

**Regional Transit Authority
February 24, 1995**

Board Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m. in Room 402 of the King County Courthouse, 516 Third Avenue, Seattle, Washington by Chairman Laing. The Board Administrator called the roll and the following members were present:

Chair:

Bruce Laing, King County Councilmember

Vice Chair:

Paul Miller, Tacoma City Councilmember

King County:

Sharon Bockelman, Bonney Lake Councilmember

Martha Choe, Seattle Councilmember

Don Davidson, Bellevue Mayor

Gary Locke, King County Executive

Cynthia Sullivan, King County Councilmember

Pierce County:

Doug Sutherland, Pierce County Executive

Washington State Department of Transportation:

Lois Anderson, representing Sid Morrison, Secretary

The Board Administrator indicated that a quorum of the Board was not yet present.

The following Board members arrived after roll call:

King County:

Greg Nickels, King County Councilmember

Jim White, Kent Mayor

Mr. Laing:

As we do not yet have a quorum, I will ask legal counsel if the Board may proceed with the non-action items on its agenda?

Mr. Adam Gravley:

The Board may proceed with those agenda items that require no action.

Report of the Chair

Mr. Laing:

I think each of the members has received a copy of a letter from Everett Mayor Ed Hansen and the Everett City Council advising us that there will be a hearing on March 1, 1995 at 8:30 a.m. Members of the RTA Board have been invited to attend. I have signed a letter in response thanking them for the invitation, and saying the previous correspondence from the RTA Board Chair, regarding the issue of any legal matters the City might raise, would constitute the RTA's input to the hearing and wishing them well in that endeavor. I also enclosed copies of the

comment cards submitted by residents of the City of Everett on the TRY RAIL commuter run so that they could gain some feeling of the attitude of their constituency who have participated in that process.

Public Comment

Mr. Laing:

I will call speakers from those who have submitted a speaker sign in sheet. Remarks will be limited to three minutes per speaker.

Mr. Paul W. Locke:

I would like to provide my comments in conjunction with the discussion of Resolution No. 60.

(Board member Nickels arrived at this time.)

Mr. Mark Dublin:

I live in Ballard.

I do not believe I will be free to attend the hearing on March 1, but I would like to talk to the people in Everett. I would ask, as a citizen, that this litigation and the talk about individual municipalities withdrawing from the RTA, be ended. I live in Ballard, and will not receive light rail service in the first phase of the project. If a city opts out, does that mean trains would be tunneled under that municipality? The main line from Everett comes through Ballard; will we find our trains being carried off on dragon ships?

The thing I would emphasize is the positive things I can see coming out of the RTA for municipalities in all directions, regardless of where the thing is in 16 years. We don't know what kind of soils we will find under Capital Hill. It could take 16 years to get to the University District. I think we should look at what we could do to serve Everett with buses. I could give you excellent service. If we used tunnel coaches coming from Everett, we could go through tunnel to SeaTac Airport or turn back at Convention Place.

Renton has a good set up for an effective flyer stop at I-405 on the east side of the city. These are things we could do within a few years. In Tukwila, I would send the first rail line to Southcenter and up SR-510. I have walked along SR-99. I am worried about taking a train down there, but I would be willing to go along with the recommendation of your engineers.

You can't opt out of a region any more than opting out of the road grid. A jurisdiction can advise its constituents to vote against the plan. I would rather lose the vote politically.

Mr. Frank Hutchins:

I have lived for 34 years in Mountlake Terrace, Snohomish County, and for three years have acted as Chairman of the Puget Sound Light Rail Transit Society. Although some members were opposed, the majority of our board members strongly supported county participation in the RTA. Our board passed a resolution saying that the process should proceed. Several of us are working with the phone bank set up by Sound Transit, as well as wearing their buttons and distributing their literature. We want a positive vote on March 14. For these reasons, I feel that I can speak to issues that to me seem urgent.

Next week, we will hear the latest decisions of the military base-closing commission, formed to insulate national defense issues from squabbles between states or cities competing for benefits.

The commission is not made up of local officials, for reasons that are obvious but too often ignored. There's a basic difference between the responsibilities of local officials and those charged with national policy. One can picture the effect on the nation's security if there were demands to place a carrier task force in every port, a bomber on every county airport, or a tank in every garage!

Regional transit planning also requires a larger perspective. It's been said that a rising tide lifts all boats, and this is true of transit planning that takes a broader view. We'll all benefit from improved transportation, even if the rail lines don't go down our particular streets.

That's why a regional district was formed. But the legislature's injection of the concept of equity encouraged local interests to compete for the dollars raised in the district. It may sound fair to distribute funds according to population and revenue raised, but it seriously handicaps design. Moreover, transit design and construction may benefit from the common sense of the man on the street, but they can't be exercises in pure democracy!

Now, with the introduction of a bill to allow cities as small as 30,000 to opt out of the plan, it can be said that the RTA, having sown the wind of equity, is reaping a whirlwind of local competition, increasing the possibility of defeat on March 14.

Regardless of the outcome of the election, the RTA Board will face certain opportunities and challenges. What will the Board do after the election? There are people sitting at this table who know what actions should be taken. Anyone who wonders what actions I'm talking about can ask the Mayor of Kent and the city council president of Edmonds.

Part of the problem is public unawareness of the distinction between the preliminary planning that presents a project for electoral consideration, and "project level" planning that deals in more detail with alignments and technologies. This is an issue of trust, and it's part of the RTA's challenge; the public wants and needs to be educated.

A few years back, actor Wilford Brimley sold a lot of oat bran cereal with the plug, "It's the right thing to do!" I suggest that given the degree of confused protest generated so far, as well as the effort put forth by people who support the RTA with reservations, some reconsiderations would be "the right thing to do!"

Mr. James Conlon:

I am an attorney in the University District and President-elect of the University District Chamber of Commerce.

I would like to share our frustration and concern. As you know, there is supposed to be a study regarding whether there will be a tunnel or a transit mall alignment in the University District. I think you know we have come out against the transit mall and in favor of the tunnel alignment. I can understand the compromise in the study, but the scoping was to be completed January 10; that work is not completed today. Without the scoping to go back to the University District, it is impossible to build a consensus in favor of the RTA plan. I realize there must be a regional transit plan to benefit the district, but in order to build a neighborhood plan, we have to know what you will propose. I would like to see this scoping done as soon as possible, with the study to be completed as soon after the vote as possible.

(Board member White arrived at this time.)

Mr. Laing:

I have one other person signed up to address the Board. Are there others who wish to speak to the scope of alternative alignments in the University District? Mr. Conlan's remarks brought that to mind. I would like to bring the Board up to date on that particular circumstance.

Staff has been working with the City of Seattle staff on a scoping for that study. I believe they are very close to having a meeting of the minds, but they are not there yet. I have asked staff to join me early next week in a meeting with the Mayor of Seattle, Ms. Choe and Seattle City staff to focus on the last areas where there might be a difference of perspective, with the idea of bringing closure to that issue.

Thank you, Mr. Conlan, for reminding me of that subject. I just want the Board to know where we stand. I hope the scope of work will be available shortly.

Mr. Davidson:

I would like to remind Board members there are other studies called out in the Master Plan which have not yet been scoped. They might help other corridors understand what is going on.

Mr. Laing:

My recollection is that there was a specific time line for that particular segment. I do not mean to disagree with Mr. Davidson that we need to move forward with that work.

Mr. George Lucas:

I will make my remarks at the next meeting.

Mr. Laing:

I have two other speakers who wish to address the subject of Resolution No. 60. Unless those individuals would like to speak now, I will call on them at that time.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Matoff:

I would like to inform the Board that we have filled one of the loaned position vacancies with a contract administrator, Ms. Elaine Swanson. Ms. Swanson has an excellent background in this area, and she will be assuming these duties next week. At that time all inquiries from consulting firms, which have been handled by the technical staff, will be forwarded directly to her. She will handle procedural issues relating to contracting. We are pleased to have her.

I would also like to introduce Mr. Alec Stephens who has been selected as the RTA's Minority/Women's Business Enterprise (M/WBE) Supervisor. He has been the senior M/WBE supervisor with the King County Department of Metropolitan Services for several years. He was most recently the M/WBE liaison on the West Point construction project. He is an attorney and member of the State Bar Association. He is well versed in the legal aspects and practicalities of making a program work, and of achieving goals. All of those who interviewed Mr. Stevens were favorably impressed. He will be meeting with Ms. Choe's task force next week. We are as delighted as can be to have Mr. Stephens on board.

I would like to ask Mr. Bob White and Mr. Henry Aronson to give a report on the TRY RAIL demonstration project.

Mr. Bob White:

In your packet today (copy on file) is a memo with a couple of attachments including some preliminary research results, compiled courtesy of Amtrak. One of the things they brought to the table is the survey and research work. There is some interesting material in this document. On a scale of one to 10, the TRY RAIL service was ranked 9.3. I think that is good for a first time out. In addition, we have gotten high marks, 9.5, on the service being provided by our ambassadors. We couldn't have done it without them, and the independent research backs that statement up.

We haven't received a 9 or better rating in every category. The comfort of the seats was rated only 7.7. These cars are 17 years old and there have been a series of improvements made since they were built. This is an area on which we will focus attention during the vehicle specification process. We have had comments about how to make the cars meet the riders' needs.

In addition to the general survey done by Amtrak, we have also provided some numbers (copy on file). This document looks at the first three days of service in the south corridor. It gives some comparative information to the

equivalent days of service provided in the North Corridor. The numbers not included are those on Monday, February 20 when we ran a round trip from Tacoma to Everett. The counting mechanisms were not working that day. We utilized nine cars with capacity for 1,500 people. We think we carried approximately 2,500 people that day. The seats, aisles and stairwells were all full.

Tomorrow and Sunday we will be offering two round trips each day between Tacoma and Seattle. We will have performing artists on the cars and provide connections to arts events in Tacoma and Seattle. We also expect to get some riders who will be attending the Home Show in the Kingdome or the Flower and Garden Show in the Convention Center. We are pulling out everything we have to support this service--we will utilize a 13 car train tomorrow, providing just shy of 2,000 seats. Preparing for this service is a challenge.

With regard to the ambassadors, several of you have noted that the ambassadors have been provided with coats, sweatshirts and caps with the TRY RAIL logo to identify them to the public. Several of you have expressed an interest in purchasing some parts of the uniform. While those goods are not yet available for purchase, I do have an opportunity. We are looking for additional volunteers to work with the trained ambassadors and they will be provided with portions of the uniform. Please let me know if you are interested in doing so.

We have emphasized that the demonstration project, in addition to providing the public an opportunity to try the rail service, was intended to be a learning experience for the RTA. I cannot quantify the value of the things we have learned. The results will produce some number of multiples in benefits and savings in what we have invested to date.

Obviously, critical to the success of the demonstration and long-term rail is the job of maintaining the equipment. To operate this service we have had to do all of the things we will need to do on permanent service, in a short period of time. We have arranged for daily inspections of the cars and locomotives. We have developed techniques and procedures for revising the length of train delays. Some of these challenges are unique because of the age of the equipment, but I think in all cases the experience is transferable. This will be invaluable in creating a maintenance program and how we will create contracts that insure we can produce daily safe, reliable, clean equipment.

I would like to point out that to do this we have created a formidable team. Among those who have helped is the END Division of General Motors who loaned us a crackerjack mechanic for three weeks, Mr. Neil Brown. Go Transit, at no cost, provided us with two people for three weeks. Bombardier provided Mr. Larry Jennings, who seems to work 24 hours a day. All of these people were donated to our service. We have also received important support from our own consultants. Amtrak has given us someone, Mr. Jim Cryder, who works at least 24 hours a day. Ken and a staff of 63 people have been putting in substantial time on the project. Our program with the demonstration has added 15% to the work load Amtrak is currently doing in Seattle. You can imagine what that is doing to their work load. They have been doing a very good job for us. I think everyone has made mistakes, but we have not made many of them twice and we have made none of them three times. We are learning a great deal.

That is a brief summary of where we are with the TRY RAIL project.

Mr. White:

How are we handling the provision of train whistles?

Mr. White:

We are using more discretion in distributing the train whistles. Whistles will not be distributed on tomorrow's service.

I would also like to mention Mr. George Lucas and his work with car cleaning. This has been outstanding. I want to thank him how; I know he will be challenged this weekend.

Ms. Walker:

We now have a quorum of Board members present.

Board Meeting Minutes of January 27, 1995

It was moved by Mr. White, seconded by Ms. Boekelman and carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present that the minutes of January 27, 1995 be approved as presented.

Report from the Expert Review Panel (ERP)

Mr. Aubrey Davis:

When utilizing the TRY RAIL service this last weekend, my grandson had to stand for the whole trip, but was still able to see out the windows. My son-in-law had to stand but couldn't see much. There were a lot of people on the train.

I think this is the ERP's final letter to the Board (copy on file). We held our first meeting in February 1990, approximately five years ago. I understood this was to be a two year commitment. We have held 16 meetings, most of which were one to two-day meetings. We also had many subcommittee and one-on-one meetings. One person estimated the annual volunteer commitment to be between 100 to 200 hours per year. We spent 10,000 hours on this effort collectively over this period. This is the first time this state has tried this approach of providing a state body to oversee the technical work of such a major planning effort such as this. This will be a new experience and it was interesting.

Our job was to provide technical oversight. There were people in Olympia concerned that there was evidence around the country that plans had been developed and promoted and numbers were not reliable. Part of that was due to changing circumstances and some was covered by Mike Meters. He commented recently that he couldn't believe it. He said this is the first region using the planning process to arrive at a decision; everyone else knows what they want when they start and make the numbers come out in favor of it. This surprised him. Maybe that is why this process took five years.

Our job was not policy oversight. We were asked to say things about policy direction and we tried not to engage in policy discussion. No one elected us to represent them for policy decisions. Our work was cooperative and collective. There were no hearings and no testimony. We reviewed the oral and written reports from consultants and staff. The Board asked us, occasionally, to look into something specific. We made many suggestions to staff and the consultants, and most were taken seriously. Our letters, over the period of time, used words such as "reasonable," "prudent," "adequate," etc. The plan is those things, in our judgment. The financing plan to be voted on is reasonable and prudent and flexible. With that, we believe the system can be built.

The Board has an ongoing responsibility. The plan is the framework for careful evaluation at each step of the way. This is an ongoing challenge. This is a first stage we are signing off on, but you will carry on oversight to be sure you are still consistent with your expectations and capital costs. We felt they were reasonable and that the contingency was adequate. These projects are more routine now than they were 10 to 20 years ago and estimating is less science than art. What kills projections is unanticipated mitigation and betterment costs. Mitigation is putting an area back the way it was; betterment involves meeting demands for improvements. You will have both. This brings those costs out and puts it at the Board's discretion and uses it as a negotiating tool to keep the project on track. We think keeping that separate was a good idea.

With regard to ridership, I don't think anyone can suggest it is overstated. Very conservative methods were used to meet the RTA requirements. The PSRC numbers are less conservative and they utilize implementation of aggressive regionwide transportation demand management policies such as those required to meet the goals of the State's Commute Trip Reduction Law. The RTA rules don't allow us to count those in making estimates.

We have commented on many things in the letter. We were asked to be clear. We believe you have met the requirements of the state law in setting up this process. It has been a pleasure working on this and representing the interests of the state. Thank you.

I would like to introduce Mary Jo Porter. Mary Jo has acted with supreme diplomacy.

Mr. Laing:

Thank you to both Mr. Davis and Mary Jo. Please convey our thanks to other members of the ERP. I intend to communicate in writing our unanimous thanks for the efforts over a long period of time.

Mr. Davidson:

In reading the report regarding capital costs, it appears there will be a 30 to 40% contingency. Is this normal?

Mr. Davis:

This was done fairly early in the process. There was disagreement between Mr. McLean, our expert who died several months ago, and the man who discussed this topic with the King County Council. The contingencies are kept in the various work elements.

Mr. Davidson:

Perhaps I could receive a follow-up memo regarding this topic.

Mr. Davis:

The amount included for the contingency would vary with different elements of the project.

Mr. Davidson:

I would like to receive follow-up information.

Mr. Davis:

Do not underestimate the flexibility you have with regard to mitigation and betterment.

Mr. Sutherland:

To Mr. Davis and other members of the ERP, I extend our congratulations for an outstanding piece of work, as well as your tenacity to stay with the project.

In your comments you said that in estimating portions of the work and preparing data for us to look at, there was "more science and less art" relative to estimating capital and construction costs. We have been hearing criticisms from those looking at this that we have been wearing rose-colored glasses with regard to estimating these costs and we have underestimated, sometimes substantially, the costs of putting this project in place.

Mr. Davis:

For some projects around the country, the critics are correct, but the Northwest has a better history. As the Federal Regional Administrator, I oversaw the MAX project. This was the only project that came in reasonably close to its estimates. It was the only project in the country to do so. It would have been closer to the estimates if it hadn't been for betterments. The Seattle tunnel was quite close to its estimates, going over by 15%. This was due to changes in scope and some betterments. The actual costs for the hole in the ground were very close to the estimates, and were slightly lower than estimates. It was surface portions of the project that ran the costs up. I am basing those numbers compared to those approved by the public body, but at the time you start the project, you

commit to a funding level. This is the process the RTA Board just completed. This is the figure we use for comparison purposes.

Our consultant spent hours and hours on this. He drove all the routes. He went through an estimation of hours and materials, piece by piece and with unit measures. He did a very detailed oversight on those numbers and came away satisfied that they may be conservative. This was a great proposition and effort that a volunteer put in. He spent hours and hours and hours looking at the detailed numbers and going through spread sheets to satisfy himself that the total numbers were appropriate.

Ms. Choe:

I would like to add my voice to those of appreciation for the work done by the ERP and Mary Jo. You have played a critical role in the RTA and our ability to speak to the corrections this body has made and lessons learned from other rail systems. This is important in our discussions with the public. I think your scrutiny of the assumptions for cost and patronage were confirmed by the PSRC in their studies. As local jurisdictions and counties have adopted comprehensive plans, we look to seeing those figures become a reality. Thank you for a thankless job and all the hours you have put into this.

Rules Committee

Resolution No. 60 - Establishing Policy Promoting Fair Work Environment for Local Labor

Mr. Paul Locke:

I do not believe you should pass this resolution. This requirement of utilization of local labor is going to drive this cost up. I can see companies being set up for a large bid for local operations and then getting into troubles that Morrison-Knudsen is in, which is underestimating costs because you are not used to going into localities and doing business. You will end up with the taxpayers paying the cost. I think it will end up costing the taxpayer more than if it were left out.

Mr. Jack Gilchrist:

I am Executive Secretary of the Seattle, King County Building and Construction Trades Council. I am in favor of this resolution and I would like to point out areas in which we believe we can help.

We are in favor of the local hiring. We have proposed it could be done under a Boston Harbor Agreement, which would allow for local hiring that would give you a better chance at the next phase being passed because local people will benefit from this work. You would be using tax dollars over again.

With regard to M/WBE participation, any contractor can and should bid the work and be successful at it. Anyone can perform under that agreement. The county, port, City of Seattle, school district, housing authority and Metro bring in non-traditional construction workers into the apprenticeship programs. We are trying to get more people into these programs and earning a living wage.

I hope this would be a 2-1 situation where we would get the schedule under control and get it done. It would be favorable for the Union and they would vote in favor of the RTA. I believe an extra 110,000 votes in the three county area would be helpful. I have a copy of an agreement with Pier 66 explaining how apprenticeship opportunity programs work. We have a plan to get these things done, such as the M/WBE and local hiring requirements. We hope you will go with the plan we would present.

Mr. Sutherland:

I want to explore something with you. Traditionally, if you look at the wages in the Pacific Northwest, they are generally much higher than in many other places in the United States. Many people talk about that and are concerned about that. But what is really talked about is the productivity levels of those same people, which I have

seen offset, so that the net cost is about the same as in other places. My concern is that on some major projects like this, there is a tendency to allow that productivity to slip.

Mr. Gilchrist:

If you are referring to featherbedding in the Boston Harbor Agreement, it would 9-0 in the Supreme Court. Part of that language states there will be no production slowdowns of any kind. One of the selling points is the Unions will guarantee to bring the project in on time. They get out and hustle to get it done on time. They also bring the apprenticeship programs, which allow you to have people on the job site learning and training but they are paid a lesser rate than the full-time mechanic. Prevailing wages are skewed based on their experience. These workers may cost you only half as much while doing the same level of work.

Mr. Davidson:

Is this item proposed for action today? I think the idea of hiring local people would be a boon to the project, but I have no idea what the document means in terms of the Board of Directors.

Mr. Doug Peterson:

I am with the Associated General Contractors of Washington, representing union and open shop contractors in Western Washington.

We are interested in a cooperative relationship with the unions. We negotiate five contracts with them. I find we have more and more in common. This issue is sensitive to us. I am here because Mr. Gilchrist told me about today's meeting at 12:30 p.m. We do oppose the proposed agreement. We believe they reduce the competitiveness. While we believe, if you look at the size of this project, the contractor successful in bidding it will probably be a union contractor, it is the subcontractors and subtrades we are concerned about. This will limit competitiveness in those areas and affect the M/WBE subcontractors. We would like to work with you on this. We have open shop and union contractors available to discuss our comments in opposition.

While we support Section 1 of Resolution No. 60, we are opposed to Section 2. We are fearful that if the project is packaged in such a way that only a large contractor from outside can bid it, some of our local members will not have an opportunity to bid it. This body and the RTA staff have the ability to package this work so that small contractors would have an opportunity to bid.

I would offer our members to sit down and talk to you on this subject.

Ms. Sullivan:

In reading Section 2, all it obligates us to do is to sit down and have those discussions. I would think you would be supportive of that, based on your testimony.

Mr. Peterson:

This language is not as strict as I thought it was. Discussions are fine; we would like to participate in those discussions.

Ms. Sullivan:

This is what is called for in Section 2. We will discuss this and have the contract manager carry it out.

Mr. Peterson:

We want to be involved in these discussions.

Mr. Laing:

Resolution No. 60 was passed by the Rules Committee with a recommendation for adoption. There are two operative sections.

The first provides that the Board adopts for the design and construction of Phase I a policy goal requiring utilization of local labor, payment of prevailing wages and the maintenance of a safe and non-discriminatory work environment to the maximum extent allowable by applicable laws and regulations and consistent with sound project management principles and economic benefit to the RTA through competitive bidding practices.

Section 2 provides for the review of the operational and legal feasibility of project labor agreements to assist the Board in determining whether they should be included within the RTA's contracting plan and to report their recommendations to the Rules Committee by April 1995.

It was moved by Mr. Madsen and seconded by Ms. Choe that Resolution No. 60 be approved as presented.

Mr. Madsen:

I would like to pose a question to Ms. Sullivan, relating to Section 2. Is it correct that the review and recommendation will be done in consultation with the stakeholder groups?

Ms. Sullivan:

Absolutely. I think these agreements are the wave of the future for large construction projects because it gets everyone on board working toward a common goal. It keeps the costs down and we finish the project on time. The public is very concerned about that. I would encourage us to be very supportive of this action. I think it is a sound practice.

Mr. Nickels:

I would like to thank Ms. Sullivan for her initiative in bringing this to us, and I urge your support. In 1970 a plan was presented which called for 80% federal financing and maybe it wasn't appropriate to benefit the local economy under those circumstances. But today we are asking for 60% of the capital program to be funded by local tax revenues. I think we have a responsibility to be sure the people paying those taxes reap the benefits in the services and the economic activity generated by the construction. There will be 29,000 direct jobs created by this project. We have skilled workers in this region who are fully qualified to do this work. I want to be sure they benefit from this, as well as the general community.

Mr. Davidson:

Was there any written report about all of these numbers and impacts? Was there an executive report that gives the financial background for this action? Everyone else seems quite comfortable with this; I trust that this item has been reviewed by other Board members and while it may be necessary to act on this item today, I have received no background information.

Mr. Laing:

Resolution No. 60 was reviewed by the Rules Committee. There was not an executive branch report because this action was initiated by Ms. Sullivan. It was worked with legal counsel because it raised the issue of authority under state law and the draft was amended and made consistent with our authority under state law. The kind of analysis Mr. Davidson is looking for is what we are asking for in this action before the Board makes implementing decisions. I see it as a statement of intent and a direction to staff to do specific analysis with legal counsel to advise us on issues related to implementation of that policy.

Mr. Davidson:

Section 1 indicates the Board is adopting for the design and construction of Phase I a policy goal of requiring the utilization of local labor, the payment of prevailing wages and the maintenance of a safe and non-discriminatory work environment to the maximum extent allowable by applicable laws and regulations and consistent with sound project management principles and economic benefit to the RTA through competitive bidding practices. The use of the word "require" makes a strong statement. That one term catches my attention.

Mr. Laing:

It is intended to indicate strong goal. The Association of General Contractors has indicated they have no problem with Section 1.

Mr. Miller:

I would echo the comments made by Mr. Nickels regarding the desire to be sure the work and jobs associated with the project stay local. I also echo the comments regarding the intent of this action. It is not to set a policy; it is to acknowledge and to ask for further information to take reasonable measure. The final sentence of Section 1 directs the Executive Director to include within the contracting plan being developed pursuant to Resolution No. 52 for further Board review and action appropriate requirements which reflect this policy after consultation with the local contracting and consulting community and with state and federal grant agencies. Once they arrive at appropriate requirements, they will come back here for our approval.

I would also refer to the second to last sentence of Section 1 which indicates we will review appropriate laws and regulations. We are not waiving what is in the best interest of the RTA in the sound financial policies and bidding process. I think we are taking strong steps to express what we believe, which we need to, to the extent possible, give preference to local jobs and even encourage local jobs without abandoning sound financial criteria and that we remain in the competitive bidding process.

Mr. Davidson:

There was an agreement referred to by one of today's speakers. Is that related to the vote here?

Ms. Sullivan:

The labor agreements referred to by Mr. Gilchrist, the Boston Harbor Agreement and the one developed by our local labor unions, were mentioned for illustrative purposes, to be reviewed in this process.

The motion to approve Resolution No. 60 was carried by the unanimous vote of all Board members present.

M/W/DBE Task Force

Ms. Choe:

I am pleased to have Mr. Stephens join us.

Since the last Board meeting I had the opportunity visit with the head of the Metro M/W/DBE program. He was helpful in providing answers to questions and determining how we can incorporate the lessons learned from other jurisdictions in gaining high M/W/DBE participation. He was helpful in providing examples of useful outreach and inclusion of percentages in bids. That was enlightening. I hope to continue working with him.

I visited the Chairman and CEO of the insurance company who provides bonding for 10,000 of the 40,000 subcontractors in the state. He was enthusiastic in the interest by the RTA in a surety support program. He has offered to provide any advice or assistance we would take advantage of. There are firms familiar with this program and they support our looking into it.

At its last meeting the RTA Board adopted a federal draft goal of 18%. We will hold a public hearing in April to solicit input on that goal. After that we will come back with these comments incorporated and present a final goal.

We will be reviewing the results of the local disparity study in which we are one participant along with Metro, King County, the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle. We are also continuing to pursue opportunities for the apprenticeship programs, such as was mentioned by Mr. Gilchrist. With regard to purchasing, etc. by W/MBE firms, there may be opportunities to try different things. We are willing to take risks and to experiment to be as inclusive as possible. We had members of the community join us and provide their input.

We are happy about the hiring of Mr. Stephens. We look forward to bringing more recommendations regarding the surety support program and the disparity study to the Board.

Next Meeting

Mr. Laing:

The RTA Board's next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 17 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Tacoma Public Utilities Building.

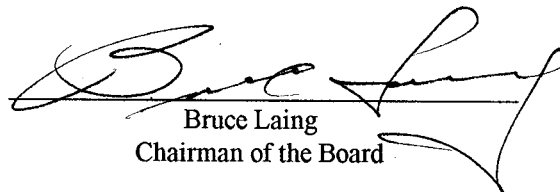
Other Business

Mr. Miller:

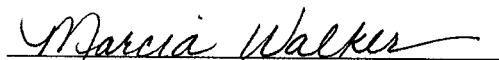
I would encourage staff to generate a press release regarding the results of the rail survey. This news is outstanding.

I would also like to acknowledge the newspaper article distributed today (copy on file) indicating that Mr. Earling has been selected Edmonds Citizen of the Year. I extend my congratulations to him.

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


Bruce Laing
Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:


Marcia Walker
Board Administrator

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