

**Regional Transit Authority  
Minutes of Board Meeting**

**December 16, 1994**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order in the King County Council Chambers, Room 402, 516 Third Avenue, Seattle, Washington by Chairman Laing. The Board Administrator called the roll and the following members were present:

**Chairman:**

Bruce Laing, King County Councilmember

**Vice Chairs:**

Dave Earling, Edmonds Councilmember

Paul Miller, Tacoma Deputy Mayor

**Pierce County:**

Sharon Boekelman, Bonney Lake Councilmember

Ken Madsen, Pierce County Councilmember

Doug Sutherland, Pierce County Executive

**King County:**

Don Davidson, Bellevue Mayor

Mary Gates, Federal Way Mayor

Greg Nickels, King County Councilmember

**Washington State Department of Transportation:**

Sid Morrison, Secretary

The Board Administrator announced a quorum of Board members was present.

The following Board members arrived after roll call:

**King County:**

Martha Choe, Seattle Councilmember

Gary Locke, King County Executive

Jim White, Kent Mayor

**Report of the Chair**

Mr. Laing:

The three county councils have all opted to continue their participation in the Regional Transit Authority (RTA), which means our next step is to take the proposal to the voters.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Al Greive, Everett:

I work for a Seattle engineering firm and recently attended the public hearing in Snohomish County and testified in favor of the proposal. I feel very strongly that we need to move forward with rapid transit in the region. I listened to three hours

of public comment and heard many speaking against participation in the system. I took an unofficial count and found the margin was two to one against the proposal. Your Mr. Matoff and many others heard these remarks as well.

We have a severely divided community because the proposal calls for the termination of light rail at 164th. This will result in a large negative vote in March. I would suggest that you reexamine the plan, if possible, including the cost estimates and the enabling legislation, to bring a divided community back together. I would be pleased to assist in any way possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. Happy holidays. Thank you for the hard work you do on this difficult and complex task.

Mr. Mark Dublin, Ballard:

I am presently driving routes which will become part of the RTA, Routes 307 and 372 Express.

(Board member Choe arrived at this time.)

I write a column in the union newsletter. I am doing everything I can within the ethical code to support this proposal. There is a limit, as a public employee, to what I can do.

I think this project is extremely vulnerable, not because of the cost, but because it is costing too much for how fast it will go, particularly the light rail system. I personally think you have given me the minimum amount of grade separation I can support. Where the system is not totally grade separated, you will have to prove you can run trains fast enough to justify the expenses. There will be criticisms that buses could do the same job at a lesser cost.

I think buses are part of the solution for Everett and Renton. I am familiar with Renton. I-405 comes across the east end of the Renton central business district. It is a shame the present construction in progress didn't include a transit center or a flyer stop to give direct access to that part of the freeway. If you think about Renton, this could become important if you are not putting rail there immediately. An express coach accessing I-405 would put someone in downtown Seattle, via I-405 and I-90, within 20 minutes. This would help relieve Renton's feelings of being left out of the system.

In Everett, someone should measure the various clearances of the Convention Place tunnel station. I think it may be possible to bring a highway coach from Everett, maybe even Canada, off the freeway at Convention Place and leave passengers where they could be picked up by a tunnel coach. This would help those in the north end. When you think about buses, there are ways to use them that can render them very effective, very quickly. That would bring many people around.

If you really think about proving you can move people quickly and as the plan is preconceived, you have a very good chance. If you wait to respond to the criticisms, you will be in trouble. It will not be an easy sell.

### Rules Committee

#### **TRY RAIL, RTA Commuter Rail Demonstration Project Implementation Contracts - Information**

Mr. Bob White:

Consistent with Resolution No. 43, which the Board adopted at its December 2, 1994 meeting, staff went to the Rules Committee and reviewed a series of contracts that will be necessary for the Executive Director to enter into by the end of the year to implement commuter rail service by January 28, which is the currently forecast agreement. We went over each of them in some detail; I will not repeat that presentation today unless there are some questions.

There is an agreement with Pierce Transit which would provide for reimbursement of the RTA for direct costs incurred for marketing and communications programs for the demonstration project, station development contracts which were competitively bid construction contracts, an agreement with Go Transit with the general terms for lease of the cars and an

agreement for transportation of the equipment from Toronto to Seattle, and an agreement that will allow us to enter into contracts for the purchase of some of the insurance liability coverage we will need.

As we mentioned to the Rules Committee on Wednesday, a week ago an unexpected glitch came up with regard to insurance. We have been working it hard for a week or 10 days, and the situation appears to be successfully resolved. We have an agreement, in principal, of how to structure the insurance and risk coverage. We reviewed that this morning with legal counsel and he has drafted language to implement that. I believe we have resolved that issue.

We mentioned to the Rules Committee that part of that issue was due to some adjusting of the budget to save money to spend it to provide overall insurance coverage we would need. I believe we have retained the essential elements of the demonstration project.

We have returned, without any change, the two two-week periods of commuter rail demonstration services. We have needed to reduce the number of services we would operate to the Sonics games from 14 to 9. We still expect to begin service January 28, 1995. One of the ways we have reduced it is rather than run two trains each way per evening, we will run one longer train. This will provide as much capacity as possible. The last change has no impact on the services but, we have made the assumption that all excursion services, those devoted to other than the Sonics games or commuter rail services, would be self-supporting.

(Board member White arrived at this time.)

#### **Management Structure of Corridor Studies**

Mr. Laing:

There were questions raised by two cities in different corridors regarding management structure for corridor studies. This lead us to reaffirm that we would utilize collaborative, joint processes by the RTA and local governments in each corridor in conducting those studies. Staff has been directed to do so.

#### **RTA Boundaries - Discussion**

Mr. Laing:

You may recall that the RTA Board adopted the RTA boundaries and during that discussion we recognized that the growth management boundaries were being revised. It was our intent to include within the jurisdiction of the RTA the urban areas designated by the urban growth boundary, to use precinct boundaries and that there would be overlapping. That review has been completed. This action was passed by the Rules Committee with the idea that maps would be available to Board members. The only changes made are within King County. If any Board member wants to review the boundaries, the materials are available. The intent is to act on this at the January 13, 1995 Board meeting.

#### **Resolution No. 49 - To Authorize Submittal of Project Justification Report (3J) to the Federal Transit Administration for the Rail Component of the Regional Transit System - Action**

Mr. Laing:

Resolution No. 49 was recommended to the RTA Board by the Rules Committee. It addresses the issue of submittal of a 3J report to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Mr. Matoff:

Under federal legislation governing grants for transit purposes, agencies which foresee putting requests for appropriations before the RTA and Congress are requested to submit each year a report identified as the project justification report under Section 3J. Last year, before I was with the RTA, there was significant discussion of this issue by the Board and the

decision was made to submit a report identifying the central corridor section or the north/south line from Boeing Access Road to Northgate as the project to be submitted for federal funding purposes. That was done last year.

This year, based on work since February; discussions with the FTA staff; reading of the situation and given the fact that the Board has not identified which segments of its overall Master Plan in Phase I the Board may want to identify for federal funding purposes, we are recommending that the entire system plan and Phase I be submitted as the 3J report. I understand that this will be acceptable to the FTA which gives us the maximum flexibility and does not necessarily restrict our options. The Board has not yet had a debate about which segments to submit and we think this keeps our options open and appears to be the best way to go at this time.

Mr. Laing:

The proposed action is included in today's agenda as Resolution No. 49. The operative language is as follows: The RTA Board hereby authorizes submittal to the Federal Transit Administration of a Project Justification Report covering Phase I rail element approved by the Board on October 29, 1994 as the rail segments for federal funding.

**It was moved by Mr. Morrison and seconded by Mr. Sutherland that Resolution No. 49 be approved as presented.**

Ms. Choe:

Was this on the agenda as a decision item today?

Mr. Laing:

Yes. This item was not on the original agenda for today's meeting, but it was shown on the revised agenda for today.

**The motion to approve Resolution No. 49 was carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present.**

#### Legislative Task Force

**Resolution No. 50 - To Amend Resolution No. 41 to Recommend that Elections Officials Conduct the RTA Election by use of Polling Place Balloting - Action**

Mr. Madsen:

I ask Board members to pull out their copy of Resolution No. 50 included in today's agenda. In addition, there is a memo from Mr. Miller, dated December 14, 1994, which has been distributed today (copy on file).

**It was moved by Mr. Madsen and seconded by Ms. Choe that Resolution No. 50 be approved as presented.**

Mr. Madsen:

This is a change in gears. Resolution No. 50 states we do not want to use a mail ballot. This is kind of discouraging to me, but we have a whole series of "what ifs." If the legislature passes the necessary bill we could utilize a mail ballot. The county auditors are now in a position that they have to order election materials. It seems the uncertainty is too great, the risk is too great and that we could fall apart in mid-February. Resolution No. 50 indicates we will go to the polling place with our ballot measure on March 14, 1995.

Mr. Sutherland:

By going to the polling place, does that mean there will not be absentee ballots available?

Mr. Madsen:

We would go through the normal election system the auditors use now, which includes the use of absentee ballots.

Mr. Drewel:

I am disappointed, but are the reasons for using a polling place ballot those set forth? Are there any other reasons?

Mr. Madsen:

There is uncertainty. The three county auditors have said they could utilize a mail ballot if all of these things happened. We asked them what would have to happen to make a mail ballot work? The risks are too great and the uncertainty is very great. It is just one of those things.

Mr. Drewel:

I suppose there could be circumstances where legislative uncertainty could affect it as well.

Mr. Madsen:

Absolutely.

**The motion was carried by a vote of 10 to 1 (Mr. Earling voted in the minority).**

#### **1995 State Legislative Program - Action**

Mr. Madsen:

I have no action item to present today.

We have had to review our list of items. What we discussed was basically looking at making sure we have the RTA represented in the halls of the legislature. There will be many entities there. We need to be defensive. We have to get a feel for where this new legislature will come down.

Unless someone has a strong feeling, I would suggest a piece of legislation that merely corrects a little problem. Under the present laws, if we include a city in the RTA boundaries and the city annexes outside the RTA boundaries, we want to clarify that the RTA boundary will follow the annexation line. I would like to start with something non-controversial.

#### **Finance Committee**

##### **Resolution No. 44 - To Amend the 1994 RTA Budget**

Mr. Nickels:

The Finance Committee recommends two changes to the 1994 budget. We recommend shifting available budgeted funds of \$260,000 for continued support of the Parsons, Brinckerhoff/Kaiser Engineers contract through the end of the year. The overall impact of this is neutral, but it is a shifting of funds.

Second, we would amend the contract with Pierce Transit for 1994 support services. The original error estimated staff support for six months instead of a full year. This is currently being financed by Pierce Transit and would be reimbursed after a vote. This would result in a \$184,000 increase in expenditures and a \$184,000 increase in revenue.

**It was moved by Mr. Nickels, seconded by Mr. Miller and carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present that Resolution No. 44 be approved as presented.**

**Resolution No. 45 - To Adopt the 1995 RTA Six-Month Budget - Action**

Mr. Nickels:

This resolution was presented to the Board as an information item at its December 2, 1994 meeting.

**It was moved by Mr. Nickels and seconded by Mr. Miller that Resolution No. 45 be approved as presented.**

Mr. Nickels:

Resolution No. 45 would adopt a six-month budget for 1995. Earlier this year the Board adopted a preliminary six month budget but we were not comfortable with the level of detail and analysis. We asked for a more detailed document before the end of the year. This is the result of that effort.

The 1995 six-month budget would total \$9.5 million. It is funded by state and federal grants and loans from local transit agencies. There are also 1994 savings carried over. The majority of the 1995 budget is approximately \$1.5 million for the commuter rail demonstration project. There are two major programs that make that \$9.5 million budget higher than expected: the first is the public vote on March 14, including publication of a voters' pamphlet and plan document for a total one-time cost of \$2.2 million; the second is \$2.5 million for the commuter rail demonstration project. Hopefully those costs would not be carried forward beyond 1995.

Without those expenditures, the 1995 budget would be \$4.8 million. This really represents a continuation of the level of effort and work we have been involved in for the last year-plus.

I am offering an amendment based on the action taken by the Legislative Task Force. The funds in the proposed budget assumed a mail-in ballot. It turns out that is \$300,000 more expensive than a ballot at the polls. This would reflect that change and reduce the overall budget by \$300,000.

**It was moved by Mr. Nickels and seconded by Ms. Choe that the 1995 RTA six-month budget be amended with a reduction of \$300,000, based on a ballot at the polls rather than a mail-in ballot.**

Mr. Drewel:

The next to last paragraph on page one of Resolution No. 45 refers to King County, Pierce Transit and "another local transit agency or government in Snohomish County."

Mr. Gunter:

I have been asked to respond. We have asked Community Transit for funds and received no response. As you recall, in the preceding year our agreement with King County we had an obligation to pursue funds from Pierce Transit and Snohomish County as Snohomish Transit no longer exists. This represents the RTA's continuing commitment to request funds from some entity in Snohomish County.

Mr. Earling:

A discussion came about that there are two separate transit agencies in Snohomish County. We are trying to work out some fair formula and it appears \$100,000 is what Community Transit feels their obligation; they are hoping some other transportation system might provide the balance.

**The proposed amendment to Resolution No. 45 was carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present.**

Mr. Nickels:

I am prepared to respond to any questions.

**The motion to approve Resolution No. 45, as amended, was carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present.**

**Resolution No. 46 - To Authorize Contract with King County for 1995 Support Services and Funding - Action**

Mr. Nickels:

This item is not ready for Board review today. Frankly, King County still has this under review so there isn't a contract to authorize. Specifically, there is a concern that King County and Metro have regarding the liability for the 32 loaned Metro employees, which comprises the bulk of the RTA staff. We want to be sure that is dealt with in some fashion in this contract. This item will probably come to the Board in January.

There was one additional item discussed yesterday. It has to do with the timing of the request for qualifications (RFQ). The Board has discussed the pros and cons of releasing the request for proposals (RFP) prior to the public vote. As a result of those conversations, the Executive Director has delayed the release of the RFP until after the March 14 vote.

(Board member Locke arrived at this time.)

The Executive Director indicated his intention to send out the RFQ prior to the March vote. The concern that was raised yesterday was the sense that doing so prejudices the public vote in a way that might be unfavorably viewed by members of the public and perhaps we would be better off to wait and then begin the RFQ and RFP process after the election. I will make that comment and ask others to offer their opinions and have the Executive Director respond.

Mr. Madsen:

I think I agree with Mr. Nickels. I feel uneasy to be putting the RFQ or RFP out until the people direct us to go ahead. I don't think we should be out in front of the people.

Mr. Sutherland:

In the budget just passed, there is an item that helps finance some of these activities which needs to be in the budget. I was concerned about beginning expenditure of public funds for what may cause a negative reaction. People may believe these funds are being unnecessarily spent.

The other thing is that, between now and the election, our focus should be on securing a successful response from the electorate. If we begin other activities, or work that naturally would flow from a successful ballot, people will begin to suspect we are looking at our next opportunity instead of the obligations directly in front of us. This vote will be one of significant seriousness throughout the RTA region. I really think all of our focus and energy should be directed at that and anything that would avert that attention should be delayed.

I suggest we work even harder to stay on schedule. I am concerned that to look like we are jumping ahead of ourselves might not feel comfortable. I certainly don't feel comfortable with that.

Ms. Choe:

I agree with all of the comments. One thing we didn't discuss yesterday, is what effect the delay of issuing the RFQ and RFP will have on the schedule. I would appreciate the Executive Director coming back after having looked at the original schedule to see what effect this additional delay will have on the staff and the Board having sufficient time to review the RFQ and RFP. By compressing the schedule even more and given the magnitude of the contracts, it seems staff may want to take another look at that and develop a revised time line.

Mr. Matoff:

I think staff and I will take that as a sense of the Board and postpone issuance of the RFQ until after the vote of the people. In the mean time, I will establish a new schedule to review with the Board. This will allow time for the establishment of DBE goals.

Mr. Laing:

The next item on today's agenda is a workshop. Are there any items to discuss under other business?

Mr. Matoff:

No.

Ms. Walker:

No.

Mr. Morrison:

Perhaps the Executive Director might mention a very successful effort between the Washington State Department of Transportation and the RTA in a meeting this past week with the Ports of Tacoma, Seattle, Union Pacific and Burlington Northern. The RTA and DOT presented to them our capacity analysis of the railroad system as we had for this discussion with the voters. We wanted to be sure congestion, because of the addition of passenger service, would, in fact, not interfere with the economic lifelines for those railroads. I think it was well received. The studies are well done. We showed the percentage of delay currently as it is today ranges from 7 to 9%; after we make improvements under the capital improvement program between the DOT and RTA, the percentage of delay in 1998, with the 6 and 10 passenger trains is brought down to 5 to 6%, including freight growth. The railroads will continue to work with us to project the railroad plan. Argo is a major connection point through West Seattle and the facilities with the Tacoma Dome; both of those are important to the Ports of Tacoma and Seattle.

I would like to raise a point of personal privilege. As the only non-elected official and with the greatest interest in the regional aspects of the RTA plan, I would like to congratulate the three counties for their decisions to stay in the system. Pierce County is a lean, mean political machine. King County had some great inside work on preventing erosion. In Snohomish County the real heroics were performed by Mr. Drewel and Mr. Earling. I would like to thank Mr. Laing who tied this together with some great staff work. We have a regional system by 20 to 5.

We recently had Stuart Elway do a poll at the Governor's request regarding how we are looking at a balanced revenue package with the state portion of the RTA. For the first time in the history of the state, we have a shift in public attention to our transportation investment. Forty-one percent said we should continue to invest in highways; 49% said we should invest in rail and transit. That is dramatic. This reflects the work by this group and transit systems throughout the area and the good work by the media in talking about what the RTA is all about.

We also have to announce that we now have a ballot issue and I can no longer have an opinion. I can only comment on the facts, and I know the facts are in favor of the RTA.

Mr. Drewel:

Mr. Al Swift has been named Vice President of Public Relations for Burlington Northern.

Thank you very much for the compliments to all of us. It was difficult. We stepped into this knowingly. In Everett the public hearing was quite long. Many people would have rather been somewhere else. We spent a lot of time on the human services side of our agenda. Our legal counsel was asked to return to the meeting. I would like to thank him for the continuation of his fine legal services.



Mr. Earling:

I would like to extend my thanks to Mr. Gunter for his extraordinary service. Thank you to Mr. Laing, Mr. Matoff and Mr. Baker for a lengthy day. Your support was certainly recognized by all. I would like to comment, for those who were not here at the beginning of the meeting, that Mr. Laing announced that we had had passage of the proposal by all three counties. I only wish it would have been that easy.

Mr. Laing:

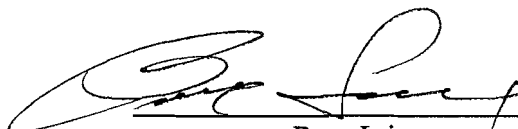
I would like to join Mr. Drewel and Mr. Earling in thanking Mr. Gunter. It was a matter of personal sacrifice, and his presence was significant to the outcome of the meeting.

**Next Board Meeting**

Mr. Laing:


The Board's next meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 13, 1995 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Puget Sound Regional Council Board Room, 1011 Western Avenue, Seattle.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52.



Bruce Laing  
Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:



Marcia Walker  
Board Administrator

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