

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF Monday, May 23, 2016

Board Members Present: Mayor Scott Avedisian; Stephen Durkee; Director Peter Alviti; Princess Sirleaf Bomba; Stephanie Ogidan Preston, Margaret Holland McDuff and Mark Susa.

Absent: Maureen Martin.

Also Present: Raymond Studley, CEO; Benjamin Salzillo, In-House Legal; Christian Capizzo, Outside Counsel; Cyndi Mason Recording Secretary; and other members of RIPTA's staff, and members of the public whose names are on the sign-in sheet.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of the April 18, 2016 Board Minutes

Mr. Durkee makes a motion to approve the April 18, 2016 Board meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Preston seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Mayor Avedisian states that effective as of the end of this board meeting he is resigning as the Chairman and as a member of the Board of Directors at the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. Mayor Avedisian states he informed the Governor of that decision. He expects that the Governor will be moving quickly for a replacement. Mayor Avedisian states further that five years ago he never thought he would be here and four years ago he never thought he would be the Chair of the board. He has learned a lot about busses over the last five years that he never envisioned knowing. Through good days and bad it has been a pleasure to work with the members of the Board and former board members as well and he states what an incredible staff – from dark days where he forced all of you to be here all of Christmas week one year, and he apologizes for that again – to the advent of the Resource Team to the incredible staff at RIPTA for their work and leadership. He states he is proud to have been part of that the last five years. And again thanks everyone for the courtesies he has been shown during his tenure as a member of the Board and as the Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Durkee says that as the longest serving Board Member of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority and having had worked with 3 or 4 Chairs, he wants to say what an honor it has been to work with Mayor Avedisian. He states Mayor Avedisian has been incredibly diligent about the agency and we have made so many strides and done such great work. He thanks the Mayor for his time, it has been extraordinary.

Director Alviti says he wants to echo that and has been here one year with the Mayor but knows the history and knows where Mayor Avedisian has taken RIPTA from and to where it is and that he should be really proud of that accomplishment, it is quite a service to the public; he did a lot of public good here and even as a private citizen Director Alviti wants to thank the Mayor for his service.

Ms. Holland-McDuff says that as a board member who came on at the same time as the Mayor and served with him wants to recognize that it was a challenging time, but it was the right

leadership at the right time and says that Mayor got us through those murky and sometimes turbulent waters. She says it is also a sign of good leadership in knowing the talent that you have and that your support of Ray and the leadership team here has been incredible and has been the asset that they have been able to make the turnaround. She gives Mayor Avedisian credit for recognizing and supporting the talent.

Agenda Item 2: Public Comment

(Board members take public comments under advisement, but do not respond except for clarifications. Members may follow-up on public comments in writing post-meeting as permitted by applicable law.)

Mayor Avedisian invites Tom Cute to speak. Mr. Cute states that on behalf of the members of the 618 and 618A and he expresses deepest thanks for Mayor Avedisian's leadership over the past 5 years. These years have been difficult with sustainable funding and he states Mayor Avedisian championed mass transit in many corridors of the State House, federal level and staying in touch with him and his predecessor, Paul Harrington, any issue the Mayor got back to them. He is sorry to hear the news, but wishes Mayor Avedisian all the best and thanks him for his dedication to the employees but also to the people who use mass transit in the state, because without his leadership the past few years might have taken a different course.

Mayor Avedisian invites Sherri Dunham to speak. Ms. Dunham states she lives in North Providence and had just recently moved out of Crossroads and was there because she had a freak accident; she had an ACL and meniscus knee injury and went through physical therapy and multiple appointments at the Providence Center every week. She has not had an income for over a year; if she did not have her disability bus pass she would not have been able to get to any of her Providence Center appointments, her physical therapy appointment, or any of her orthopedic appointments. She doesn't know what she will do as of July 1st because she will end up walking, because even at 50 cents a bus, she does not have it to give.

Mr. Pereira states there are 15-16 people who have signed up to speak. Mayor Avedisian asks him to call the first one up.

Jeff Mello is invited to speak. Mr. Mello wishes Mayor Avedisian good luck. He says he doesn't make much money at all and knows a lot of people on the Board and knows a lot of the drivers; he knows a lot of people at RIPTA and wants to express his concern about the 50 cent ride program where they are taking away the no fare bus passes. He does not agree with that and would like the Board to think about maybe doing something else, because it does not seem fair to him that this company who makes millions of dollars, but takes what little money he and other like him make. He is talking about other people with disabilities and seniors and like another member of the audience, people who don't have much. He does not think it is fair to be asking them to help RIPTA out with its financial problems when we have a lot of our own. He thanks the Board for hearing him and hopes they listen and really hear him. He cannot drive and is desperate and RIPTA is his only way around.

Betty Alvarez is invited to speak. Ms. Alvarez states she has two kids, and has to take her kids to doctors and it will be hard because every day she won't be able to pay on the bus the money that they want me to pay; she says she cannot afford it. Her daughter has to take the bus every day to school and she has to put her son at the bus stop to take the school bus, but sometimes when he has appointments so it's hard.

Joseph Cole is invited to speak. Mr. Cole states he is sorry to see the Mayor go and that he has been one of the better Chairs that RIPTA has had and wishes he would stay. Mr. Cole says there are some service cuts that are on Agenda No. 10. The 52 line is very important. He

knows that they are going to interlock it with the 58, where 58 would come down Mineral Spring and take a right on Douglas and a left on Charles and then into the city, but you are going to be losing a lot of portion of Mineral Spring also, and while he thinks it might be good to keep 52, he would hate to see another line disappear. As far as the East Providence service that they want to reconstruct, they want to do a new hub in East Providence, but he feels a hub is a place by itself that stands with busses coming in and out. People standing for a bus, passengers using the Wampanoag Mall people are standing in front of Stop and Shop, it is already hard to get in and out traffic. You have people coming out of the market, and 9 times of out 10 when people come out of the market they never look for oncoming traffic the just push their carriage straight out. It is another accident waiting to happen. I know RIPTA said that the DOT has property behind the market that they might open up later, but he says do the hub first and the busses will follow. Or maybe they could use the Taunton Avenue park and ride and the drive by the market itself. Putting a lot of people in front of a market with no shelter and it is a fire lane; he does not see it as a good idea. Also the bus stops on Broad Street on the R-Line – one in front of McDonald's and the other is on the other side – Trinity Square – they are very bad bus stops, there was an accident not too long ago. We are doing a petition on the summer choose-up with all the drivers an alternative. He hopes something else can be done for the summer or fall choose-up to get those bus stops out of there.

Pozner Curry is invited to speak. Mr. Curry states he uses the bus to get his groceries and his medicine and he is not comfortable about these fares. He won't be able to afford transportation; it's uncomfortable for people won't be able to get around, people won't be able to get out of their house. He can't afford the bus pass, so he asks to leave the no fare on the bus pass.

Randall Rose is invited to speak next. Mr. Rose is a member of the RIPTA Riders Alliance and he says a lot of people are out there concerned about the fare increase. He says it is ridiculous that a lot of people can't even get in the room; he says he has seen the room more full than it is. The fare increase is going to cause a lot of people to have to limit the amount of traveling they do and he has heard that the expected elasticity is 37% meaning that 37% percent fewer trips will be taken by people subject to this increase. That is an average and for people who make a decent amount of money charging 50 cents wouldn't cause people to take fewer trips, because 50 cents is a small amount of money if you have enough already. But for the people who are on a limited income it is going to be more of an impact, meaning that a substantial number of people are going to cut back on the trips. Some people won't cut back on their trips at all; they will just find the money elsewhere by cutting back on some of their other expenses and some will cut back their trips by a lot more than 37%. But if you live on a limited income you can't afford this 50 cent bus fare without cutting back on other things and many people have told you that if someone is a senior on limited income or a disabled person cutting back their trips by 37% or more means they will be a lot more isolated. They will be able to get out for necessities but won't be able to visit your friends and family as much, and won't be able to go to the senior center as much. As a result, these people will have a lower quality of life because they will be stuck at home a lot more. That will lead to more medical problems later on, because isolation is a big risk factor for medical problems and will end up costing the state more in the long run; it won't save any money. It's dumb idea to try to raise more money by charging the most vulnerable people in Rhode Island. He says it has been affordable for 40 years and other states still afford it, we can continue to afford it, it's not that much money. He says further that sometimes people say that many other states don't give this benefit of free bus pass and that the federal guidelines don't require a free bus pass, but the problem is the federal guidelines about senior disabled fares are designed for programs that are not means-tested. The federal rules say you have to have at least half fare for off-peak senior and disabled travel but that is not a means-tested program. If you have a means-tested program, which is what Rhode Island

has always had, then it makes sense to have more of a discount because it is targeted better. So it is true that the federal rule, which is designed for non-means tested programs does not require free travel, but when you have a means tested program free travel makes a lot more sense. He does not know any other state that has a means tested program but still charges people a significant amount, which is what Rhode Island is planning to do and charge people 50 cents. That is unprecedented and totally unreasonable. and he also says that the plan is to not allow senior and disabled people to get any discount on bus passes, and if you are a regular rider, whether you are senior/disabled or not, you want to have monthly or weekly passes, people don't like to pay separately for a ride, if you are a regular rider you like to pay for the monthly or weekly passes, but the plan is not to give them any discount on monthly or weekly passes, so basically senior/disabled people on a limited income can't get any passes unless they are able to pay \$70 per month, nearly \$1000 per year, and that is unaffordable if you are on a limited income. Unless you are taking 140 trips per month, you are not going to be able to afford it but the main problem is regardless of whether the monthly pass has a reasonable discount or not the main problem is senior and disabled people on limited income cannot a lot of travel – whatever you charge them is going to mean a cutback in their quality of life and that is why Rhode Island has had this reasonable free bus pass program so long, and it's really important to get it to continue and he hopes that the RIPTA Board will support efforts to remove Logisticare so that we can save the money we waste on Logisticare now, and if the board will support efforts to set up a separate entity that can handle Logisticare's work so we have two different entities supported by the state that will divide the broker and operator rules and satisfy CMS and if the Board supports that effort with RIPTA and one other entity then the state budget will not have to pay for Logisticare's rip-off, and it will be a lot easier to afford continuing this program of free bus fares we have had for many years. He hears people in the statehouse have some interest in getting rid of Logisticare and setting up a new entity whether it is a quasi-public or some other entity that will take over Logisticare's function, but having the Board support that would be very helpful. It could perhaps share staff with RIPTA, lots of ways to do it, it could be a quasi public or a state chartered corporation with or without the Governor appointing, lots of ways to do it, set up a non-profit or affiliate with RIPTA. Have some way for people to indicate when they travel whether they are going to a Medicaid eligible appointment or not – there are ways to set that up so that can be reimbursed properly even while continuing the free bus fare program.

Arthur Morelli is invited to speak. Mr. Morelli states he is from Johnston and is a member is the RIPTA Riders Alliance and says he wants to compliment Mayor Avedisian for running a very professional meeting with patience to everyone who spoke, interspersed with humor and good will to everyone. He always enjoys coming to these meetings and thanks Mayor Avedisian. Mr. Morelli continues by saying that isolation is the single greatest threat to senior's health and longevity. Not keeping the no-fare bus passes will have the unintended consequence of increasing the state's Medicaid costs and be a disaster for the thousands of vulnerable riders. Senator Harold Metts said it may seem unfair to those of us who are doing okay, but those who are on a fixed budget, it is devastating. He applauds Representative Scott Slater for sponsoring a bill that would remove the Rhode Island Public Transit Authorities bus fare hikes against the most underserved of Rhode Island's population who rely upon public transportation. He also praises Senator Juan Picardo for sponsoring his bill. The most extensive research in the past half century from Yale health professor Elizabeth Bradley published in her book, The Health Paradox, she concludes the jury is no longer out, the more money you spend on social services like no fare bus passes the less money it costs the state in the long run. Rhode Island is an outlier in the fact that our state has the highest per capita age 85 plus popular of any state, which will more than triple by 2060, the fastest growth of any age group. The Jewish Voice,

April 2016, front page article, "Poverty Among Rhode Island Senior Citizens is a Large and Growing Concern," they struggle with living on the edge of poverty. 40% are more likely to experience congestive heart failure, 53% are more likely to report a heart attack and 60% are likely to experience depression. There are elders living in beautiful homes who are living hand-to-mouth, Jewish seniors who would love to come to Temple services and events but who don't have the money to spend on transportation. So says Temple Sinai's Rabbi Jeff Goldwasser who also spoke at RIPTA's November hearing; he said – as a matter of faith I ask you to continue the no-fare bus passes for 14,000 low-income seniors and people with disabilities who rely on the no-fare bus passes for every-day transportation needs. There really is a realization that for many seniors even a 50 cent increase is impossible on budgets already stretched desperately thin. On the 50 cent increase Governor Raimondo said, if your only way to get to the doctor's is the public bus and you don't have 50 cents times however many times a week you have to go to the doctor, that is a public health problem. Senator President Paiva Weed supports the no-fare bus programs and said, I'd like to see the 50 cent fee eliminated completely, as does Senator Metts and Senator Pichardo.

Doris Finnigan speaks next. Mr. Finnigan says she is here because there are an awful lot of people -- she pays rent herself -- but there are people who really don't have that kind of money and they might be in a wheelchair, they may have bad sciatic nerves like her. She fell out of a second floor window and had bad injuries to her body, but she can walk and talk because she makes herself do these things. But a lot of people don't, so there are a lot of people who really need the bus passes and don't always...she pays the fare when she does not have her bus pass ...but she is speaking for the people who don't have that and some are out there because they are drug infested or whatever, but that is on them. She is here for people who really need these things and who need to go to doctors or go to out of town to visit their children or something like that.

Dora Piavia speaks next. Ms. Piavia says she does not want the fare to pass and if it does it will affect her whole life; she does not have a job she is disabled; her rent is \$700, so she needs this transportation and she's not the only one; the outside is full of people and the ones that could not make it she feels bad for them so their vote should matter. She really hopes that the Board thinks really hard about the 75 cents, it might not mean a lot to the board but it's a lot when you got to take trips all day, it adds up. I only get \$73 to live on a month, it doesn't work.

Marie Robideau speaks next. Ms. Robideau says it is not fair for the elderly that they have to pay 50 cents to go to the grocery store and then come back. It's unfair for the wheelchair people to do the same thing.

Cecil Sherman speaks next. Ms. Sherman states she is here to speak for her mother who is 69 and disabled and who just had her 3rd heart attack and breast cancer, and is on cardio watch so has her blood level tested and it could be a 2 hour notice, but Logisticare wants 48 hours notice when you go to the doctor and she after paying her rent, her medication, her food, clothes how is she going to be able to afford 50 centers for the bus. This is her issue, basically without the INR appointments without her oncology appointments and her PCP which happens to be in Coventry, so that is 3 busses, doing the math back and forth to Providence. She says they are putting a nail in her mother's coffin, she hates to say it but that is how it looks to the family. If she can't have a bus pass there is no way she is going to be able to get to these doctors appointments. She is sorry if she offended anyone, but that is how it looks to some of these elderly who cannot afford it after they worked their butt off. She says it's a shame that the

school kids get free bus passes, all walking around with I-phones and Jordans, why don't they start paying for bus passes.

Christina Tate speaks next. Ms. Tate says she is from Providence and worked all her life since she was 14 years old. She just recently stopped working because she had back surgeries and a hip replacement. RIPTA gives her independence to get out and do things she needs to do without asking for help; sometimes you can ask and you don't even be heard. But she depends on RIPTA to get around, she volunteers at the Church 3 times a week, it will stop her from getting out and being around people and her depression is going to rise up. She asks them to have a heart for the people that worked all their lives or the disabled handicapped it's going to hurt a lot of people. She thanks God for each and everyone and asks them to please find it in their heart to forgive the fare.

David Eisenburger speaks next. Mr. Eisenburger says there has been about a year to prepare for this as it was announced June 30; he says it would be nice to have transparency because nobody has mentioned the alleged 50 cents, if is it every single time you get on the bus? Or is it with a transfer which would be more equitable, more cost efficient for the people who are less fortunate and there is a lot of work to be done. He is not complaining about it because he has traveled a lot in this country and this transit system is going to work, but we all have to have solidarity on it too.

Barbara Freiteis speaks next. Ms. Freiteis is the Director of the Rhode Island Homeless Advocacy Project. She says RIHAP finds this bus fare hike unacceptable and it is extremely unfair to our folks that depend on bus transportation on a daily basis. The most important point she wants to make is the most affected demographic are already struggling financially and now they would be asked to take on additional stressors. Choosing between going to the grocery store, a doctor's appointment, pharmacy to pick up needed medication, seems to be an unacceptable position to put any person in, especially our folks that have the least. From a homeless advocacy viewpoint if our folks that need to travel to and from shelters - we do nightly homeless outreach – they do not have the money to do so they may be put in the position to panhandle. I think we all know how we all feel about the panhandling situation and they are going to have to panhandle to raise this money. If people are unable to raise these funds they may be put in the serious position of sleeping outside, another unacceptable thing. So while RIHAP understands that RIPTA is trying to fix their financial lows, the people that they serve who are elderly, disabled and/or homeless will find themselves in the position of giving up the most while they really have the least. We have outreach workers who are volunteers to help the homeless and they travel by bus to get to downtown, to the south side, and now she says she will have to ask them to pay to do this volunteer work. She says it will affect their outreach and they work in collaboration with the Coalition for the Homeless, this is a problem and this is going to affect our homeless folks in a huge way. She understands that it needs to be fixed in some way, but we are just asking the people who have the absolute least to give up so much and we will find people have to make choices of going to the doctor or going to the grocery store. If they can't get their needed medication they will end up in ER's; adding more people to the ER's and they won't be able to see their doctor and they have all been asked to go to the doctor rather than the ER, so now we are going to have sick people and it's unfair.

Anna Cruz is next to speak. Ms. Cruz states she volunteers at McCauley House and anyone who needs it in the street. She wants to let the Board know that Providence already has had the first crime of the year which is really good so far. This is going to increase believe it or not

these people the homeless have no money and they will start stealing, a lot of people don't see that. There is going to be more crimes just for that 50 cents fare, they will have to get the money to get to the food kitchen, to their shelter; some of them want to get a job, they cannot get a job if they don't have bus passes. There are issues that are not seen, but will affect everyone; if you live on the East Side or downtown; because you might be the next target. Ms. Cruz states she is out there and she sees and hears everything that goes on. Handicapped people come out to get their food, they won't do that because they don't have the 50 cents. Their social security is maybe \$700 or \$200-\$300, that's all they are going to get and they have to pay their medication also. A lot of people are worried out there, and you will hear about it. We want to keep it as it is. Try to keep these people busy and moving, if they have to go to the soup kitchen, the doctor.

Don Rhodes speaks next. Mr. Rhodes states that 5 years ago he also started a journey when Mayor Avedisian started and wants to thank him for his acceptance and openness in letting us have our say, when we were a little group known as the RIPTA riders before their incorporation and before their funds and some of the other benefits they have. He wants to thank Mayor Avedisian for that time and patience. He also wants to state that at past board meetings people in audience in the back cannot hear. He asks everyone who is part of the board to be aware and know that they do listen. There were lots of hearings at the state house last week and he noticed that there were no board members at the meetings. He has put in an application to be considered for the RIPTA Authority; he says he would attend those hearings at the state house. One of the hearings he attended was about their RIPTA board reform bills, and the bill would require that the Board of Directors be comprised of a full-time RIPTA rider and a full time elderly, handicapped person to be on the board. He states he's been coming here since 2012. The other bill was on the fare hike situation, and a lot of the testimony is valuable. If the bus pass were to go through, the frequency and amount of time that he spends here and at the state house would be cut because those bus trips are not covered. He found the Medicare and Logisticare does not cover and he was surprised at some of them, one of which was cosmetic surgery. He states the cosmetic surgery also includes any kind of gum disease or any kind of disease, which he says is not cosmetic but those rides would not be covered. He gives further examples of medical services and what is covered and what is not. He finishes up by saying that passing this fare increase onto the people that can least afford it, is not the right direction to go.

Next to speak is Margie Santil. Ms. Santil thanks the board for their time. She says to think about this as if it were your mother or other family member and their life here in Rhode Island and being elderly or handicapped if they had no way or could not even afford to get a soup kitchen. She feels there are other ways to raise money besides taxing poor people who don't have much.

Next to speak is Sheila Robertson. Ms. Robertson says she has been riding RIPTA since the 1960's. She now lives in Central Falls and has to take 3 busses, one to downtown Pawtucket, takes the R-Line, and if she needs to go to the Elmwood Avenue area, that is 3 busses. She says she is not out every day, and she feels that 50 cents to ride the bus is not fair – she has to pay rent, utilities and by the time she pays all that there is hardly anything left. If she has a few dollars she goes to the Dollar Tree and gets cleaning products and that's it. She feels that RIPTA needs to not raise the fare. She has medical issues and doesn't want to feel like a prisoner in her own home; she needs to get out. She also wants to say that the busses need to be cleaned.

Next to speak is Marjorie Waters. Ms. Waters works for the Rhode Island Organizing Project. They have been working on this issue since last June when it was first announced and there are a lot of misconceptions about what people are using their bus pass for and she hears that often the first thing people say is they use it for medical appointments because they feel that is the most urgent and the most compelling, but when she speaks to them further, it is really going shopping 3 or 4 times a week because the elderly can't carry more than 2 bags at a time; it is volunteering, going to church, watching their grand children, taking care of sick relatives. Those are the things that are most in jeopardy and additionally there will be increased isolation, food insecurity. The overall cost of medical care in Rhode Island will go up.

Eric Vinas speaks next. Mr. Vinas says he does not think this is a good idea what is going to be done. Usually he takes the bus to appointments and he goes shopping, visiting people. He states he does not have a car, or a license, and he thinks it is going to affect me because he cannot afford the fare. He knows a lot of people who feel the same way. He wants RIPTA to understand that they need the elderly disabled bus passes to be free.

Ele Felaco speaks next. Ms. Felaco states she has not be to the board meeting since December and brought with her the minutes from the December board meeting, when all these people turned out to try to convince the board not to implement the fare on the low-income elderly and disabled. And at that time we found out that the decision had already been made, that it was not going to be a \$1, it would be 50 cents. We also found out that the Governor wants the RIPTA board to find a way to bring it down to zero. She states that is not what is in the minutes, according to the minutes, RIPTA has no intention of doing that because you can't get anything for the medical trips if you don't charge something. RIPTA can't get anything for medical transportation if there is no charge to people who are taking medical trips. Ms. Felaco states there has to be a solution to this problem, when the state of Rhode Island has a surplus and there is so much money coming in from lottery tickets. Such as when there is a power ball winner, there was an astronomical power ball recently and she does not know how much went into the general fund for that. There has to be a way to fund this, because she does not have the money to go on RIPTA and has cut back already. But she can't cut it out entirely and she is now using Logisticare, but there is a problem with them. She had to get her medical provider to certify that she can't walk the 2 miles that Logisticare expects you to be able to walk, and if you can walk you are supposed to take the fixed route to get to your appointment. She cannot do that, and only has to give Logisticare 48 hours notice, but there are times when she can't and if an appointment gets changed and she doesn't have the 48 hours, then she doesn't know what to do. She says that Logisticare says it covers 70 trips, but they don't want to cover any trips, they are doing what they can to discourage people. She has heard people say they have been told by Logisticare that they need to find a medical provider that is closer so they don't have to drive them as far. She doesn't know when she will be back unless something is doing to stop the 50 cent increase.

Mark Susa, board member thanks the speakers and wants to follow up on with Mark Therrien after the last ATAC meeting in April and the advertisement on Lite Rock 105 of going to RIPTA in Kennedy Plaza and for the RIde people and getting a new RIPTA bus pass which has been changed and going to the RIde building on Elmwood Avenue and that it will be open on Thursdays. He also wishes Mayor Avedisian good luck.

Lewis Jerateis speaks next. Mr. Jerateis states RIPTA is helping the clean water, clean air act and also the social security act and improving the standards of the United States of America. It

is also eliminating the problems encountered by this country and the traffic jams. We need clean air not only for the elderly but also for pre-school children. We are better off encouraging passengers to use the public transportation system.

Wendy Thomas speaks next. Ms. Thomas is disabled and has medical issues; she volunteers and works with those who don't have much, and she states the soup kitchens will be down to about ½ a many helpers as they have now, and the people who need the soup kitchens won't be able to get to them. She states she can't carry more than 5 pounds how can she go grocery shopping having to pay 50 cents a ride? How will she get to her doctors when she has 3 days a week physical therapy? They figured it out at one of their meetings, when it was at \$1, it was a 7000% increase; so at 50 cents it has to be a 3500% increase, and that is unheard of. She asks why it is being taken from the people that need it the most -- something has to be done, you are causing people to be housebound, resulting in depression and more medical problems.

Doris Finnigan speaks again. Ms. Finnigan wants to speak about the lady who needs more than just public transportation and she feels that she has to get on the bus when she goes to the hospital. She states that she uses the bus to go to the hospital and there are some times she can barely walk, but instead of calling the rescue she gets on the bus. She lives 6-8 blocks from the city but sometimes she can't walk that far because of the pain. She has also seen bus drivers being assaulted and she does not think those people should be allowed back on the bus at all.

Don Rhodes speaks again. He says he didn't want to take up all the issues until other people had spoken but in addition to the importance of the fare hikes, we have to start paying attention to the Pawtucket Hub situation because right now the second biggest hub in the state, 10,000 people a day and putting those people on the street with shoddy shelters, when plane and train riders don't have to deal with that. And Kennedy Plaza continues to go downhill unless the city can come up with some money so it can be safe for RIPTA people to service their passengers.

Agenda Item 3: CEO Report

Mayor Avedisian welcomes Mr. Studley to present the CEO report. Mr. Studley states that the last few meetings we have discussed issues at Kennedy Plaza. We have been meeting with the City to discuss the problems at Kennedy Plaza which have gotten worse, progressively worse. Usually with the warmer weather it is more crowded there. Mr. Studley states they are in the process of arranging to have security there. We were hoping to start by Memorial Day, but due to the training needed it will likely start the second week of June. We will have a supervisor and a security officer - one on the inside of the building and one walking the Plaza, for 12 hours Monday through Friday and Saturdays from 9 to 5. We have met with Providence Police and informed them of what we did and they were very happy with that. We will monitor it for 6 months or so and see how it goes.

Mr. Durkee asks for information about the company. Mr. Studley states the company is AlliedBarton and they represent at 13 or 14 transit properties so they are familiar with it. The personnel will work with Mr. Tierney and Mr. Pereira and we will advise them of what the rules and regulations are. We have met with the City and we have the different ordinances that they can enforce. They do not have arrest powers, but they will be of great help to the Providence Police. Inside the building has been very difficult for our Street Supervisors to deal with.

Mayor Avedisian asks Mr. Studley if the officers have a contact person in the Police Department? Mr. Studley states that Mr. Tierney and Mr. Pereira have worked with this company before and we do have a Lieutenant that runs that area so we want to be able to have

them observe to be able to take video and if they do see a crime, take photos and provide that to the police. The police have said there has been an exorbitant amount of drug dealing, hand-to-hand drug activity, during the day over in Burnside Park and in the Plaza. Mr. Studley states a lot of business owners on Fulton Street were at a meeting they are coordinating security at the front of their buildings and he wants to reach out to them and look into that for us. Because if we are going to use AlliedBarton in Kennedy Plaza, maybe we could all have one security group in the Plaza.

Director Alviti asks Mr. Studley about his comment about increased number of drug activities and that the Providence Police know about it, and yet they haven't agreed to step up their presence there?

Mr. Studley responds that the Providence Police have stepped up their presence; in fact they just did an undercover operation and made about 30 arrests, but those investigations do take a lengthy amount of time. Part of the issue is the police department right now has two academies and those are a long process obviously; they have increased the presence there, but when you look at the city of Providence they don't just focus on Kennedy Plaza, they focus on Waterplace Park so they may have 6 or 7 police officers there, but those officers have to worry about the Biltmore, over by the Westin, walking by the Mall and those areas.

Mr. Durkee states there are bike cops, beat cops, like that; but they are 80 short.

Mr. Studley states that is correct. Director Alviti asks how many security guards there will be and Mr. Studley responds that there will be 2, 7 days a week.

Ms. Bomba asks if the times listed, based on Mr. Studley's reach, are considered high peak crime times. Mr. Studley says that 7am to 7pm and then from 8 to 4 and 3 to 7 are the busiest times. Ms. Bomba asks if this is then when have police officers present? Mr. Studley says that sparingly they are down there, and it needs to be addressed, he does not think they will have police radios but we will keep as much data as we can so we can provide that to the police department to try and help them with investigations. Folks that are trespassing and don't belong there, things like that.

Mr. Durkee asks if the security guards will be primarily in the Plaza. Mr. Studley states yes, they will only be in the Plaza, they will not be in Burnside Park.

Mr. Studley says in answer to Director Alviti's question...in our Intermodal facility last week there were several card games, open alcohol containers inside the building. We are going to maintain the Intermodal facility and then walking the bus shelters and berths just in the Plaza.

Director Alviti asks what the security people will be able to do when they encounter a drug transaction or a card game? Mr. Studley states if they are in our building, they are trespassing if they are not there for transit use and we would be able to ask them to leave, and if they don't want to leave we will call the police department and let the police respond.

Director Alviti asks if a coordination plan is set up with the police for that notification to happen? Mr. Studley says that yet we have met with the police and have more meetings over the next two weeks to determine the best approach to that is. The police are on board and they welcome the extra help.

Mayor Avedisian states that Mr. Pereira and Mr. Tierney met with Major Verdi to talk about what the priorities need to be, but unless it has changed, there will not be dedicated police officers for the Plaza.

Director Alviti states his concern is around future projects; there was discussion previously about a new bus hub up and around Rhode Island Hospital and there are ongoing discussions about a new bus hub at the train station

Mayor Avedisian states that at the train station there will be uniformed Amtrak police as a regular presence in the training station. Director Alviti states then the bus hub will need protection, and the one at Rhode Island Hospital. Mr. Studley says yes, potentially, it is more a

comfort station. But this is a good opportunity for us to see how this works with AlliedBarton – they currently do 14 transit properties and work in conjunction with LAPD, so I think it’s a good opportunity and why we discussed it. Knowing those projects are forthcoming is this going to work and if it doesn’t work what is the next solution.

Director Alviti asks about the cost. Mr. Studley responds that it is approximately \$2,800 to \$3,000 a week for two people for 136 hours of security; less than what was being paid when he first got to RIPTA and they had to put security on the property. Mr. Studley continues that it is much less expensive than hiring police and we will try to see if we can capitalize some of that in working with other transit properties. The security company AlliedBarton determine how well the property is doing, with consulting and data collection we may be able to get 80% in federal funding. We are going to sign a contract for 6 months and see how it works.

Mr. Durkee states this is definitely an issue and a rising concern. Collectively the board members agree and further Mr. Durkee states there is a conversation with the Mayor’s office about perhaps we have the airport police who have arrest powers and do we start to work with the administration and start broadening that to become a state transportation police, and also take on bus transit. There needs to be a new look at this concern.

The board members and Mr. Studley continue discussing security options and funding for same.

Mr. Studley also wants to inform the board that Planning, Ms. Pettine and Ms. Picchione, have worked really hard on two discretionary grants one for just over \$5 million for the Pawtucket Bus Hub, which was mentioned in public comment, we have worked with Director Alviti’s staff submitting an application for the train station hub in Pawtucket, which will allow us to build our hub in conjunction with the train station. We are hopeful to get an answer late summer or early fall.

The second discretionary grant we filed to FTA for a NOLO was submitted for \$2.8 million to buy 14-15 hybrid V-8 buses with fuel power as well. We will find out about those hopefully in the next week and add those to the purchase that we have for 2018.

Agenda Item 4: Comprehensive General Liability Insurance Policy

Mr. Salzillo presents the Comprehensive General Liability Insurance Policy, which is a policy that we carry every year. Basically if someone trips and falls on one of our properties or gets injured this will provide coverage for that. It is \$1 million per occurrence with a \$2 million aggregate. Previously we had a policy which only covered designated facilities; this is a broad form policy which covers every one of our facilities regardless of whether it is designated in the schedule. It is a good thing for us to have. We did obtain competitive quotes and this was the best we get from Admiral Insurance at a cost of \$138,000 and change. We request the board to approve entering into this contract.

Ms. Preston states she thought RIPTA was self insured. Mr. Salzillo responds that RIPTA is self-insured for auto liability only. Mr. Salzillo states that it is prohibitively expensive to be insured for auto liability, and this type of policy makes sense for us from a risk management perspective to buy this coverage.

Mayor Avedisian responds that RIPTA has looked into whether there might be a consortium as regional transit agencies that we could all buy together, but that doesn’t exist; we thought maybe if we get enabling legislation passed the RI Interlocal Risk Management Trust could cover us, but they are not allowed to cover state entities or quasi-publics.

Mr. Durkee makes a motion to approve, Director Alviti seconds and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Generator for 269 Melrose Street

Mr. Vendetti presents the proposal which was submitted from him and the Facilities Program Committee which identifies and looks at critical infrastructure equipment. We have been tasked with that since last August and as you can see a lot of the repairs which have been done over the last 10 months are underway as of today the last portion that we wanted to look at under our critical infrastructure was putting a standalone generator for uninterrupted power source that would supply our data room and our dispatch center, in the event that we had a blackout or a loss of power. We believe this is critical to have a redundant power-source and fits into line with our business continuity plan as well. We are recommending that Commercial Electric be awarded this contract for \$175,404.

Mr. Durkee asks who prepared the specifications for the bid? Mr. Vendetti states that an architect and engineering firm drafted it and we incorporated natural gas so we would not have to worry about maintenance over the years as well as the fuel supply source.

Mr. Durkee moves to approve, Ms. Preston seconds and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 6: Trash Disposal Services

Mr. McGrane presents and requests the award the contract to Republic Services of Fall River, Massachusetts to provide trash disposal services for all the Authority's facilities at an average annual cost of \$26,485.36. It is a 3 year contract with up to 2 annual renewal options to be exercised at the sole discretion of the Authority. Bid was issued March 4 and was publically advertised, bids were received on April 6. Three companies submitted bids; Republic Services submitted the lowest responsive bid. It is funded by operating funds, and we ask permission to award it.

Ms. Preston states that if in the future if the board can be informed if it is a budgeted or unbudgeted item and that it be standardized, it would be helpful. Mr. McGrane states that this is currently in the budget.

Ms. Holland-McDuff asks what the current annual cost is; Mr. McGrane states it is about \$40,000, but they were able to negotiate some price reductions.

Ms. Holland-McDuff moves to approve, Ms. Preston seconds and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 7: Financial Audit

Mr. Dilorio states the Board of Directors is requested to approve the award of a 3 year contract with Bacon & Co. of Warwick Rhode Island to provide the annual services to RIPTA for the Fiscal Years ending 6/30/2016, 6/30/2017 and 6/30/2018. The total cost of the audit will be \$175,250 plus a negotiated fee for the single, as required, per the Auditor General Bid Specifications.

The RFP was issued February 23, 2016 and was advertised via the electronic media. Three proposals were received on March 23, 2016. The proposal evaluation committee was held on March 31, 2016, and the committee unanimously recommends the award of the contract to Bacon & Company. The audit bid specifications and approval were attached to the Staff Summary. The Prior 3 year contract services were awarded to Bacon & Company at \$88,500 plus a negotiated fee for the single audit of approximately \$9,000 annually. The current contract included the audit of RIPTA's pension plan, which was under a separate contract for Fiscal Years ended 6/30/14 and 6/30/15 at \$35,000 to Cohn, Reznick.

Funding is from the RIPTA Operating Funds and funding for the pension audit is from the assets of the pension plan. RIPTA is required by law to have the annual audits.

Recommend to award the 3 year contract to Bacon & Company.
Mr. Durkee moves to approve, Ms. Holland-McDuff seconds and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 8: Exchange Upgrade Project

Ms. LeClerc states the request is to amend the project that was approved in March, 2016 and will save money, with a cost savings of \$8,909.24. Ms. LeClerc states she has been going back and forth with Dell with different options on how we could buy our licenses and in doing that we realized we could get it less expensive from Dell. We are switching the Exchange licenses from Custom Computer to Dell to buy all the software from Dell. Custom will still do the implementation and the hardware.

Mr. Durkee moves to approve, Ms. Holland-McDuff seconds and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 9: Cantilever Rolling Ladder

Mr. Harwood states that this is a safety ladder., We have a safety harness for our mechanics, and to work above six foot height mainly because of the hybrid busses we need access to the roof area of the bus, meaning on the roof, so they have to wear a safety harness, and the only way to get that harness on and to get on the bus is to have a safe way to get up. So it is more a stairwell ladder -- that is the cantilever type for access to work on the vehicles.

No vote is necessary because this was inadvertently put on the agenda.

Agenda Item 10: Fall Service Changes

Ms. Pettine states there are a series of service restructuring changes to improve service in several communities primarily in East Providence – Providence area. Last month Mr. Morgan gave an extensive presentation to give you the heads up. This is an update since we last saw you, we did hold five 5 public hearings and posted a 30 day comment period during that time. About 43 people attended the hearings; we received about two dozen oral comments, three written and twelve other via email or letter. Two hearings were held in East Providence, one at the library on the East Side, one at the DaVinci Center near Branch Avenue, where we were proposing to eliminate a route segment and one here at RIPTA. In general it was great discussion; we were interested in what people had to say. We were selling the primary benefit of expanding our East Providence service to Seekonk and serving the new Lifespan facility on Wampanoag Trail; creating a high-frequency trunk corridor going from East Providence through the East Side and into Downtown. Re-routing Route 92 from Rhode Island College to service the jewelry district and create a new connection that way over the Point Street Bridge in anticipation of the growth on the East Side. Restructuring of removing the duplicate service between Route 50 and 52 to create similar to what we have on the 20, what we call shorts and longs, along Douglas Avenue to improve service onto Bryant University and they did write a letter in support of these changes. The big concern was the impact of a short stretch of Branch Avenue, not terribly long, but over 90 boardings a day and vulnerable populations there. That is why we held a meeting at the DaVinci Center and we got some good feedback not only from people in the area but people on the route 58 line which is what we were proposing to re-route to cover a portion of that. With that feedback we are proposing some modifications to the changes - we outlined it in the staff summary, but basically starting in East Providence – we are not reducing any frequency in the 32, 33 or 34, we heard that loud and clear from folks. We are only eliminating one stop in East Providence, but is walkable to another stop. The East Side trunk we were able to get 15 minute frequency and over on the other side we are restructuring

the 58 to actually cover that entire length of Branch Avenue, so no lost service. We will start the new 58 line on Saturdays as well, which is something we heard from folks. There are some minor changes independent of this we would have never brought it before you, but we are going to be making some route segment elimination on a portion of Mineral Spring Avenue and eliminating one deviation into a senior high rise, we will be going back out to do some informational sessions to inform people of the changes. They are minor and don't elevate to a hearing process but to be consistent and transparent we want to make sure we go back out. We did a Title VI analysis because through these changes the elimination of Branch Ave we did determine it to have a disparate impact on minorities. We attempted to mitigate it somewhat and now we are mitigating it fully by these changes. That full report is attached to the staff summary.

This is a cost-neutral proposal we are looking to serve new markets, strengthen some underperforming routes and making the system easier and simpler to use so we don't have to make these changes. We are requesting approval to move forward for the fall.

Mr. Durkee inquires about the trunk being 15 minutes and goes through the tunnel. Ms. Pettine states that is correct, taking 3 East Providence routes that were going on 195, swapping them, and coordinating them with the 40 and eliminating the 92. Ms. Pettine says she can't say enough about staff who worked really hard on this.

Ms. Preston inquires about what kicks off a hearing process? Ms. Pettine responds that there are two indicators – one is in our enabling legislation, which she believes states if it is a 15 percent change overall in service hours, not defined if it is the system or lines, so we usually are generous with that interpretation. Anything that we feel is going to have a major impact. The other piece that triggers the hearing process is the Title VI plan, which we write and those are our own standards which we adhere to that the FTA approved and we have thresholds for major and minor service changes. We put notice in the newspaper with a 30 day comment period.

Ms. Preston also states that she appreciates the detail behind it, she finds it difficult to digest and doesn't know if there is improvement opportunity to just either bottom line or provide analysis, because even after all this she knows that there were 5 hearings but doesn't know how many written comments, how many people showed up and maybe the top 6 themes. Ms. Pettine responds that she starting to prepare that in the staff summary, however, it was becoming very long and we wanted to talk about what we ended up.

Ms. Holland-McDuff states that it is a job well done and also wanted to say that Mr. Cole during public comment mentioned about Stop & Shop, where she frequents, and she wants to commend the drivers that have to go in there because they have to constantly stop because people just walk right out. There is discussion between board members and Ms. Pettine about the area and that the level of service has not changed in there. Ms. Pettine states that there is some potential to move the bus stop nearby to offset some of the impact on the plaza and make it easier for the busses to get in and out.

Director Alviti moves to approve, Ms. Preston seconds and it passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 11: Update to Newport Gateway Project

Ms. Picchione states this is an update on the project, in its early days it was just a repair project for the broken tent covers and the pavilion. We have been working to bring this to a conceptual design and the project was approved and the funding at this point is \$6 million with the City of Newport. We have a change order in order to get the 80 on the same level as the larger project and in that process we realized that we would need to re-bid as that was the best way forward. It will include some new expertise - repaving the bus way, signage, lighting, community engagement levels. We do not want to delay the project and the FTA has made it clear that

they don't want us to delay the project, we recently advertised a contract. The firm that is selected will be asked to work from that budgeted concept and continue to work with the City of Newport and the design review committee to get those design documents. We are not afraid of losing time overall, it was largely developed during the changeover process this spring. In the interim Ms. Picchione talks about the additional work that has been done. She states the next time it will be for the award of Phase 2. Ms. Pettine states they are splitting it into 2 phases, originally the board approved what we thought would be one phase and we are now making it 2, so you are not surprised in anticipation of that.

Agenda Item 12: **Executive Session to consider, discuss and act upon such matters as may be closed to the public pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(2) regarding issues related to collective bargaining.**

Mayor Avedisian states next item on the agenda is a collective bargaining matter. Mr. Durkee reads the law to go into Executive Session.

Ms. Holland-McDuff makes the motion to enter into Executive Session and the motion is seconded by Ms. Preston and a roll call vote was taken. The motion to convene into Executive Session passes unanimously.

Agenda Item 13: **Adjournment**

Mayor Avedisian asks for a motion to seal the Executive Session minutes. Director Alviti makes a motion to seal the minutes from Executive Session and Ms. Bomba seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Mr. Durkee makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Holland-McDuff seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cyndi Mason
Recording Secretary