

Regional Transit Authority
September 17, 1993

Members present:

King County

Paul Barden, King County Councilmember
Don Davidson, Bellevue Councilmember
Mary Gates, Federal Way Councilmember
Audrey Gruger, King County Councilmember
Bruce Laing, King County Councilmember
Greg Nickels, King County Councilmember
Norm Rice, Mayor, City of Seattle
Cynthia Sullivan, King County Councilmember
Jim White, Kent Councilmember

Pierce County

Sharon Boekelman, Bonney Lake Councilmember
Ken Madsen, Pierce County Councilmember
Paul Miller, Tacoma Councilmember
Bill Stoner, Pierce County Councilmember

Snohomish County

Bill Brubaker, Snohomish County Councilmember
Dave Earling, Edmonds Councilmember
Pete Kinch, Mayor, City of Everett

Washington State Department of Transportation

Sid Morrison, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 1:38 p.m. by Mr. Morrison, Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Chair Pro Tem, in Exhibition Room South, Bellevue Conference Center, 505 106th Avenue Northeast, Bellevue, Washington.

Introduction of RTA Board Members

Mr. Morrison stated I would like to welcome everyone to today's meeting. I am pleased by the attendance, he noted, and continued his remarks as follows:

Unlike the meeting room configuration for the Joint Regional Policy Committee (JRPC) meetings, where members faced each other, the RTA Board members are facing the audience. It is symbolic that the RTA Board faces the public and all of the people of King County, Pierce County, Snohomish County and the people of Washington State.

It is my privilege as Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to call this meeting to order. I do so under the authority of Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.112.030, which states:

"The secretary shall call the first meeting of the authority, to be held within thirty days following receipt of the appointments. At its first meeting, the authority shall elect officers and provide for the adoption of rules and other operating procedures."

All RTA Board members have been briefed or had the opportunity to receive a briefing within their own county areas, therefore there is some degree of understanding on the procedures that we will follow today. The first order of business is to designate a Clerk. I will ask that Ms. Bonnie Mattson, Clerk of the Council, Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (Metro), serve in that capacity. I understand that Ms. Mattson is available for the next two RTA Board meetings. I would also like to announce that this meeting is being videotaped.

On an historic note, we are meeting at a site that was once district headquarters for the old WSDOT District 7.

Mr. Morrison introduced the RTA Board members at this time, and continued his remarks as follows:

I would now ask Representative Ruth Fisher, Chair of the House Transportation Committee and Co-Chair of the Legislative Transportation Committee, to make some opening comments. All of us involved in the RTA recognize that the RTA Board would not be present today if not for Ms. Fisher's leadership during the course of a number of years. We appreciate that and look forward to a challenge from Ms. Fisher.

Ms. Fisher said on the morning of September 13, 1993 I watched on television as Mr. Yitzhak Rabin and Mr. Yasser Arafat shook hands. At that time, it went through my mind that if the Mideast leaders could meet and shake hands, surely the leaders of three counties in the northwest corner of the world could get together and start a regional transportation system, she noted, and continued her remarks as follows:

I would like to provide a little history in regard to why we are here today. In 1986 the State Rail Development Commission was formed by the Legislature; four RTA Board members, Mr. Brubaker, Mr. Laing, Mr. Nickels and Mr. Stoner, participated on that Commission. Mr. Laing was Chair of the passenger side. Out of the Commission's 37 meetings and six statewide meetings, we fashioned House Bill (HB) 1825, which brought high capacity transit into the 20th Century. In 1987 HB 1825 passed the House but failed in the Senate. The Senate wanted a revenue package in 1990, so we

stipulated that the revenue package for the WSDOT and the cities and counties would not pass unless HB 1825 did. It finally passed in 1990.

The JRPC came out of HB 1825. The JRPC came forward with a plan this year. In 1992 House Speaker Joe King and I decided it was time to put an RTA into legislation and we did that, which brought the JRPC to the point at which we are now. I envy the RTA Board members; if there was a way to write the House Transportation Committee Chair into the legislation I would have done so.

The RTA Board has a real responsibility and a great challenge; it will not be easy. You have political courage and are responsible people.

I would like to say a few words about funding. It is my contention that the state, federal and local governments should each pick up one-third of the funding responsibility. I hope we can work together so that games of "chicken" do not happen. I think the temptation will be for the local governments to wait for the state government to act and the state government will be tempted to wait until the federal government acts.

You are on your way. I envy the RTA Board and wish that I were part of this effort. Almost half of you are new to this work. There is a lot of work ahead of you and I believe that you will find a way to do it. I plan to live long enough to ride on this system; that is a blessing and a threat to all of you.

(The RTA Board members applauded at this time.)

Mr. Morrison thanked Ms. Fisher for her leadership and the challenge. We are excited about all the potential and opportunities Ms. Fisher has provided for us, he explained. At this time I would like to introduce Mr. Scott Rutherford, who will speak on behalf of the Expert Review Panel (ERP), he continued. Mr. Aubrey Davis, Chair of the ERP, was not able to attend this afternoon's meeting, he added.

Mr. Rutherford made the following remarks:

HB 1825 created the ERP in response to some disastrous high capacity rapid transit planning efforts around the country. Several legislators wanted to ensure that did not happen in Washington State. The Secretary of the WSDOT, the Legislature and the Governor's office therefore appointed the state's technical oversight group. The ERP was

appointed in 1989 and has been working together for almost four years. We have held 14 meetings. The ERP is available to the RTA for future oversight work.

The ten ERP members represent various technical disciplines from across the country. We have several members from transit properties and from the academic and business communities. We have experience with projects in Portland, Atlanta, San Francisco, Houston and Miami; that experience has been very valuable during our review process. The ERP's role is outlined in HB 1825; that role was slightly modified during two legislative sessions. We were basically responsible for reviewing the assumptions, methodology and results that the JRPC's consultants and transit agencies developed as part of the process. Our review was based on whether or not the assumptions, methodology and results were reasonable, realistic and formed a good basis for decision making. The ERP was not responsible for commenting on policy decisions.

We met regularly every three months. JRPC staff mailed us documents and we came together to review the documents and provide comments. We found Regional Transit Project staff to be cooperative; they have incorporated most of our suggestions.

The system plan process in general was the most comprehensive system plan ever undertaken. The patronage forecasts were generally conservative and the capital costs were reasonable and conservative. Operations and maintenance costs were based on good operating experience from other systems around the country.

I have participated on several similar panels around the country; this ERP is one of the best experiences I have had. As I mentioned earlier, we are available for future work.

Mr. Morrison noted a letter from Mr. Tim Hill, King County Executive, was distributed (copy on file in the Metro Clerk's Office). In his letter, Mr. Hill basically offers his congratulations on the first meeting of the RTA Board, suggests that we get on with our work, and stated that King County is willing to provide assistance to the RTA Board, he added.

Comments

Mr. Morrison said I will now turn to the RTA Board members for their comments.

Mr. Nickels stated I want to be on record that if the RTA Board is anything like the JRPC, we will spend a lot of time discussing ridership forecasts and construction cost estimates. That kind of detail is important and appropriate, however I would like us to keep in mind a vision for this region, he explained, and continued his remarks as follows:

I cannot imagine this region 30 years from now without a mass transportation system. A mass transportation system is essential for our economic health and environmental quality. For many of us it will not be a tool that we will be able to use in our day-to-day lives as we do not currently live or work along the main lines or we are so stuck on our habits that we will not take advantage of the system. We owe this choice to our children and grandchildren. I hope we think about the debt we owe to future generations when we get mired down.

Mr. Madsen said I do not have a great deal to say. I do feel very strongly that for a change we are talking about moving people instead of moving vehicles, he explained. I think that is a serious change in philosophy and how we allocate resources, he continued. Will we achieve what we are all hoping for?, he asked; I have no idea, but I am willing to try. I think we should get started instead of sitting and listening to each other talk, he concluded.

Mr. Miller said there are numerous challenges ahead for the RTA Board that will test our fortitude. Our final decision may not resemble the vision we have in our heads now, he explained. I believe that the only way we can fail as a body is if we do not address the transportation issues and problems of the future, he added.

Ms. Boekelman stated I would like to defer my comments for six months. I hope we can be effective immediately, she noted. We need to focus on the issues that need to be taken care of immediately, she concluded.

Mr. Earling stated I look forward to the challenges and the opportunity to serve on this Board. In Snohomish County we may perhaps feel outnumbered but I have been assured by staff that we will be well armed when we walk in the room, he explained. I share Mr. Nickels' need for reality checks and the importance of vision, he continued. I know that many of the RTA Board members have been around this block many times, however some of us have not, he said. I hope that you will be patient with us while we move through this project, he concluded.

Mr. Brubaker said I would issue a challenge to the RTA Board. I hope we do not become transfixed on technological issues, he explained; I hope we get on with refinements to the system plan and get the financing plan done and to the voters. We need to do this with all dispatch, he noted. I hope we can keep the momentum going, he continued. I am glad to be here, he concluded.

Mr. Kinch said the impact of transportation is becoming apparent to us at the north end of the spectrum as Everett is emerging as one of the economic centers of the Puget Sound area. I see this as a tremendous opportunity in regard to where we go in the future, he added.

Mr. Morrison noted Ms. Sullivan just arrived. I will call upon her to speak after she has had a few minutes to gather her thoughts.

Ms. Gruger stated this is a 90-day term for me and I am here just to help start the RTA Board on the right trail. During the last 12 years as a King County Councilmember, I have watched King County Councilmembers do what I thought was an outstanding job of being regional in their approach, she explained. I believe the RTA will take the same approach, she continued. Before long we will not be talking about or looking at only the benefits to our piece of the region, she concluded, but how we can help everyone as we focus on the future.

Mr. Rice stated I would remind us of the King County/Metro merger debates and offer some lessons from that experience. He continued his remarks as follows:

First, I want to ensure that the regional interests are kept in mind; we will benefit from that attitude in economic and other areas. Secondly, trust is essential; we must be open and honest and lay our interests on the table. The third area I would like to address is political will. Clearly there are a large number of people who want to modify dreams and visions because they are politically expedient. I think we want to move forward and not just on the politics of the day. Finally, our approach must be collaborative in order for the RTA Board to be effective. I come to this table open, honest and ready to work for the betterment of the Puget Sound region.

Mr. Stoner said it is a privilege to be at this point. Lots of work went into the JRPC, he explained; that was only the beginning. My thinking is that if we do not ride together we will ride separately and move slowly, he added.

Mr. Barden said about six years ago, when I chaired Metro's Capital Facilities Subcommittee, we opted to embark on commuter rail because we thought it would be so quick to implement and demonstrate to citizens that rail transit works. He continued his remarks as follows:

I hope that we do not focus on planning for too long. I hope that you ladies and gentlemen build the system because we desperately need rapid transit in our communities. The jobs of our children and grandchildren depend on the economic health of our communities as does the preservation of our environment. I have great confidence in the RTA Board; when I look at the quality of the Board members I know that our work will get done. I salute the RTA Board in advance for the good work it will do.

Mr. Laing stated I am honored to be an RTA Board member. I thank Ms. Fisher for her challenge, he explained. It is clear to me, from the membership of the RTA Board, that we will be able to meet that challenge, he added.

Mr. White said I echo Mr. Laing's comments about being honored to be a part of this process. I would like to share a fault of mine, he explained; that is my impatience with long studies. I urge us to move forward and give the public something to consider, he concluded.

Ms. Gates stated many people have asked me why I get involved in regional issues. I have always responded that I do not understand government boundaries as they relate to transportation issues, she explained. People do not stop at county lines or city boundaries, she continued. I think if we keep that in mind, the regional perspective will flow from that analysis, she noted. I hope we recognize how all government bodies are intertwined in the economic development and outcomes of the region, she said. Our duty is to ensure the movement of people, goods and services as well as to ensure there are jobs and a transportation system that works, she concluded.

Mr. Davidson said the RTA Board has a real challenge before it. As some of you know, I have been rather critical of the process during the last several years, he stated. I was not a member of the JRPC, he noted. I believe, however, that it is time to move forward and make sure that questions are answered on behalf of the public so that we can approach the public in a year or two with a plan that it can support, he explained. I am looking forward to the challenge of that, he added. I think we need to move forward, he concluded.

Mr. Morrison thanked the RTA Board members for their comments. We truly have a very talented team, he concluded; our goal is to work together as a team as we take on the tremendous challenge that Ms. Fisher outlined for us.

Agenda Changes to Order of Business

Mr. Morrison asked for additions or deletions to the agenda and there were none.

Adoption of Interim Rules and Procedures

Mr. Morrison referred RTA Board members to an unnumbered resolution adopting interim rules and operating procedures for the RTA Board under tab four of the document entitled "Regional Transit Authority Resource Book" (copy on file).

It was moved by Mr. Barden, seconded by Mr. Laing and carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present that the interim rules and operating procedures be approved.

It was moved by Mr. Barden and seconded by Mr. Nickels that Section 2A of the interim rules and operating procedures be amended as follows:

"The Board Chair and Vice Chairs shall be selected by majority vote of all members of the Board and shall serve two-year terms. The Board shall elect two Vice Chairs and other officers as it deems necessary. The Chair and Vice Chairs shall be from different counties."

Mr. Brubaker asked how does Mr. Barden envision the Vice Chairs operating as opposed to Co-Chairs? Mr. Barden replied the Vice Chairs shall preside at meetings and otherwise perform the responsibilities of the Board Chair upon motion of the Board or in the event of the absence or inability to act of any Board Chair.

The motion to amend Section 2A of the interim rules and operating procedures carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present.

The motion to approve the interim rules and operating procedures, as amended, (hereinafter "Resolution No. 1") carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present.

Mr. Morrison stated information related to the time and place for regular RTA Board meetings is included in Section 3 of the interim rules and operating procedures. Copies of a spreadsheet that lists the standing meetings of King County, Pierce County

and Snohomish County were distributed (copy on file), he explained.

The RTA Board discussed meeting dates and times.

It was moved by Mr. Laing, seconded by Ms. Gates that the RTA Board establish regular meeting dates on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at 1:30 p.m.

Ms. Gruger said I would suggest that we not be so specific in identifying the meeting time. There are some times that we may want to meet on Friday mornings, she explained. I hope the RTA will give itself room to meet on Friday mornings, she noted. Mr. Morrison responded the interim rules we have adopted provide for special meetings of the RTA Board with a minimum of 24 hours notice. Our goal is to establish regular RTA Board meetings at a set time, he explained.

Ms. Gruger stated there was poor attendance at a number of the JRPC's Friday afternoon meetings. I suggest that we attempt to meet earlier in the day, she added.

Mr. Laing said I appreciate the intent of Ms. Gruger's suggestion, however we are initially establishing a cycle for people to put on their calendars. We can adjust the meeting time as we gain experience, he explained. Mr. Morrison added the rules can very easily be modified as we proceed.

The motion to establish regular RTA Board meeting dates on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at 1:30 p.m. carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present.

It was moved by Mr. Stoner and seconded by Mr. Brubaker that one of six RTA Board meetings be held in Pierce County and one of six RTA Board meetings be held in Snohomish County.

Mr. Morrison said the WSDOT suggests that the September 24 RTA Board meeting be held at the Metro Council Chambers in Seattle. We will need help in establishing meeting locations as we move up and down the Interstate 5 corridor, he added.

Ms. Gates noted I am in support of this motion. I have long felt that we need to understand the region; on a Friday afternoon there is real understanding in terms of traffic movement between Snohomish County and Pierce County, she explained. I think it will cause us to move with measured haste, she added.

The motion to hold one of six RTA Board meetings in Pierce County and one of six RTA Board meetings in Snohomish County carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present.

Mr. Morrison noted there are several other provisions within the by laws that would be appropriate to change now if that is the desire of the RTA Board. Those include the super majority vote provision and the authority the Secretary of the WSDOT must have if carrying a vote on behalf of the State of Washington, he explained. I also want you to note the firm stance in regard to RTA Board alternates or proxies, he added; they can sit in on the meetings on behalf of RTA Board members, but they will not be allowed to vote. At some point in the future we may want to make the interim rules permanent, he added. In the meantime, the interim rules can be changed at a subsequent meeting after notifying members of the RTA Board of the proposed changes, he concluded.

Election of Officers

Mr. Morrison noted under the established rules, the RTA Board Chair and the two Vice Chairs will be elected to two-year terms.

It was moved by Mr. Stoner and seconded by Mr. Brubaker that Mr. Laing be elected Chair of the RTA Board.

It was moved by Mr. Rice and seconded by Mr. Brubaker that nominations be closed.

The motion to elect Mr. Laing as Chair of the RTA Board was carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present.

(The RTA Board applauded at this time.)

It was moved by Mr. Barden and seconded by Mr. Miller that Mr. Stoner be elected Vice Chair of the RTA Board from Pierce County.

It was moved by Mr. Barden and seconded by Mr. Miller that nominations be closed.

The motion to elect Mr. Stoner as Chair of the RTA Board from Pierce County was carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present.

(The RTA Board applauded at this time.)

It was moved by Mr. White and seconded by Ms. Gruger that Mr. Brubaker be elected as Vice Chair of the RTA Board from Snohomish County.

It was moved by Ms. Gruger and seconded by Mr. Laing that nominations be closed.

The motion to elect Mr. Brubaker as Vice Chair of the RTA Board from Snohomish County was carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present.

(The RTA Board applauded at this time.)

Establish Regular Meeting Dates

Mr. Morrison said the RTA Board is scheduled to meet on September 24 at 1:30 p.m. unless I hear objections.

Mr. Laing noted that meeting date is driven by the Central Puget Sound Account grant application deadline. The granting authority extended the grant application deadline to the end of this month to allow for input from the RTA Board, he explained.

Mr. Morrison asked after our September 24 meeting should we proceed on the regular meeting schedule discussed earlier? Ms. Gruger replied the RTA Board may want to consider some special meetings in November and December because the holidays will affect our regular meeting schedule. Mr. Laing added I suggest that we ask the staff who are available to us to distribute background information to the RTA Board regarding the types of decisions that we are facing in the near future. At our next meeting we can use that as a basis for scheduling our meetings, he explained. We could then consider workshops or other special meeting formats, he added.

Central Puget Sound Transportation Account Grant Application

Referring to the handout entitled "Central Puget Sound Account" (copy on file), Mr. Morrison made the following remarks:

There are three options for strictly interim financing between the RTA formation and a vote of the people. The RTA Board could apply to the WSDOT for high capacity transit grant funds; applications will be accepted next spring. The RTA Board could apply for Central Puget Sound Transportation Account funds, also through the WSDOT. The last funding option is to apply for grants or loans from the transit agencies within the RTA boundary.

One of the RTA Board members, Ms. Martha Choe, chairs the Multimodal Committee, which governs the Central Puget Sound Transportation Account. The Multimodal Committee has set aside \$2.3 million from the Central Puget Sound Account in anticipation of a grant request from the RTA. We can discuss or take action on the preparation of an application for those funds.

The transit agencies in King County, Pierce County, Snohomish County and Kitsap County and the RTA are all eligible recipients for these funds. The funds can be used for planning, development of capital projects, and development of high capacity transit systems, including high occupancy vehicle lanes. This money is from the Legislature, which appropriated \$21 million from the Central Puget Sound Transportation Account for the 1993 to 1995 biennium. All of the funds will be under contract by November 1, 1993, therefore we have a short window for the \$2.3 million that is reserved.

It was moved by Mr. Barden, seconded by Mr. Brubaker and carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present that cooperative staff be directed to prepare a Central Puget Sound Transportation Account grant application for the RTA Board's consideration at its September 24 meeting.

Mr. Davidson said along with that I would like a wider discussion of the various grants and financing options. There is some paperwork that we have had on interim RTA funding and I am interested in a total discussion of this issue, he explained, such as what strings go with what funds, how they can be used and are they designated for specific projects. Mr. Morrison responded Mr. Davidson's request is so noted.

Mr. Miller stated it may be appropriate to open discussion on the subject of forming subcommittees on finance and legislative actions. The sooner we address those issues the sooner work on this Board can continue, he added.

Mr. Laing said I am open for discussion to get a sense of the work program that will drive the staffing, which needs to be decided as well as the subcommittee structure. I think Mr. Miller's suggestion is excellent, he noted, and I agree that background information on staffing and subcommittee structure should be gathered between now and next week.

Mr. Rice stated we need to "get on the same page" before we start assigning subcommittees. I think we all need to spend some time working together first before forming subcommittees, he added.

Ms. Gates said I think we need a really basic briefing for all of us so we have a similar level of knowledge on funding, staffing and work program issues. It would also be helpful to have a briefing in regard to the JRPC subcommittees that worked and did not work, she explained, so that we can find out what was done and how we can make it better.

Mr. Morrison said perhaps Mr. David Kalberer, Regional Transit Project Manager, Metro, could share information with us regarding the potential for receiving a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) commuter rail grant.

Mr. Brubaker asked will Mr. Laing's expectations in regard to staffing issues and the financing package be discussed at the same time? I believe that interim and permanent staffing are critical to determining our work plan, he explained. Mr. Laing replied yes, that is correct. The JRPC was staffed by joint staff from the existing transit agencies, he explained. The funds for that structure for 1993 have been allocated to those transit agencies for the work subsequent to the JRPC's adoption of the system plan, he continued. There is a question of how much of the staff will be permanent and how much loaned from the transit agencies, he noted, and how we want to utilize the staff that is available to us. That is connected to the funding issue, he added.

Mr. Brubaker asked when will that issue be discussed? Mr. Laing replied we can begin that conversation at our next meeting.

Mr. Morrison asked Mr. Kalberer to review the FTA and federal funding cycle and the \$300 million we hope is out there.

Mr. Kalberer stated when the JRPC approved the Regional Transit Project System Plan, it included a commitment to the commuter rail line from Tacoma to Seattle with a spur to Renton, and pending further brief analysis, to bring the Seattle to Everett line up to the same level of discussion. He continued his remarks as follows:

The JRPC's direction to staff was to move briskly to implement the commuter rail project. The commuter rail project was also supported by all of the jurisdictions along the line from Tacoma to Seattle. In response to the direction of the JRPC, Metro applied for funds that were made available through Congress in order to enter the next stage of planning for the commuter rail line between Tacoma and Seattle, including Renton.

In that regard, a \$20 million appropriation was secured from Congress two years ago. We barely got by the last appropriation process without losing any of those funds because we did not apply for any of the \$20 million the first year we received the funds.

Following action of the JRPC, we did apply, as King County Metro, for a federal grant in the amount of \$1.88 million to take the planning for a commuter rail line from Tacoma to

Seattle, including Renton, to the next stage. We understand that we could receive those funds from the federal government as early as the end of September.

Since the demise of the JRPC there is no policy body that is overseeing the commuter rail study. In order for us to receive the grant funds, we need to come to a policy body that agrees that the work should begin, contract that work and give staff direction during the conduct of that work. Does the RTA Board want to assume policy responsibility for the development of the commuter rail project? If it does, we will be seeking direction for the receipt of the money and organizing to carry out the study. An extension of the existing consultant contracts would be required; that could be accomplished through the processes of King County or Metro. We will not take action until we receive your policy direction.

Mr. Morrison asked does the \$2.3 million that is available from the State of Washington from the Central Puget Sound Transportation Account correlate with the funds Metro requested from Congress? Mr. Kalberer replied yes, that is correct. The \$1.88 million from the federal government would be matched by about \$300,000 or \$400,000 of local money for the Tacoma to Seattle segment, he explained. The \$2.3 million would be for work on the Everett to Seattle portion of the commuter rail project similar to work already done for Tacoma to Seattle, he continued. Additional funds for that portion of the work would be required if the RTA Board decides to proceed with that project level work, he added. The Central Puget Sound Account would be asked for those funds, he concluded.

Mr. Laing stated I think it is important that Mr. Kalberer remind the RTA Board of the extent to which either or both legs of commuter rail project that he has described are being pursued. Has a commitment to construction or operation been made?, he asked. Mr. Kalberer replied no, it has not. Project level planning would answer questions about the alignment, the location of stations, how the bus system would work with the commuter rail line, the location of park-and-ride lots, and environmental issues associated with development of the project, he explained. That would, however, leave us short of a commitment to the overall project, he continued. I also want to point out that part of the \$2.3 million would support not only project level work for the Everett to Seattle line, but would also consider the Tacoma to Lakewood extension of the commuter rail project and incorporate that in project level planning in the southern segment, he added.

Mr. Davidson said it sounds like the funds are flowing, but policy decisions are related to the timing of grants. Mr. Kalberer responded yes, that is correct. The ability to secure state and federal funds is now upon this body, he explained. Ideally we would have several sessions to consider the status of the JRPC's work, he continued. If the RTA Board can, it needs to make some judgments early on, he said. If the RTA Board is not comfortable assuming policy responsibility, we will not move forward because there is no elected official body to go to that would provide direction, he concluded.

Mr. Davidson asked what grants are available when it comes to that bigger picture? This is project level planning, which makes a pretty solid commitment that we are serious about getting something like that built, he explained. Also, is there other planning that could be done in other areas that meet broader interests, he continued. Perhaps next time I will have a better feel for the larger picture, he added.

Mr. Earling asked if the RTA Board takes action on September 24 will it still have an opportunity to review the work plan and look at underlying assumptions and previous studies on ridership? I am looking for assurances that would happen after September 24, he explained. Mr. Kalberer replied yes, that is correct. We suggest that the RTA Board indicate an interest in the funds but indicate to the body that disperses the funds that it will consider the status of commuter rail project as part of the work program, particularly in the north, which is where the \$2.3 million would apply, he explained. We would proceed, independent of this grant, with the study to bring information related to those efforts to the RTA Board before the RTA Board ultimately decides to use the \$2.3 million and move into project level work, he added.

Mr. Earling said I want to ensure that the RTA Board has an opportunity to look at the underlying assumptions and methodology of the study, if not here, then certainly at the staff level. Mr. Kalberer responded that opportunity will definitely be provided.

Mr. Morrison noted other new RTA Board members may have requests for information about work that was done during the last several years. Is that information readily available?, he asked. Mr. Kalberer replied yes, that is correct.

Mr. Barden said perhaps Mr. Kalberer could present information to new RTA Board members and bring them up to speed at a workshop before the next Board meeting. Mr. Morrison asked is it possible for Mr. Kalberer to coordinate such a briefing? Mr. Kalberer replied yes, that is correct.

Mr. Morrison asked where are we with the \$300 million in federal funds? Mr. Kalberer replied we have secured a \$300 million authorization from the federal government to be applied to the rapid rail portion of the system plan. The \$300 million was secured three years ago, he explained, and continued his remarks as follows:

We have not received any of the funds because we have not made a determination as to whether or not we wish to apply for that money or enter into further studies beyond those already conducted. On September 24 we will share different options for timeframes for the RTA Board to make judgments.

The ability to make that decision in a timely fashion, between now and March or April of 1994, would provide the RTA Board with an opportunity to seek appropriations in relationship to the \$300 million authorization. Failure to make a decision about whether or not to pursue rapid rail construction would probably mean that the next Congressional appropriation cycle will be missed. With only two years left in which to secure the \$300 million, the total \$300 million would be out of reach for this body in terms of acquiring it through the annual appropriation process because it is beyond the realm of our Congressional delegation to secure \$150 million per year. This is an important appropriation cycle. The funds are there; we need to tell Congress what they would be used for.

An added imperative is that in 1994 Congress will discuss technical amendments to the underlying authorization and it is expected that Congress will revisit the entire authorization in 1995. Failure to get any of the \$300 million during this appropriation cycle is likely to make it more difficult for us in the next authorization to secure any significant funds. While the challenges before the RTA Board are great, we cannot make up for missed opportunities. Time is important to us from the authorizing and appropriating standpoint at the federal level.

Mr. Morrison asked which comes first? Mr. Kalberer replied I think the appropriation will come first, followed by reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Surface Transportation Bill.

Mr. Morrison asked where does the demonstration of local effort and involvement fit in? Mr. Kalberer replied Congress has strongly indicated that the local entity needs to make a commitment of local funds.

Mr. Nickels asked does Mr. Kalberer think the chances of getting a significant part of that authorization appropriated would change with a successful public vote on the system plan? Mr. Kalberer replied I think the projects that have been discussed will be competitive from the standpoint of their effectiveness in moving people and how they relate to the growth management effort. The one immense drag on our proposal is no local match for the federal dollars, he explained. To have an overmatch at the federal level requires two-thirds local and/or state dollars, he continued; that is \$2 at the local and \$1 at the federal level, he continued. Being in the position of offering that local match would move us to the head of the list to get the \$300 million, he concluded; we would be extremely competitive for the \$300 million and more.

Mr. Laing said perhaps alternate timelines that include timing constraints can be made available on September 24. Mr. Morrison responded Mr. Laing's suggestion is so noted.

Other Business

Mr. Laing stated as a point of order, the Clerk or Secretary function was stipulated earlier this afternoon. Perhaps that stipulation could be made formal in our by laws, particularly for the next meeting, he explained. Mr. Morrison responded others in this room will decide whether or not Ms. Mattson remains available as Clerk after the next two RTA Board meetings. Mr. Laing noted this would only be in effect for the next RTA Board meeting.

It was the consensus of all RTA Board members present that the RTA Board by laws be amended to designate Ms. Mattson as the official RTA Board Clerk for its first two meetings.

Mr. Laing suggested that legal services be made available to the RTA Board, as it was to the JRPC, through Metro for the next RTA Board meeting, if needed. Hearing no objections, the record will officially note our request that Metro provide legal services to the RTA Board for its next meeting, he stated.

Public Comment

Mr. Paul W. Locke said I think some important things were left out. When you set up this operation did you determine that the funding is coming from the users?, he asked. There was no discussion about that, he noted, and continued his comments as follows:

It is absolutely essential that the goal of the RTA is that users pay for this. Maybe you will never arrive at that

conclusion, but that should be the goal for the management who will operate this system. That should be the goal of the RTA Board. I have not heard you discuss this issue. If the public funds dry up, and I think that they will, you are going to have a system that can at least get its operating funds from users. If you can get users to pay for equipment, that would be even better. It should be a goal of the RTA to set up a system that will operate on the funds generated by the people who use it.

Mr. Frank Hutchins said I represent the Puget Sound Light Rail Transit Society (PSLRTS). He continued his remarks as follows:

I would like to explain the reason why we took no position on the RTA's existence. We believed that the RTA would pass, however, we wanted our objections and concerns to be heard. We felt that saying no was the only way to accomplish that. This whole project is in a David and Goliath relationship with the public because of the driving habits of people in the Puget Sound region. That is the Goliath. The RTA is up against that Goliath in its attempt to change people's driving habits. I would recommend that you take courage from the David and Goliath story. David avoided the customary methodology and as the story turns out he stayed on top.

Mr. Ted Pankowski said I am a representative of the Washington Environmental Council (WEC) and am here to speak on behalf of Sound Metropolitan Area Regional Transit (SMART). He continued his comments as follows:

With me is Ms. Teresa Taylor of the Economic Development Council of Seattle and King County, who has a statement in addition to the material that has already been circulated to you (copy on file). Our other colleagues with SMART join us in congratulating you on your appointments, particularly Mr. Laing, Mr. Stoner and Mr. Brubaker on your elections. As private citizens we can only speculate on the magnitude and complexities of your tasks. We share with you, however, the conviction that our region's growing congestion and declining mobility represent a threat to the economic vitality, environmental quality and social opportunities we have already inherited; and that our collective responsibility is not to a single interest or collection of interests but to the well-being of the entire region.

As representatives of groups that worked hard for the formation of the RTA, we thought it was important to summarize our understandings and expectations for you. Attached to the materials distributed by SMART this

afternoon (copy on file) are SMART's Issue Papers 1 and 2 and other material. In the interest of brevity, I would like to summarize what those points are.

Some people may feel that the RTA's scope of work consists only of financing and phasing, but this exemplary listing of uncompleted work suggests something else:

1. specific rail technologies;
2. the amount of exclusive rights-of-way;
3. specific rail alignments;
4. station area planning and locations;
5. transportation system management (TSM) improvements;
6. support facilities and locations;
7. integration of transit with land use plans;
8. site specific environmental impacts; and
9. a re-evaluation of park-and-ride lots, and so forth.

We urge you to revisit these issues as appropriate to make sure that third-party interpretations have not sanitized some of the social, economic and environmental trade-offs that are bound to exist in a transit system of this magnitude and complexity.

SMART's own consensus can be summarized as follows:

We continue to support a phased, incremental approach, possibly with a "starter" rail, with frequent opportunities for public scrutiny and approval. We are not only concerned about "sticker shock" and a negative public vote. There are also issues related to whether or not we would be getting the best return on our investment; concerns about cost-effectiveness and the pursuit of "least cost" alternatives; the role of transit in the total transportation picture; and whether or not the system plan would have enough flexibility to deal with changes in land use and economic conditions.

For these reasons, the organizations that participated in SMART still support a "phased, incremental" approach to allow us time to grow into the system, comparable to the successful initiative taken in Portland and elsewhere.

Members of SMART are deeply concerned about the extent of tunneling in the recommended system plan. The extent and location of tunneling needs to be revisited at a level of detail comparable to that given to the various system alternatives.

SMART wholeheartedly supports inclusion of TSM and transportation demand management (TDM) improvements in the total package if the rail system is to be cost-effective and ultimately successful.

Some have suggested that it might be productive for the RTA to create staff capability committed primarily to TSM and TDM in order to balance out engineering inputs in plan revisions.

Ms. Steers had to leave early, however she asked me to emphasize SMART's commitment to having an open and meaningful public process. Regaining public credibility for the ballot is perhaps your biggest challenge.

Since the plan was adopted, questions have arisen on the future role of the ERP. The ERP has undoubtedly performed a valuable public service on the technical aspects of the plan. However, the issues now before the RTA are likely to involve issues, preferences and expectations beyond the ERP's legislative mandate. Some of us would urge you to consider setting up an additional panel, broadly-based from representative groups throughout the region to address the social, environmental and economic trade-offs that we see on the horizon.

SMART supports the idea of passing RTA funds to local transit agencies. We do not see the local share as a "grab bag," however. The RTA might want to look at performance standards to make sure that effective intermodal connections are being made.

After much discussion, groups within SMART unanimously agreed that the proposed commuter rail system should be extended from Tacoma to Seattle and Seattle to Everett. Our reasons for that recommendation are outlined in our paper. We encourage you to proceed with the suggestion that Mr. Kalberer made earlier to apply for funds to continue that phase of the project.

We strongly urge the integration of transit planning and land use. We are aware that the timeframes for these two developments in public policy are different in that the comprehensive plans to be developed by local government are

not due until some time in 1994. The need to reconcile land use and transit planning makes a strong case for a phased, incremental approach to the system.

The public debate over transit tends to be focused on rail and its \$6 billion plus projected cost. Other than our support for the commuter rail project, members of SMART were not able to reach a consensus on an ideal rail system, much for the same reasons that other citizens' groups were also not able to reach consensus. There is not time to go into these reasons in detail. The differences between project justification and system planning are many and complex.

I need to emphasize, however, that had there not been a broadening of the recommended performance standards for rail in order to allow for serious consideration of alternative technologies and alternative alignments, there would not have been from SMART, or from any other citizens' group that we know of, any sort of organized public support for formation of the RTA.

We worked hard to make sure that the RTA had the flexibility to respond to the many suggestions and questions that we felt were inadequately addressed by the JRPC -- issues of access to the rail system, the number and frequency of station locations, redevelopment potentials along the various corridors, the use of surface streets along with separated rights-of-way, the net effects of TSM and TDM improvements on ridership, land use considerations and so forth.

Some may now take these issues as the pretext to re-do the entire system, including a rehash of the fundamental premise that we need to think and plan and build regionally. We urge you to resist reinventing wheels. At the same time, we urge you to take the time to do whatever additional work is necessary to take to the ballot a workable proposal, one that represents the best thinking in our region, and one that reflects our region's needs and hopes, and one that is cost-effective.

I want to thank you and once again congratulate you on your appointments.

Ms. Taylor said copies of a handout entitled "Policy Position on a Regional Transit System Adopted by The Board of Directors of the Economic Development Council of Seattle and King County, April 27, 1993" were distributed for your review (copy on file).

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Mr. Morrison noted SMART played a very significant role in the fact that we are here today; we appreciate that contribution.

Adjourn

Mr. Morrison said the RTA Board has been formed and organized and is ready to do business. We have about 20 years to make up and we can do it with the talent and sincerity of the people around the table, he concluded.


With no further business to conduct, Mr. Morrison adjourned the meeting at 3:16 p.m.

df



Sid Morrison
Chair Pro Tem, RTA Board

ATTEST:



Bonnie Mattson
Interim Clerk, RTA Board