

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority (“Authority”) was held at the Authority’s offices in Jamestown on October 19, 2022.

---

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 A.M. by Chair, James K. Salome.

**Members Present**

James K. Salome, Chair  
Darrell Waldron, Vice Chair  
Peter M. Janaros, P.E.  
Karen D. Pinch

**Members Absent:**

Peter Alviti, Jr., P.E., Ex Officio

**Invited Guests:**

Lori Caron Silveira, Executive Director  
Eric Seabury, P.E., Director of Engineering  
Kathryn Coleman, Director of Tolling Operations  
Jeffrey Goulart, Chief Financial Officer  
Stephen Cahill, Manager of Safety and Security  
Jeffrey Wiggin, Assistant Project Manager  
Marianne Durgin, Executive Assistant to the Director  
Remmy Villacis, Network Technician  
William O’Gara, Pannone Lopes Devereaux & O’Gara, Legal Counsel  
Nicole Benjamin, Adler Pollock & Sheehan, Legal Counsel  
David Schultz, Legislative Fiscal Analyst

**Item No. 2**

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

**Item No. 3**

A motion made by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2022 Board meeting.

**Item No. 4**

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to approve a resolution adopting a new pricing contract with Kapsch Trafficcom USA, Inc. for transponders and hardware, including programmers, antennas, readers, and modules, used in the lanes to receive the most up-to-date pricing. The price of interior transponders will be reduced from \$6.69 to \$6.20 per unit and for exterior transponders from \$13.49 to \$12.99 per unit. There are no monies incurred up front, only as orders are placed. The E-ZPass Group will now require updated pricing to be approved on an annual basis, which is a new concept. The pricing will be effective through February 2023. Director Janaros confirmed with Ms. Coleman that Kapsch is the current supplier of the transponders. The lower pricing will be honored for the last two orders that have been placed. Since June 2022, RITBA will save \$2,353.00 with the new pricing. Ms. Coleman indicated that Kapsch had to go through rigorous testing to get the approval of the E-ZPass Group for this contract. Chair Salome confirmed with legal counsel, William O’Gara, and Executive Director Caron Silveira that the Board’s approval of the resolution puts the new pricing in effect and that all members of the E-ZPass Group are required to adopt the resolution to secure the new pricing.

## Item No. 5

**Discussion: Implementation of INFRA Grant Awarded for Newport Pell Bridge Projects:** Chair Salome congratulated the team for securing the massive grant award of \$82.5 million for the Newport Pell Bridge.

- Director Caron Silveira noted that this submission was for a bundle of projects, many of which were slated for several years in the future. RITBA will now be able to accelerate the date of completion for several of the projects. The team will take this opportunity to share ideas with the Board on how RITBA may proceed with execution of the projects. RITBA management welcomes the Board's input on its planning.
- Eric Seabury noted that he and CFO Jeff Goulart have worked on updating the timing of cash flow for the projects in the capital plan to reflect the INFRA grant. The next step will focus on procuring designers. Although RITBA has many on-call consultants, the grant-related work is broad in scope, and the team believes the work should go out to RFQ. The team's initial thinking is to break down the grant work into three projects: 1) dehumidification of the cables and anchorages, 2) deck and finger joints, and 3) a tower painting project, including new tower elevators.
- Due to the enormity of the work, including the dollars, timing, and logistics involved, RITBA is considering engaging a Program Manager to be responsible for the coordination and supervision of the three projects. Alongside these projects, the AET project will be taking place with the installation of the new gantry and tolling system, and could be added to the Program Manager's responsibilities.
  - Chair Salome asked if there was knowledge of the cost savings by completing these projects years earlier than originally planned. Mr. Seabury indicated the savings will be reflected in the updated capital plan. Further, Mr. Goulart noted there will be approximately \$18 million in savings by completing the projects earlier than originally planned.
  - Director Waldron encouraged the team to move forward with selecting a Program Manager due to the many benefits it could afford.
  - Director Janaros asked about the suspender ropes. Mr. Seabury said they would be included in the Dehumidification of the Cables and Anchorages project, as some replacements are anticipated based on condition.
  - Director Waldron noted the federal reporting requirements are strict and suggested that the RITBA team maintain control over the reporting. It was suggested that RITBA management provide its consultants with dates for submission of project data so RITBA can maintain strict control over the timely submission of its reporting.
  - Director Pinch inquired if the grant was written with the assistance of a consultant. Director Caron Silveira indicated a consultant assisted but much of the work was done in-house. She believes the grant may be the largest ever awarded to Rhode Island for infrastructure rehabilitation.
- Mr. Seabury shared an article from Smartcitiesdive.com titled: Rising prices, labor shortages threaten infrastructure law implementation: DOT report. There will be challenges that RITBA will face in implementing the projects, but the same challenges will be faced by all entities who have received grant funding for infrastructure projects.

**Director of Engineering Eric Seabury - Capital Projects Status Report:** This month Mr. Seabury highlighted the following:

- Newport Pell Bridge Pier 5W Girder Temporary Shoring and Bearing Removal and Replacement: Actively working on delivery of bearings and the installation schedule. Shop drawings being finalized. Project should be complete within a few weeks.

- Phase II – AET Final Design- Newport Pell Bridge: The final design of the AET project is underway.
- Misc. Steel Repairs – Mt. Hope and Sakonnet: Shop drawings are almost complete, and Piasecki Steel will begin the steel repairs for items identified in the Interim Inspection report.
- ATMS Bridge Safety and Video Analytics – Pell and Mt. Hope: In the process of purchasing two more cameras for Mt. Hope due to insufficient views of the center span. While trying to commission the system on the bridge, staff found that the thermal optical cameras on the bridge would not come on-line. They were taken down and found to have moisture in them. RITBA team worked with the vendor, Axis Communications, and they have been replaced under warranty and are ready to be installed. The final step in this process is to perform testing on the AI system and compare it against the performance metrics established by the consultant, Parsons. Director Janaros confirmed with Mr. Seabury that the cameras will recognize stopped vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The metrics include how quickly the cameras pick up the information and what is picked up, including false positives. Testing will be performed with live situations, using RITBA staff to determine the accuracy of the system.
- Capital Improvement Plan Update: Mr. Seabury will meet with Director Janaros to review the revised capital plan, and it will be brought before the Board at the November meeting for discussion.
- Load Ratings and Inspections: New load ratings are occurring on the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge, Mt. Hope Bridge, and Sakonnet River Bridge. Routine inspections are being conducted on several of the bridges.

#### **CFO Jeff Goulart – Financial Summary Report**

- YTD toll revenue was higher than budget by \$700K, primarily due to toll revenue per vehicle coming in at \$2.58 vs. the budget of \$2.16. Gas tax revenue was lower in both July and August for a combined \$200K. Mr. Goulart checked with RIPTA and RIDOT, and their gas tax revenue was down, as well, presumably due to the recent high gas prices, which may be resulting in motorists driving less. YTD operating expenses were lower than budget by \$300K. Personnel expenses, utilities, insurance, and bridge inspections were all lower than budget. Contractual services and other supplies were higher than budget and some of this is due to timing. Some costs are higher due to bill-by-mail transactions, which include postage and supplies. Total revenue vs. prior year was higher by \$0.5M. Toll revenue was higher by \$600K, partially offset by \$100K less in gas tax. Personnel expenses, insurance, bridge inspections were all lower vs. prior year. Utilities, contractual services, and other supplies and expenses are higher, often due to timing.

Director Janaros noted that years ago, conduit and fiber optics were installed on the Pell Bridge with the intent to lease it at some point in the future. He asked Mr. Goulart to share with the Board the recent communications the RITBA team is having with companies interested in the fiber optics on the Pell Bridge. Mr. Goulart indicated RITBA needed to get solid pricing in place to respond to inquiries. The Authority recently worked with legal counsel to establish pricing metrics for the fiber and conduits. Three firms have expressed interest. Pricing is now in place to address inquiries for either leasing fiber, using RITBA conduits and running the lessee's fiber, or installing independently-owned conduits and fiber. RITBA is now ready to negotiate terms for lease or sale of the Authority's fiber optics.

#### **Executive Director's Report:**

- **Bridge Anniversary** - Director Caron Silveira first noted that this day marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge.

- **Traffic Update** - Director Caron Silveira reported traffic numbers are continuing to look more and more like 2019. The weather was very good in October, and it is anticipated next month's traffic numbers will reflect it.
  - **Citizens Pell Bridge Run** - Sunday, October 16th was a beautiful day for the Citizens Pell Bridge Run with approximately 3,200 runners/walkers.
  - **Speeding - RI State Police Presence** - There continues to be an issue with speeding on the Pell and Jamestown Bridges. Since July 1<sup>st</sup>, the RI State Police have been assigned a regular post at the Authority. The troopers are responding to speeding issues, accidents, and have been apprehending some of RITBA's highest toll violators. Director Caron Silveira is in regular communication with Lt. LeValley from the Wickford barracks. Steve Cahill, Manager of Safety and Security at the Authority, shared that the troopers are currently concentrating their time at the Pell and Jamestown Verrazzano Bridges. Starting in December there will be state police presence at the Mt. Hope and Sakonnet River Bridges, as well. Mr. Cahill has seen a reduction in response times to accidents, which has improved RITBA's ability to clear accident areas faster. He noted that when the state police are present, speeding is reduced. Director Janaros inquired if RITBA staff can assign duties. RITBA does not assign duties but is in regular communication with Lt. LeValley to communicate needs. Director Caron Silveira indicated the Colonel has informed her that the commercial enforcement unit has been present at the Mt. Hope Bridge in an effort to enforce weight restrictions. Director Janaros inquired if the state police are weighing trucks. Director Caron Silveira will report back once she obtains feedback from the Colonel regarding the availability of portable weighing equipment and staff for enforcement of weight restrictions.
- **Tolling Operations** – Director Caron Silveira indicated that Ms. Coleman has been actively engaged in managing three projects: 1) Working with Emovis to get a new back office system up and running, 2) Working with Emovis on the new lane integration system, which captures the traffic data for tolling, and 3) Working with the E-ZPass Group on the HUB project, which will assist all 36 E-ZPass agencies in sharing tolling data through a central “HUB.” Until now, each agency has had to share tolling data and files with other agencies independently. When the HUB project is complete, all the data will be coordinated within a central hub, making it a much more efficient system for exchanging within the E-ZPass system.
  - Also noted were the strides being made by the RITBA tolling department to reduce the time it takes to read license plates of motorists with no valid E-ZPass transponders and then process these bill-by-mail invoices.
  - RITBA is renewing its campaign of “Got E-ZPass?” to encourage motorists to get E-ZPass accounts, which will reduce the number of bill-by-mail transactions.
- **Federal Funding Requests** –
  - **Bridge Investment Program** - RITBA still has a smaller submission pending under the Bridge Investment Program for the Mt. Hope Bridge Dehumidification of the Cables and Anchorages project and is awaiting word.
  - **State Funding for Feasibility Study of Safety Barriers** - Just received word, RITBA will receive one million dollars from the state budget for a feasibility study of safety barriers for bridges under its purview. This allows enough funding to study one suspension bridge and one non-suspension bridge as approved by the Pandemic Recovery Office. Next month's agenda will have a task order presented for approval to proceed with a study for two bridges.
- **Next Board Meeting** – Scheduled for Wednesday, November 16th.

At approximately 9:15 a.m. there was a motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter M. Janaros, passed unanimously to convene into executive session, pursuant to RI General Laws § 42-46-5 (a) (2) to discuss the truck tolling litigation.

At approximately 10:07 a.m. there was a motion by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Darrell Waldron, and passed unanimously to reconvene into open session.

Chair Salome stated RITBA convened into executive session pursuant to RI General Laws § 42-46-5 (a) (2) to discuss the truck tolling litigation. No votes were taken. Motion by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Darrell Waldron and passed unanimously to seal the minutes.

A motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter M. Janaros, passed unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at 10:08 A.M.

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