Mr. Cowan explains the Resolution 00.12.02 for the Executive Director's salary increase, distributing a handout and discussed the applicable policy, explains the resolution and the reason action is needed.

MOTION: Mr. Tucker moves to accept Resolution 00.12.02, which was seconded by Mr. Shailendra.

Mr. Cowan and Mr. Sibley shared their appreciation of the Board to the Executive Director.

ACTION: The Board approved the resolution unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Catherine Ross, Executive Director

Clayton County Update

Clayton County Commission unanimously authorized Mr. Crandle Bray as Chairman, to enter into a contract with GRTA to provide Bus Service to Clayton County. Dr. Ross also thanked Mr. Shailendra for his activity in accomplishing this task.

ARC/TIP Development Program

The ARC/TIP Update Program occurred during the Board Retreat, there are subsequent meetings planned.

Selection of MARTA General Manager

Dr. Ross introduced the new MARTA General Manager, Nathaniel Ford and stated her enthusiasm about working with him in the future.

Mr. Ford stated that he values Dr. Ross' contribution to MARTA as a Board Member. He commented on MARTA's vision and challenges for the future and as the new GM/CEO of MARTA, he will work to solve these challenges. Mr. Ford invited the GRTA Board

Members to attend the opening of the Sandy Springs and North Springs MARTA stations on Saturday.

Mr. Cowan thanked Mr. Ford for his past work at MARTA.

Mr. Hovdesven stated how fortunate we are to have Mr. Ford's experience at MARTA.

Production Meeting Update

Dr. Ross explained the production meeting process to the Board. Staff will continue to add/delete tasks and update the Board on a Monthly basis.

Legislative Luncheon Update

Dr. Ross thanked Mr. Stephenson for his attendance at one of the three legislative luncheons over the last month.

Mr. Stephenson expressed the appreciation of some of the legislators that attended those luncheons.

Presentation to Transportation Committee of Atlanta City Council

Dr. Ross gave a presentation to the Transportation Committee of the Atlanta City Council on November 15, 2000 to acquaint them with GRTA and its current/upcoming projects (eg: Atlantic Station).

Personnel Assignment from US EPA to GRTA

Dr. Ross announced that the US EPA is allowing Dr. Robert Goodman to work part-time assisting GRTA in measuring the impact of investments on Air Quality. He will give us about 20 hours a week for the next six months.

Greenlight Committee Update

The Greenlight Committee will begin to meet every month because the project is entering a new phase. We now have a signed and approved Environmental Assessment document that allows the project to move forward.

Mr. Cowan recognized Ms. Liane Levitan in her last meeting as Dekalb CEO.

Ms. Levitan addressed the Board and thanked them on behalf of the citizens of Dekalb County.

Mr. Cowan recognized Mr. Carl Rhodenizer, Clayton County Commission and thanked him for his work on the Clayton County Bus System.

Mr. Cowan asked that, due to the need of the Vice Chairman to leave at 3:00, the order of the agenda be modified. The Board agreed to the modification.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Administrative/Finance/Personnel Committee

Mr. Deriso introduced Mr. Fjelstul who presented the Admin Committee agenda item.

Mr. Fjelstul outlined the previous resolution, the proposed resolution (00.12.01) and the Admin Committee request that it be incorporated into the GRTA Policy Manual.

MOTION: Mr. Deriso discussed the work of committee, moves to approve Resolution 00.12.01, which was seconded by Mr. Stephenson.

ACTION: The motion was approved unanimously.

Transportation Committee

Mr. Deriso addressed the update from the Transportation Committee, one matter for discussion and action by the Board is required on the GA 400/Northern Area Study. The engineers from the State of Georgia Department of Transportation presented information concerning the HOV connectivity with the Ashford-Dunwoody Interchange.

Motion: Mr. Croy presented a copy to each Board Member outlining the scope of study in RFP format, addressing the legal issues, and explained that the Transportation Committee's approval of a recommendation to the Board for a 22 month contract to study the GA 400/North Area Study in an amount not to exceed \$7 Million. There was a recommendation from the Committee for a motion to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute contracts with GDOT and Parsons Brinkerhoff/Post Buckley in an amount not to exceed \$7 Million for the North Area Study.

Mr. Deriso clarified the motion presented by the Committee does not need a second and therefore is presented as is to the Board.

Mr. Cowan stated that the vote passed due with a 3-2 vote in favor.

Mr. Tucker asked that due to the discussion at the previous committee meeting the sides of the discussion be reviewed before the Board takes formal action.

Mr. Croy briefly outlined the scenarios discussed at the earlier meeting, the Committee Members comments for and against, and the basis for Staff recommending the \$7 Million study to the committee.

ACTION: After discussion by the Board and Staff the Motion was approved 6-5.

Those in favor of the motion were:

Andrella Baylis
Sonny Deriso
Sharon Gay
Eric Hovdesven
John Sibley
Carolyn Williams

Those against the motion were:

Shi Shailendra
Jim Stephenson
Ken Thigpen
Richard Tucker
Michael Tyler

Mr. Deriso presented an update on the Ashford-Dunwoody Project. The consensus that GDOT presented adequately addressed the concerns of the GRTA Board.

Mr. Cowan announced for the record that GRTA accepts the report of the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Mr. Croy explained that the project did have a design change, lengthening the bridge span as a result of this request by GRTA.

Dr. Ross reviewed preliminary discussions during the next monthly meeting with the GDOT Commissioner to initiate a neutral task force to review some of these issues.

Georgia Rail Passenger Program Liaison Committee

Mr. Deriso asked Mr. Croy to present the GRPP PMT Report.

Mr. Croy presented an update detailing the alternatives recommended by the consultants being studied by the Project Management Team. He continued by reviewing last week's Senate Transportation Subcommittee Meeting hosted by Senator Max Cleland. Those in attendance were Governor, Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater, Amtrak President George Worrington, Federal Railroad Administrator Molitoris, Mayors of Atlanta, Macon and Canton, and representatives of CSX and Norfolk Southern for an afternoon long presentation relating to rail projects in Georgia and the Southeast. Federal Legislative update, issues related to access of Greyhound into the MMPT. A \$1.6 Million rail capacity study for the downtown Atlanta rail corridor to address capacity constraints in the area.

Mr. Deriso elaborated on last week's PMT meeting at the Capitol Education Center which allowed Mr. David Lynch, President/CEO Greyhound to present to the PMT showing the interest of Greyhound in the MMPT project.

Mr. Cowan highlights a recent visit with the mayor of East Point and stated that he invited them to address the Board in March or April to address issues related to rail choke points in that area.

DRI Committee

Mr. Croy presented a DRI Update addressing three DRI's that were reviewed in the last week. The Fairburn Wastewater Treatment Plant (Application Number FS-100300-1a), was found by the ARC at the last DRI Committee Meeting **NOT** in the best interest of the State, thus requiring GRTA Board review under the Interim Policy. The recommendation of the DRI Committee was read aloud: **"The DRI Committee is supportive of, and in no way disagrees with the finding of the ARC, however, GRTA's interim policy limits GRTA's review of DRI's when ARC's findings are based on reasons other than transportation or air quality, therefore the DRI Committee recommends, pursuant to the interim policy that Federal and State funding required to create land transportation services and access to the development not be prohibited."**

Ms. Gay asked that Staff explain what the ARC findings were, since they were not transportation related?

Mr. Croy explained that there were issues related to the level of service boundaries between local governments on this project.

ACTION: The motion was approved unanimously.

Bus Committee Update

Ms. Williams presented the Bus Committee Update. She stated that she and Mr. Piascik recently traveled to two MCI bus manufacturing plants in Winnipeg, Canada and Pembina, North Dakota. Seating arrangements, wheelchair access, ingress/egress, fuel systems (CNG/Superclean Diesel), dependability and costs were several of the issues addressed during the visits.

Mr. Piascik further elaborated on the overview of the bus options reviewed during the visits. The CNG package would have the same characteristics as the diesel package, but the cost is approximately \$100,000 more than the standard Diesel Package.

Mr. Hovdesven stated the need for a north side bus service facility. This facility should provide any bus service the opportunity to utilize the facility for maintenance.

Mr. Piascik stated the need for further review and discussion on the CNG platforms.

Mr. Cowan asked that the Bus Committee bring the Board materials in an educational format in the near future to enable the Board to be better informed on the options for discussion.

2001 BOARD CALENDAR REVIEW

Mr. Ellis presented a discussion on the 2001 Board Calendar. He stated that there were several conflicts to be addressed and reviewed by the Board.

The Board determined that the January 4, 2001 Board Work Session be cancelled in and that the DRI Committee would meet on the morning of the January 10, 2001 Board Meeting at 9:30 a.m. with the Transportation Committee Meetings taking place at 10:30 a.m. The GRPP/PMT Meeting initially scheduled for January 4, 2001 was moved to January 11, 2001. The Committee Meetings, except for the DRI Committee Meeting, will be cancelled. The July DRI Meeting will be held on July 11, 2001 if needed. The DRI Committee will meet at 9:30 a.m. with the Transportation Committee Meetings will continue to meet at 10:30 a.m. each month. The Administrative/Finance/Personnel Committee will be scheduled as needed.

GOVERNOR'S DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Counsel recommended to the Chair that the GDC Review be postponed until next month so that all of the Board Members could be present. The Board agreed to this proposal.

POLICY COUNCIL UPDATE

Ms. Cochran presented the work of the Policy Council and Citizen's Academy meetings. They will prepare a short Policy Council presentation during the February, 2001 Board Work Session.

Ms. Cochran reviewed the Short Term Actions referencing page 25 in the handout to develop ideas for longer-term actions to present to the Board. They covered incentives and disincentives, land use, traffic congestion, technology, studies, transit, involvement of local governments, and other topics to be presented in February.

Mr. Cowan stated that the policy council presentations be the bulk of the Work Session work in February

NEW BUSINESS AND BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Sibley requested that the results of the Speed Study be made available to the Board ASAP.

Ms. Gay presented the issue of the difficulty of local governments in complying with the requirements for developing and expending money on sidewalk and bicycle projects. There are expensive requirements for engineering and design phases of sidewalk projects. Can Staff provide some clarity on what GRTA can do to clarify the cause of the policies making these projects so difficult to accomplish.

Ms. Cochran responded that there are some special requirements that are CMAQ funded that are not required of other CMAQ funded projects. Staff is looking into these concerns and will present its findings to the Board at a later date.

Mr. Croy continued by explaining some of the NEPA processes that can drive up the costs on these projects.

Mr. Hovdesven encouraged the Staff to present the Speed Study at the next Board Meeting to help with the arguments related to RTP investments we are trying to move forward.

Dr. Ross responded on the request for the Speed Study presentation that Staff will make the draft speed study available to the Board ASAP.

Mr. Thigpen inquired about recent statements made by the Governor and Dr. Ross agreeing on the construction of HOV lanes related to various lawsuits. Did we get involved in this?

Dr. Ross explained that this has been an ongoing progress on a lawyers level, so there is not much involvement for us at this point. When there is a position reached, we will make comment and be more involved.

Mr. Hovdesven thanked Dr. Ross and the GRTA Staff in starting this process to build improvements in our infrastructure. In the end GRTA is going to help improve growth in this region.

ADJOURNMENT

It was approved without opposition to adjourn the meeting at 3:23 P.M..

APPROVED:

Joel H. Cowan
Chairman

Date

ATTEST:

Jason D. Ellis
Recording Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Kirk R. Fjelstul
Chief Legal Counsel