

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority (“Authority”) was held via Zoom on Wednesday, April 7, 2021.

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The meeting was called to order at 8:30 A.M. by Acting Chair, Judith M. Morse.

**Members Present:**

Judith M. Morse, Acting Chair  
Darrell Waldron  
Peter Alviti, Jr. P.E., Ex Officio

**Members Absent:**

None

**Invited Guests:**

Lori Caron Silveira, Executive Director  
Eric Seabury, P.E., Director of Engineering  
Kathryn O’Connor, Director of Tolling and Operations  
Jeff Goulart, Chief Financial Officer  
Toni Gubata, Controller  
Stephen Cahill, Manager of Safety and Security  
Marianne Durgin, Executive Assistant to the Director  
Raphe Sciola, Senior Administrative Assistant  
Remmy Villacis, Network Technician  
Frank Flowers, Manager of Maintenance  
Bill O’Gara, Legal Counsel  
Brian Lamoureux, Legal Counsel  
Giselle Mahoney, Account Executive, RDW

**Item No. 2**

**Public Comment** – There were no public comments.

**Item No. 3**

Motion by Peter Alviti, Jr., seconded by Darrell Waldron, passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2021 Board meeting.

**Item No. 4**

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., passed unanimously to approve Pannone Lopes Devereaux & O’Gara LLC, invoices for professional services dated March 2021 in the amount of \$40,467.98.

**Item No. 5**

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., passed unanimously to approve the tentative agreement with the union addressing the wage/healthcare reopener for the CBA 2020 – 2023. The revenue benchmarks for the potential wage increase in year one were not met, so the union received no wage increase. The agreement is for a 1% increase effective July 1, 2021 along with a 1% increase retroactive to July 1, 2020. The approximate cost is \$40,000. In addition, the agreement includes a potential wage increase effective January 1, 2022, tied to pre-COVID traffic benchmarks. In April 2022, the parties will meet to negotiate wages and health benefits for the third year of the 2020 -2023 CBA. Director Alviti requested that a report of the planned transition to All-Electronic Tolling (AET) and

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its anticipated impact on the CBA be provided to the Board. The Executive Director indicated there is detailed language in the 2020 – 2023 CBA that addresses the transition to All-Electronic Tolling. A report will be provided which will include the long-range plans for displaced employees, costs, policy changes, etc. Later, a follow up report addressing attrition rate, retirement policies, etc. will be provided.

#### Item No. 6

Motion by Peter Alviti, Jr., seconded by Darrell Waldron, passed unanimously to approve of a task order for ATANE to conduct the load ratings of the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge and the Hummocks Avenue Bridge at a cost not to exceed \$198,298.91. This work will be performed under Contract 19-10 – On-Call Professional Engineering Inspection Services.

#### Item No. 7

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., passed unanimously to approve of a task order amendment for Collins Engineers, Inc. to perform Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) of Pier 5W on the Newport Pell Bridge at a cost not to exceed \$45,957. This task order amendment will be completed within the current contract budget. While Collins was performing underwater inspection of the repair work being done by Aetna Bridge under Contract 19-04, Miscellaneous Repairs to Newport Pell and Jamestown Verrazzano Bridges, they discovered that further evaluation of the concrete footing conditions on the Pell was warranted.

**Revisited Public Comment Period: Zoom host asked all to unmute themselves. No public comment**

#### Item No. 8

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., passed unanimously to approve of a task order for WSP, under Contract 19-9, On-Call Professional Engineering Services, to perform a comprehensive review and update of the Ten-Year Renewal and Replacement Plan at a cost not to exceed \$114,875. The plan will also include a “Plan of Finance” which will lay out the financing of each of the projects.

**Director of Engineering Eric Seabury - Capital Projects Status Report:** A summary of all current projects was included in the Board materials. This month Director Seabury highlighted the following:

- Bridge Electrical and Communications Upgrades (Pell and Mt. Hope): EW Audet, Inc. is the contractor, and the work has included running fiber optic cables across the Mt. Hope and Newport Pell Bridges. The work on Mt. Hope is complete. The work remaining is the termination of the fiber optic cables on Pell. The project is projected to finish approximately \$125,000 under budget.
- Partial Depth Deck Replacement on Newport Pell: Aetna Bridge is doing the final grinding and sealing of the bridge deck and the project should be completed in about two to three weeks.
- Miscellaneous and On-Call Repairs – Newport Pell and Jamestown Verrazzano Bridges: Recent activity includes concrete collar work on the piers of the Newport Pell Bridge. Fiber-reinforced polymer strips will be attached to the bottom of the prestressed beams on the Newport Pell, which will increase the load-carrying capacity of the beams.
- Mt. Hope and Sakonnet River Bridges - Miscellaneous Steel Repairs: Piasecki Steel is the contractor, and the remaining work includes installation of new composite walkway and stairway accesses and catwalks.

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- Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge Guardrail and Railing Painting Project – (In-House) A significant portion of the concrete barrier that was used on the Newport Pell deck project will be installed to close off the shoulder for the paint work to be done. Two lanes of traffic will remain open. 2,000 feet of pressure washing has already been completed.

### CFO Jeff Goulart – Financial Summary Report - Mr. Goulart noted the following:

- YTD Results vs Budget: The Authority's YTD revenue is higher than budget by 11.6%, or approximately \$2.0 million, primarily due to the conservative approach in budgeting as it was unknown what the impact of COVID would be. YTD Operating expenses are 15.3%, or approximately \$2.4M lower than budget primarily due to open positions, elimination of the 3<sup>rd</sup> shift, reduced staff in the customer service center, lower healthcare costs, the timing of the expenses associated with the bridge inspections and other reductions in discretionary spending.
- YTD Results vs Prior Fiscal Year: The Authority's YTD revenue is lower than prior year by 16.4%, or approximately \$3.8 million, primarily due to the impact from COVID. However, all operating expenses (with the exception of insurance) are lower than prior year by 14.4%, or approximately \$2.2M, due to open positions, reduced staff in the customer service center, elimination of the 3<sup>rd</sup> shift, and the timing associated with the bridge inspections and other reductions in discretionary spending.
- February Revenue: The Authority's February revenue is in line with the budget, and operating expenses continue to track lower than budget for the reasons noted above.

### Executive Director's Report:

- **Traffic and Revenue Data** – Almost at 90% of pre-COVID traffic. Commuters not coming back in entirety yet, but tourism industry appears to be making up for it.
- **Accountability and Transparency Audit** – Came through with flying colors, suggested improvement had to do with RITBA's toll processing vendor completing an SOC 1 Type 2 report, a go-forward suggestion; we have already addressed and implemented it.
- **RFP for External Audit Services** – Will be bringing this item before the Board at the next meeting to approve award of selected firm.
- **RFP for All-Electronic Tolling** – This RFP will go out shortly and will encompass modifications to the existing toll plaza, as well as siting and design of an open road tolling gantry. The tentative plan is that by Columbus Day 2021, RITBA will no longer be collecting tolls by cash and credit card. Director Alвити requested that a summary report to include the costs, benefits, and recommendations from the All-Electronic Tolling pilot program from February 14<sup>th</sup> to March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 be provided to the Board.
- **American Rescue Plan Act – Infrastructure Opportunities** – The State of RI will be receiving federal funds because of COVID-19. RITBA submitted three proposals to the State for consideration. All three submissions were for studies of potential projects: 1) A study of the feasibility of a bike/walking path on the Newport Pell, Jamestown Verrazzano and Mt. Hope Bridges estimated at \$1.5 million; 2) A study to modify the existing toll plaza to allow for All-Electronic Tolling, which would include construction and implementation of the project

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estimated at \$12 million; and 3) A study to look at the issue of accessibility of mental health resources in RI and the feasibility of constructing barriers on the Newport Pell, Jamestown Verrazzano and Mt. Hope Bridges estimated at \$1.5 million. Jeff Goulart noted that if the bike/walking path and barrier studies are both approved, the estimated funding for these two studies could be reduced because they could be performed at the same time.

The Board suspended the regular Board meeting to convene an Executive Session upon motion made by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr. All Board members voted aye. The Executive Session was called to order at 9:20 A.M. in accordance with Rhode Island's Open Meeting Law, R.I.G.L. 42-26-5 (a) (2) for an update on a construction litigation matter.

It was noted by Executive Director Lori Caron Silveira that the Zoom meeting host, Remmy Villacis from RITBA's IT department, would be moving all meeting attendees who are not part of Executive Session into the "Waiting Room." Once the Executive Session concludes, the host would move those attendees remaining, back into the reconvened open session.

At 10:03 A.M. a motion to exit Executive Session was made by Darrell Waldron and seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr. The motion passed unanimously, and the Executive Committee exited Executive Session.

At 10:03 A.M the Board reconvened in open session. A motion to seal the minutes was made by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., and passed unanimously. It was noted by Executive Director Lori Caron Silveira that no votes were taken in Executive Session, and, therefore, there was nothing to report out.

Acting Chair, Judith M. Morse acknowledged that Board Chair, Stephen C. Waluk had given notice that he would not seek another term on the Board, and she wanted to thank him formally and publicly for his many years of hard work and dedication to the Authority, noting the great job he performed. All Board members wholeheartedly concurred.

Motion by Peter Alviti, Jr., seconded by Darrell Waldron, passed unanimously to adjourn the public meeting at 10:05 A.M.

**Lori Caron Silveira**  
**Secretary**