

Regional Transit Authority
February 25, 1994

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bruce Laing, Chair; King County Councilmember
Bill Brubaker, Vice Chair; Snohomish County Councilmember
Bill Stoner, Vice Chair; Pierce County Councilmember

King County:

Martha Choe, Seattle Councilmember
Don Davidson, Bellevue Mayor
Mary Gates, Federal Way Mayor
Greg Nickels, King County Councilmember
Cynthia Sullivan, King County Councilmember
Jane Hague, King County Councilmember
Jim White, Kent Mayor

Pierce County:

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

Snohomish County:

Dave Earling, Edmonds Councilmember
Ed Hansen, Everett Mayor

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:36 p.m. by Chairman Laing in The Jib Room, The Executive Inn, 5700 Pacific Highway East, Fife, Washington.

APPROVE MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Nickels and seconded by Ms. Boekelman that the minutes of January 14, 1994 be approved as presented.

Ms. Gates asked that the January 14, 1994 minutes be corrected to reflect throughout "Ms. Gates" rather than "Mr. Gates."

The motion to approve the January 14, 1994 minutes, as corrected by Ms. Gates, was carried by the unanimous vote of all Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Board members present.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Mr. Laing welcomed Ms. Jane Hague to her first meeting of the RTA Board. He noted Ms. Hague has been appointed to the Public Involvement Committee, and Mr. Hansen has been appointed to the Finance Committee. He said today is the first official meeting for both Mr. Matoff and Ms. Grubbs; the Board is glad to have both of them on staff.

Mr. Laing continued his presentation as follows:

I have executed an agreement with the City of Tacoma appointing them the treasurer for the RTA. Copies of the agreement are available for members of the public and the Board.

The Rules Committee acted on a recommendation from the Public Information Task Force that they be designated as a committee due to the continuing nature of their responsibilities.

Two days ago, Mr. Matoff, Mr. Brubaker, Mr. Stoner, Mr. Madsen and I made a full day's visit to Olympia to introduce Mr. Matoff to the Governor and the leadership of the legislature. I thought this was the best organized lobbying visit in which I have ever participated. I would like to publicly thank Mr. Madsen and Mr. Ebersole for their efforts. We met with Governor Lowry, Brian Ebersole, Senate Transportation Committee Chair; Ruth Fisher, House Transportation Committee; Marc Gaspard, Majority Leader and with the Transportation Committees of each house of the legislature. In each instance Mr. Matoff was introduced. In the morning we had a meeting with the State Transportation Commission. This was a very full day; my thanks go to Mr. Madsen for organizing these meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Laing said two of the three members of the public who signed a card indicating their desire to address the Board have indicated a desire to address the Executive Director's report. The third speaker has indicated comments of a general nature, he continued, which could be associated with the Executive Director's report. For that reason, he stated, I will call these speakers in the order in which I received their cards.

Mr. Mark Dublin made the following statements:

I live in Ballard. I am presently, and have been for the last 11 years, a transit operator for Metro. I have put in quite a lot of time on the trolleys and served on the advisory committee for the Metro tunnel. The operators were quite close to that project through the design phase. I drove coaches through the tunnel for a year, but now operate electric coaches from Atlantic Base, with my favorite route being Route 7. I have spent some time operating the articulated coaches and I am fond of them.

I would have liked to hear Mr. Matoff's remarks before making my statement today. I would like to welcome Mr. Matoff to Seattle.

I have submitted written comments today, copies of which Board members will receive, entitled "We Have Already Started" (copy on file). I read in the newspaper that Mr. Matoff was looking at reevaluating the general direction of the project. If anyone else had made such a statement I would have opposed it. I have ridden on some of Mr. Matoff's systems, in Portland and Sacramento, for example.

From what I have seen, the RTA is still soliciting ideas from the public and this worries me. The Board should know what to do. The public should be informed of decisions made by the Board. If it were up to me and you were asking me for ideas, I have one: make use of the Tunnel and dual power buses and start using that in the first phase. Extend the tunnel under the Ship Canal toward Northgate. I know the cost and size concerns everyone, but I have been looking at this for many years. I cannot think of any other way to do this.

You need a two-way coachway out of Bellevue. The center lanes are intended to be converted to transit. This has been done on Rainier Avenue. This would provide the capacity to handle rush hour and a game in the Kingdome at the same time.

I would also suggest extending the E3 busway in the south end down to Southcenter. If you did nothing but that, it would do quite a lot. These are the kinds of things you could do.

You need reliable dual power coaches. I hope no one considers the Breda to be the last word in dual power coaches. The operators wish any other coach had been purchased. The Neoplan coach was experimented with in the 1980s. This coach utilized the diesel engine to generate electricity. Many thought this was a better way to go. It is surprising the Breda coaches work as well as they do. Because we have had problems with them does not mean dual power coaches would not work, but we can do better.

If you are asking for ideas, I have thrown out an idea. I am looking forward to hearing Mr. Matoff's thinking.

Mr. Richard Tate, 9917 Lake Washington Boulevard N.E, Bellevue, made the following comments:

I would like the Board to take Mr. Dublin's comments very seriously. I believe his suggestions have a lot of merit and

they deserve consideration.

I am Vice President of the Washington Association of Rail Passengers (WARP). The WARP has adopted a resolution urging the RTA to submit a plan for funding the first phase of the Regional Transit Plan no later than November 1994. I recognize this is earlier than currently anticipated.

Mr. Tate read the text of Resolution No. 9401 at this time (copy on file).

Mr. Tate said this resolution was adopted by the WARP without opposition. Two members did abstain, he explained, because they felt they lacked a sufficient understanding of the issue. I would like to ask you to remember that the great majority of the electorate does not attend public meetings, he said. They voted for the accelerated development of rail, he stated, and they are still waiting. They look to the RTA for leadership, he said, confident that the Board will not disappoint them.

Mr. Brubaker said the WARP has suggested a very tight time line. What role would the WARP take to put this before the voters in a positive way?, he asked. Mr. Tate said the WARP would, if it saw the RTA proceeding with a plan along the lines described in Resolution No. 9401, be eager to see such a plan adopted.

Mr. Brubaker said my question has to do with manpower. It seems the success of any ballot measure will depend on the stakeholders making sure it passes, he said. Mr. Tate said it is difficult for me to speak for a group of volunteers, but this is a high energy association. I do think we can claim a little credit for the fact that following the telephone and write-in campaign by its members on the legislature a year ago, the legislature did fund the state rail program at a time when transportation funding was taking a hit. This is an energetic association and the members would be supportive, he stated.

Mr. Brubaker said the RTA would welcome support from the WARP.

Mr. Dean Claussen, Bellevue, made the following remarks:

I served in the United States military in Europe for 20 years. In 1991-92 I was a member of the Washington State Ground Speed Transportation Steering Committee. I am currently a member of the Eastside Transportation Committee, but I speak for myself today.

I am worried because I have the feeling some of you are leaning towards surface light rail as a starter as opposed to a grade separated railroad system that is the nucleus of the

project before you. As one convinced by experience that a fully grade separated system is the right one for this region, I am troubled by the talk that because a surface light rail system would mean fewer or no tunnels and would "not necessarily need to be grade separated", such a system would be much cheaper to build than the Regional Transit Project (RTP) as proposed and easier to sell. It would be cheaper, but it would be wrong.

The key is total grade separation. That is not assured or felt to be imperative with a surface system that operates only partially in mixed traffic. Only a heavy rail system, like that you are now revisiting in the RTP, assures grade separation. This is important from 145th to the Kent/Des Moines area and later across I-90 to Bellevue. Only such a core system, modeled on that in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles or European systems assures the high capacity, reliability, speed and safety that this region requires to meet the regional population, economic and quality of life objectives we have set for ourselves.

Light rail does have its place in the multi-modal system you will recommend. Its role should be as a feeder line or for interim extensions of the local systems, such as from Ballard to the University District or from Boeing Everett to Everett or from Tacoma to Lakewood. To the extent possible, these should be separated from other traffic and be convertible.

In the months ahead, as the alternatives are analyzed even more minutely, we should guard against penny-wise and pound foolish systems with surface light rail. The Portland MAX system is not appropriate for this region. It is very clear why. Once across the Willamette River, the MAX slows to a crawl in mixed traffic into downtown Portland. Now, the new west segment is to repeat this basic flaw.

Mr. Aubrey Davis said the Expert Review Panel found the RTP numbers reasonable but conservative. This should say something significant about the RTP's merits. No fewer than eight of you present today helped create the RTP which was approved by the JRPC with a single dissenting vote. More than one of you was a skeptic of rail, as some of you still are today, but you came out a believer. Rail is not a dirty word. You former JRPC members know no one forced something on you. You were served by a confident and dedicated Metro staff.

Finally, though you and some others have done so, I urge you to go and see the rapid rail systems I have cited, including three or four of those in Europe. This would be the *politically responsible thing to do.*

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Matoff made the following statements:

You have before you a recommendation from myself and the staff regarding a proposed method and schedule for the development of a first phase proposal of a regional rail transit system (copy on file). The proposal is in response to our discussion on January 28. There is an illustration of a method I can recommend on how to prepare a first increment of the RTP for implementation. It is not restarting the planning process; it is taking the excellent work that has been done and extracting from that a first step, to take to the public, to win voter approval.

The method of doing that involves several phases. Those are outlined in the memo prepared by staff. Essentially it involves a series of discussion and parts of the plan that could become part of the first element. Initially, if the board is comfortable with this direction, I would begin a series of informal meetings with the Board members and with community leaders and stakeholders regarding pieces of the plan they feel would be essential in a first increment approach. Based on those discussions, I would try to create a couple of alternative first phases that would be presented to the Board and for broad public presentation. I would try to do this by March 25. Based on that activity, "round one" public discussions would take place in April/May. Based on those discussions, broad conceptual approaches would be selected by approximately May 25. Staff would recommend to the Board a series of specific proposals to be refined technically over the summer. There is a decision point and that would need to be followed by the staff. Depending on the content of the proposals, a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) may be required. It is my hope we would develop a first phase that is consistent with the work already done, so that preparation of a SEIS would not be necessary.

Assuming no SEIS is required, we would complete the findings. We would then have another round of discussions and in the fall, perhaps October 28, we would select the first increment. During the period from today to October there would be a decision developed. That would then be submitted the next month to the three county councils, with a 45 day period for review. In January we would be looking for a decision from the three counties whether they wish to opt in or out of the RTA and then submit this proposal to the voters.

Based on that timing scenario, we would then be able to proceed to the voters in the spring. My recommendation would be that we target May 16, 1995 for a public vote, which is a statutorily set date. It would be nice to go earlier, but given the possibility to make this process a little more involved, it might be overly optimistic to shoot for a date prior to May. I think that is a reasonable way to move forward from the RTP as it currently stands to a first increment vote next spring. It makes it possible for the RTA to pursue the obligation of as much federal funding as it can possibly pursue. It fits with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan prepared by the JRPC. I think it is do-able and it is the way to get started. This is not an attempt to reopen the entire RTP and the notion of rail transit planning. It is a move towards implementation. This is my recommendation.

Ms. Choe asked Mr. Matoff to speak to the role of the local jurisdictions in the process over the next few months in shaping the decision. Mr. Matoff responded as follows:

The local jurisdictions have all taken positions on various parts of the RTP. One of the dilemmas we face with an incremental approach is including enough in the first increment to make it attractive to jurisdictions, but not so much that it is not affordable at the polls. It is my intent that staff engage the staffs and officials of all jurisdictions to insure that, at least, a reasonable meeting of local expectations is included.

Ms. Choe said I think it would be important that the role of local jurisdictions be clearly defined. As we approach the October/November period for adoption of Phase I, she said, the timing coincides with many budget deadlines. This should be factored into the timing, she noted.

Mr. Laing said in the elaboration of the public involvement effort, an element could be added which would address the interface with local jurisdictions. Would this address Ms. Choe's concerns?, he asked. Ms. Choe said yes.

Mr. Miller made the following remarks:

I would share Mr. Matoff's belief that we can move through this process without triggering the need for a SEIS. We need to distinguish the differences between changes and modifications that relate to the long term basis of the plan versus what we are trying to do in the short term first phase of the program. This distinction should be made sufficiently so that we can meet that spring election target.

In recent discussions staff has presented at least two scenarios. One is a more aggressive scenario for funding, and one is less aggressive. The first continues to work on commuter rail, moving the plan forward and going after funding to keep that moving. The second is to hold off on work and thereby the funding requests until after we identify the first phase and establish a date for scheduling an election. Mr. Matoff's comments don't address these scenarios. I hope we can move on the aggressive path. Perhaps you could address how this relates to the funding requests.

Mr. Matoff made the following remarks:

It is my intention that we move ahead on the assumption that we are going to the polls and that all necessary steps be taken in the aggressive pursuit of funding and activities for implementation of the plan, short of obligating funds we will not have until after the election. By doing so, when we win the election, we can then move ahead very quickly--the next day if at all possible.

I am an impatient person and I find myself on the defensive. I am not trying to extend the process, but I think this is the fastest way to get something done. I am not viewing this as a new planning process, but a way of defining and focusing on an increment we can move ahead with. Everything possible, short of obligating funds, should be pursued.

Mr. Brubaker made the following statements:

I was in Washington, D.C. two weeks ago. One of the many questions asked was, "What is going on in the greater Washington?" The RTA's notion of an incremental approach received a favorable response. Congressmembers see this as a more practical approach to this whole system. It says to me that once they are on board with funding, there will be fewer questions in the nation's capitol.

I have concerns about the November 1994 election date. I believe this is too soon. I was once a proponent of that date. Given this slight change in direction, I now believe that would be too soon for the election. Mr. Claussen's issue of technology has to be settled and I think this is a good approach. I urge Board members to support Mr. Matoff's recommendation.

Ms. Choe said I think we need to note this will proceed as the local jurisdictions follow their comprehensive planning and Growth Management Act processes. That is a very time intensive process,

she said, and we may want to be sure they are consistent. We should be mindful of that, she stated, as this is a major parallel.

Mr. Laing said I think we should keep in mind that the PSRC update of their transportation plan at the end of 1994 is in the same time frame as when the RTA is proposing to have a Board decision on the first phase. I think this might be the same time the PSRC is receiving their results, he said. Mr. Miller said we are tracking with them fairly well in identifying policy alternatives and technical review of those alternatives. Towards the end of 1994 I think the RTA is slightly ahead of them, he said. We are making decisions close together, he noted.

Ms. Gates said I want to make sure the Board has indicated all issues it has discussed as a group. One issue is the assurance that whatever is promised in Phase I will be delivered in Phase I, she stated. The other issue is assuring there is a Phase II and how we get to that point, she continued, or we have the beginning and no more. This is an issue we should not lose in this discussion, she stressed.

Mr. Matoff responded as follows:

I agree with Ms. Gates completely. Phase I should be a specific budgeted and deliverable packet of projects. Obviously, credibility depends on that fact. Regarding future phases, part of this would be the adoption by the Authority of the RTP itself. At the same time there is submittal to the councils of a master plan for the region and incorporating procedures for periodic revisiting of that plan. There are also institutional issues relating to some techniques and dealing with the integration of a rail system with the bus operation in the three counties and future ways the Authority itself is involved as a facilitator of that integration.

Mr. Laing made the following statements:

I would like a better focus on distinguishing between suggestions that come to us or from us about changes to the system plan as opposed to what is involved in Phase I. I can see from the comment on the draft system plan through comments on the final system plan reviewed by the three counties up through the work process that there continue to be proposals that are amendments to the system plan. Some of them we heard today. I interpreted one of those suggestions to be an amendment to the system plan. People may well suggest different technologies. I view the time line as indicating that by the end of round one, the RTA Board will hear whatever is said to us whether it addresses the system plan or Phase I

and then decide what the alternatives for Phase I are. One or more of the alternatives may result in an intrinsic change to the system plan. If it does, it will be a decision where we knowingly understand the implications of such a change. The system plan is not subject for testimony; only Phase I would be the subject for testimony. That is one message. The other is we are focusing on Phase I but comments may have been tied together with what would be a change in the system plan.

Mr. Matoff made the following comments:

The incremental nature of the plan carries with it an amendment to the RTP, in a sense. If an amendment to the plan itself is required, it would require a super-majority of the Board. As a practical matter, if there isn't a super-majority in favor of that first increment, it will not work. There must be a broad consensus. In the process I am recommending we have to be open to that possibility.

Mr. Miller said I need clarification on a third scenario. I have no doubt that in this process we will be discussing elements of a first phase, he said. As we go through that, he continued, there will be changes and modifications proposed that might not be a portion of the first phase but that are changes to the overall plan. The clarification I want is to know if those changes are substantial and relate more to the long range versus the first element, he continued, will a SEIS be required prior to a vote on the first phase? Mr. Chuck Kirchner said the RTA needs to adopt a system plan prior to recommending anything to the voters. If significant changes are made to the system plan that would necessitate a SEIS, he stated, it would have to be completed prior to the adoption of a plan and coming up with the first phase.

Mr. Laing said I encourage Board members to consider a motion concurring with the Executive Director's recommendation.

It was moved by Mr. Davidson, seconded by Ms. Sullivan and carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present that the Executive Director's proposed decision schedule for developing a first phase ballot issue and system plan be adopted.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Nickels gave the following report:

As a result of actions taken in January, the City of Tacoma will serve as the RTA's treasurer. Subsequent to an inter-local agreement with King County, which was adopted by the Metropolitan County Council and signed by the King County

Executive, the RTA now has money in the bank. I would urge the other committee chairs not to go wild as there is only a small amount of money in the RTA bank account.

Adopt Resolution No. 16 Authorizing Application and Acceptance of Washington State HCT Account Grant Funds and the Negotiation of Related Interlocal Agreements

At its meeting last week, Finance Committee recommended approval of Resolution No. 16. Resolution No. 16 would authorize the RTA Executive Director to apply for funds from the HCT Account.

This is one of the key funding sources available to the RTA. I believe there will be \$6 million statewide for the period July 1, 1994 through June 30, 1995. We have some indication from the Washington State Department of Transportation informally that we can expect to receive \$2.5- to \$3 million. Staff believes the RTA will receive \$3- to \$3.5 million. Resolution No. 16 would approve the application for \$4- to \$4.5 million. The strategy for doing so will be left to the grants staff.

I have an issue I would like to bring to the Board's attention. A small number of jurisdictions have asked for HCT funds to be passed through to them for work in advancing their own HCT segments or plans. In this round of grant applications, only the RTA will be eligible to receive funds. The only funds for local jurisdictions would have to be sought through the RTA. The Finance Committee did not think it was in a position to give advice on those particular pass-throughs, whether they are the highest priority and compatible with our direction. There is no recommendation whether those requests should be granted. The Finance Committee will be working to develop criteria to use in considering those requests and to make a reasonable determination on how much funding should be passed through to local agencies.

It was moved by Mr. Nickels and seconded by Ms. Choe that Resolution No. 16 be approved as presented.

Mr. Davidson made the following comments:

I am familiar with the agency Mr. Nickels is referring to. We are in the middle of a HCT grant two-phased study. We have completed the first phase and we are going through the process of asking the RTA to give its blessing to the second phase and our grant. There is a certain degree of speed at which I would like the RTA to deal with these criteria so we can apply

for some portion of that grant. The first phase of the study was completed within budget and on schedule. The second phase is planned, so it is not entirely new. It applies to HCT. I would encourage the Board and the Finance Committee to move along with developing these criteria so that jurisdictions can access those funds through the RTA.

Mr. Laing said from the standpoint of the work program we have discussed, I understand Mr. Davidson's point but I am not sure how soon in our work program staff would be in a position to recommend these criteria to the Board. The Board should be responsive by providing a time frame, he said. Mr. Matoff said staff is preparing a time frame and accelerating it so the RTA can respond to local jurisdictions.

The motion to approve Resolution No. 16 was carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present.

REPORT OF THE RULES COMMITTEE

Adopt Proposed RTA Mission Statement

Mr. Laing said before the Board today is a proposed RTA Mission Statement. This has been recommended by the Rules Committee, he said, and it was circulated at the last Board meeting.

It was moved by Ms. Sullivan and seconded by Ms. Gates that the proposed RTA Mission Statement be approved as presented.

Mr. Laing said the mission statement includes goals and objectives.

The motion to approve the proposed RTA Mission Statement as distributed in the agenda was carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present.

Adopt Resolution No. 15 Authorizing Reimbursements for Boardmember Expenses and Per-Diem Allowances

Mr. Laing said copies of Resolution No. 15 have been distributed to all board members (copy on file). Resolution No. 15 would authorize reimbursements for Boardmember expenses and per diem allowances, he stated. This resolution has been recommended by the Rules Committee and was discussed at the last RTA Board meeting, he noted.

It was moved by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Brubaker and carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present that Resolution No. 15 be approved as distributed.

Adopt Proposed Committee Responsibilities

Mr. Laing said the responsibilities for the committees had been developed, with the exception of the Rules Committee. Those responsibilities have now been reviewed and adopted by the Board approximately two months ago, he explained, and a full package is being presented today. The proposed committee responsibilities were recommended by the Rules Committee, he stated, and the Chair is seeking a motion.

It was moved by Ms. Gates, seconded by Mr. Miller and carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present that the proposed committee responsibilities be approved as presented.

Travel Authorization

Mr. Laing said the Rules Committee authorized travel by the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board to attend the American Public Transit Association (APTA) Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. during the first week of March.

The RTA Board concurred with the Rules Committee in approving travel by Mr. Matoff and Mr. Laing to Washington, D.C. in the first week of March to attend the APTA Legislative Conference.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. Earling said copies of the Public Involvement Committee's report have been distributed today (copy on file). He continued as follows:

The Public Involvement Task Force recommended that it be made a formal committee, and that is now the case.

As I mentioned at the last Board meeting, the Public Involvement Committee has been setting up a speakers bureau. That has gone forth and there are contacting people with phone numbers now identified. If you are accepting a speaking engagement relating to the RTA, you may contact one of these people. There are no speaking engagements in Snohomish County listed at this time; this is due to an error and a Snohomish County speaking engagement being listed under King County. If you are attending a speaking engagement and you need hand-outs, etc. and if you need staff to attend, this support can be provided.

I would like to let the Board know that we are developing a tool you can use at various meetings, round table discussions, etc. The Committee saw this questionnaire yesterday for the

first time. We will have the ability to change the format identifying current issues so we can gain responses back as we approach key decision milestones. These questionnaires should be available in March.

I also want to notify Board members that the RTA's first video is now available. Those interested may view the video at the end of today's meeting.

With regard to commuter rail and the public involvement program for the Tacoma-Seattle line, a separate program and schedule have been proposed because commuter rail has entered project level planning and has community-specific communication needs. Public involvement at the project level is designed to support the RTA's selection of station sites, service levels and rail alignments for commuter rail. It is, however, designed to be carried out as part of the overall public involvement program.

I would also remind Board members that attached to the Committee's report are newspaper articles and citizen correspondence from the last month.

Mr. Laing said earlier in the discussion, Ms. Choe asked that there be a way to schedule outreach and incorporate participation of the executive and legislative bodies of the local governments within the region as part of our work program. My response was, that might be an element of the public involvement work program, he said. Is that correct?, he asked. Mr. Earling said I think that is something the Public Involvement Committee is interested in pursuing. We have had some discussions about that, he noted.

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE

Mr. Madsen gave the following report:

I have three items to discuss, one of which involves a motion.

We are in the 47th day of this annual state legislative session. It is my understanding that the people there are ready to shoot each other. We have done rather well with our legislative agenda. Mr. Matoff has talked about incrementalization of the plan. Under existing law, there is a question about whether we can do that. The bill that would allow that incrementalization is SB 6491, introduced by Vognild and Nelson. The bill has passed the Senate and has passed the House Committee. I understand that, as of this morning, it is now on the House consent calendar, which means there is no objection to it. I thought we would have trouble

with this proposal; its passage speaks to the good ability of our lobbyist.

The second issue is authorizing the County Executives to appoint themselves to the RTA Board. This is HB 2169 and it has passed the House and Senate Transportation Committees and it is my understanding that it is on the Senate calendar now. It will probably be acted upon this weekend.

Most importantly, we have an issue called the transportation budget. This is GSSB 6084. Last Wednesday, when we were in Olympia to have discussions with the leadership and the Governor, we were able to include an amendment to GSSB 6084 that has been agreed upon by both leaderships that there will be \$1.5 million specifically designated for the RTA. There is language around it not requiring a match so it is a net of \$1.8 million, which will come to us through these efforts. I would like to indicate this is not supplanting money, it is additive.

One of the issues that could give us problems is there is a debate tomorrow on the transportation budget in the House. The House and Senate did not initially agree on the amount of money, but they now agree. The Governor does not agree so it will be interesting to watch this. We may be calling some Board members and asking them to call their legislator to seek their protection of this item.

The Board previously authorized the Legislative Committee and staff to enter into negotiations with the railroads concerning commuter rail. In that motion, the Committee said it would come to the Board on this date with a report. With that explanation, I would ask Mr. Bob White to give this report. The negotiations have not yet concluded.

Mr. White gave the following report:

On January 14 the RTA Board directed us to pursue the idea of accelerating the obligation of currently authorized federal funds for commuter rail. We have done so on two levels:

- 1) Locally with our RTA staff and at the federal level through Denny Miller Associates dealing with the federal FTA staff and the staff of various congressional committees and delegates. At this time we have a pretty clear understanding of what is required to do that. Information is being prepared for those going to Washington, D.C. in the next month so you will have that information in hand for your discussions.

2) With Union Pacific and Burlington Northern, to determine whether there is potential for agreement with them for certain trackage and signal improvements and development of agreements between them and the RTA that would allow funds to be spent for substantive products the RTA can use to accelerate implementation of commuter rail. We have been in intense negotiations with them, particularly over the last month. We have made substantial progress on many issues. Several issues are very complex both legally and procedurally, as well as being very important to the two railroads from a business standpoint and the competitive relationship between them. We were not optimistic about how quickly we could work through those issues, but we have made progress. We do not have an agreement yet, but I think by March 11 we can give a detailed report on where those negotiations stand.

Mr. Madsen continued his remarks:

I asked Mr. White to be ambiguous in his remarks today.

The last item I would like to report on is the federal legislative package. It is evolving and has been since we started. There are two items raised in the memo dated February 16, 1994, entitled "Federal Legislative Program" which has been distributed today (copy on file). These are, in effect, what we suggest as talking points when you meet with members of the Congressional delegation. I would like to request that if you go to Washington, D.C., you let me or Mr. White know so we can schedule meetings with members of our Congressional delegation and provide you this information. It is important that they see the RTA is an active, living thing and not just something on paper. If you are meeting with our Congressional delegation in the state, let us know and we would like to remind you of the talking points.

The lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., Denny Miller and Associates, is working with the FTA staff and congressional staff and members. One of the issues that came out today, and I would like to renew it, is that the Board endorse the proposal for the 1994-95 work plan. This is aggressive. We will have to work hard in D.C. to do this. It is important to recognize we will ask for a whole bunch and hope to get only some of it.

It was moved by Mr. Madsen and seconded by Ms. Gates that the RTA approve as its interim federal legislative agenda the following four points:

1) The Board will seek the appropriation of the final \$4.7

million of the authorized \$25 million of Seattle-Tacoma Commuter rail funds.

2) The Board will continue to explore the accelerated obligation of all authorized and appropriated Seattle-Tacoma Commuter Rail funds as directed by the Board.

3) The Board will explore the potential for utilizing portions of the Central Puget Sound High Capacity Transit authorization for the Commuter Rail program as a method of maximizing the level of federal participation in the initial phase.

4) The Board will seek federal funding for preliminary engineering and the environmental analysis of a locally preferred alternative, scheduled to be identified in the fall of 1994.

Mr. Madsen continued his comments:

This is what we feel is the aggressive approach to trying to acquire funds. We have funds out there authorized but not appropriated. I want to go after them through the appropriation process. This is money that is not obligated. We need to go after that money. This fits with Mr. Matoff's plans. It is very, very aggressive. If we can get three-fourths of this, I think we will be very successful. I think there are other things moving around relating to some of our authorization, but it is my understanding of the House Appropriation Committee that mark-up begins in May. Public testimony will be taken in April. We need to have this authorization to set the stage for some of us to go back and testify before the Committee and make sure we are in the appropriation bill in May.

Ms. Gates said I support this. I also support the message it sends to residents of the Puget Sound region that this is a project that in fact does qualify for federal funding and starts to fulfill promises that in fact when we put together a transportation system for the region, we can expect federal funding, she stated. It seems to show that federal revenue flow is important to the future of the project, she concluded.

The motion was carried unanimously by all RTA Board members present.

Mr. Laing thanked Mr. Madsen and Mr. Metcalf for the quality and effectiveness of the legislative work they have done. The progress of the bills we have supported in Olympia speaks for itself, he stated.

NEXT MEETINGS

Mr. Hansen said I plan to attend the National League of Cities conference in Washington, D.C.; Mr. Davidson may attend as well. There is a meeting of the RTA Board scheduled on this same date, Friday, March 11, he noted. Mr. Laing said I will look into this situation. I hesitate to reschedule that Board meeting, he said, as there are plans to hold a reception for our new Executive Director on that date.

Mr. White said most city officials will be out of town on March 11.

Mr. Madsen said I understand there is a National Association of Counties meeting in March, as well as the Cities and APTA conferences, all in Washington, D.C. It would be nice to know who is going to Washington, D.C. so they can be scheduled to meet with the Congressional delegation, he noted.

Mr. Laing said Mr. Earling will be in D.C. at the same time as the APTA conference. Mr. Madsen said meetings can be scheduled for those travelling to Washington, D.C.

Mr. Madsen said when RTA Board members travel to Washington, D.C. on behalf of the Cities, etc., we would like to have additional schedulings so they can discuss RTA functions with members of the Congressional delegation.

Mr. Davidson said RTA Board members who are in D.C. on other business may have trouble scheduling separate meetings with the Congressional delegation to discuss RTA business.

Mr. Laing said it may not be possible for city representatives to attend the March 11 RTA Board meeting due to a conflict.

STAFFING TASK FORCE

Mr. Brubaker said with the hiring of Mr. Matoff, three of the task force's four responsibilities have been completed. The naming of legal counsel has not yet occurred, he said; this issue will be discussed by the task force at its meeting on March 10. The Staffing Task Force does not believe it will exist forever, he said; once its responsibilities have been completed, staffing issues can probably best be dealt with by the Rules Committee.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Laing said Mr. Earling will join Mr. Matoff and myself in

Washington, D.C. In order to join us, he continued, we will be staying over an additional night. This travel authorization was not included in that approved by the Rules Committee, he noted.


It was moved by Ms. Hague, seconded by Mr. Brubaker and carried by the unanimous vote of all RTA Board members present that travel by Mr. Laing, Mr. Matoff and Mr. Earling to Washington, D.C. during the first week of March be approved.

Mr. Earling reminded interested Board members to view the video available in the back of the room after today's meeting.

NEXT MEETINGS


Mr. Laing said the scheduled meetings for March and April are shown on today's agenda. Invitations to a reception for Mr. Matoff, following the March 11 meeting, have been distributed, he explained. The reception will take place in the Dome Room of the Arctic Building, he said, with the consent of the City of Seattle.

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.



Bruce Laing
Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:



Delores Grubbs
Clerk of the Board

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