

The Annual 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 May 22, 2024.

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The meeting was called to order at 8:31 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  
Peter Alviti, Jr., P.E., Ex Officio

**Members Absent:**

None

**Invited Guests:**

Lori Caron Silveira, Executive Director  
Eric Seabury, Director of Engineering  
Kathryn Coleman, Director of Tolling Operations  
Jeffrey Goulart, Chief Financial Officer  
Stephen Cahill, Manager of Safety and Security  
Remmy Villacis, Network Technician  
Joseph Rodio, Rodio & Ursillo, Legal Counsel  
Marianne Durgin, Executive Assistant to the Director  
Jeffrey Wiggin, Assistant Project Manager  
Jamie Swanberg, Manager of Tolling Operations  
Jose Morales, Project Manager, Emovis

**Item No. 2**

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

**Item No. 3**

A motion made by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Darrell Waldron, passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2024 Board meeting.

**Item No. 4**

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to reappoint the current officers for the coming twelve months: James K. Salome as Chair, Darrell Waldron as Vice Chair, Jeffrey Goulart as Treasurer, and Lori Caron Silveira as Secretary.

**Item No. 5**

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., voted favorably by Karen D. Pinch and James K. Salome, passed four to one with Peter M. Janaros opposed, to ratify the payment of \$11,265.00 to Kapsch TrafficCom USA, Inc. (Kapsch) for locating the radio frequency (RF) interference found during a site survey at the toll zone of the new gantry location next to Structure E at the Pell Bridge. The site survey was called for in the RFP of Contract 22-02 to identify any RF interferences that could impact the toll collection system’s performance. On May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Kapsch located the source of the interference which was a repeater operated by RIDOT. RIDOT was notified, and within 24 hours disconnected the repeater. Chair Salome asked how Kapsch proceeded with the search. Ms. Coleman stated the Kapsch technicians drove in the vicinity of the interference and with the use of antennas, the area was triangulated and then further narrowed down to identify the interference. It was noted that sometimes the interference can be identified as coming from a private citizen. Chair Salome asked what approach might be taken in this case.

Director Alviti responded that efforts are made to work with the party involved and request they change their frequency and usually it can be worked out. Ms. Coleman noted in some instances the interference cannot be identified. Chair Salome inquired if the search for the interference could take days or even weeks, and Ms. Coleman replied, yes. Director Alviti noted the companies performing this work are getting better at it. Oftentimes the person or company identified is unaware that their equipment has drifted in frequency into the range that is set aside for things like tolling or government operations. They should not be in that frequency range and generally once they have been notified, they cooperate. Ms. Coleman indicated Kapsch would not have certified their equipment to work at an acceptable range of 99.9% had the interference not been found. Director Janaros shared a concern he had, which he noted has been an issue he has raised at prior Board meetings. Kapsch presented its item for approval as a lump sum cost, rather than a time and materials proposal. He noted that Kapsch, in its quote for this item, could not provide a full scope of work in that it was unknown. As such, he takes issue with the fact that if the time needed to identify the interference was far less than anticipated, the same fee would have been paid. Chair Salome inquired of Ms. Coleman the time needed to complete the task. Ms. Coleman indicated it took five days. He asked if it had taken more days, would it have been the same cost. Ms. Coleman replied, yes. Ms. Coleman stated she reached out to several of RITBA's tolling consultants to confer about the proposed fee and was told this work is typically billed as a lump sum. There was considerable further discussion of Director Janaros' concern. Director Janaros also expressed that the lump sum cost itself was not competitively bid. Executive Director Caron Silveira shared that she spoke with Director Janaros about his concerns prior to the Board meeting and in response, generated a memo to RITBA staff outlining several protocols that will be followed in preparing Board items for presentation. She noted that sometimes a lump sum quote is favored in the tolling industry unlike in engineering. Moving forward, if an item will be presented as a lump sum fee, there will be an explanation in the cover sheet for that item. Chair Salome noted there will be times when important work needs to proceed in between Board meetings and Executive Director Caron Silveira and her Senior Staff should have the authority to move forward on items that are critical to the smooth and safe operation of the Authority, further noting he has faith in the decision making of the Director and her staff. Mr. Rodio pointed out that statutorily, Director Caron Silveira has the authority to authorize certain engineering and consulting work under \$20K without Board approval, which applies to this agenda item. Finally, Director Waldron made note that Director Janaros had raised an important point for discussion. Chair Salome concurred, and thanked Director Janaros.

#### **Item No. 6**

Motion by Darrell Waldron, seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to approve an extension of Contract 11-13 with Emovis for an additional four months beginning June 25<sup>th</sup> for ongoing E-ZPass back-office maintenance and support while the new back-office system is undergoing final design and implementation at a cost of \$57,907.50 per month. This is the same monthly cost that RITBA has been paying. The contract extension will allow RITBA to end the fiscal year with the legacy back-office system. This will reduce the risk of issues arising during the audit process. The additional time will also allow RITBA to establish a stable back-office system while the new all-electronic gantry is completed and brought online. The new back-office will be ready to go-live in the fall. Director Alviti asked if the existing contract has an extension clause. Ms. Coleman replied that it had one, and RITBA had exhausted its extensions. Director Alviti also confirmed that this extension is to bridge the time between the end of this contract and the beginning of the new one that is already in place. Director Janaros commented that he would have liked to have seen this Board item's materials presented with a comparison of what was previously paid monthly for the item. Director Caron Silveira noted she included this in her memo to her Senior Staff for future protocols for Board item material presentation. Director Pinch added she concurs with Ms. Coleman's approach to keep what she has in place through the end of this fiscal year, and not risk any disruption to the back-office system's operation. Ms. Coleman stated that Mr. Jose Morales from Emovis, Project Manager for both the AET and the back-office, was present and able to address any questions from Board members. Director Janaros asked Mr. Morales to share information about the current work

with the Board. Mr. Morales shared, “I agree with this strategy to delay the back office due to the new gantry; it is the right thing to do. Delaying until the end of the summer and not impacting customers is wise. The new gantry will launch at the end of the summer and then after the summer the new back office will launch. The back office has a big impact to your drivers, and we want to minimize the impact.” Director Janaros asked if the back-office were to come online sooner than the four-month extension period, would the Authority be bound to pay for the full four months? Ms. Coleman indicated if the system were to go-live sooner, the Authority would transition to the new contract pricing. Mr. Rodio confirmed with Ms. Coleman that the Authority is not bound to pay all of the four-months of the extension if they are not needed. Ms. Coleman said she believes the full four months’ extension will be needed, but that if not we will not pay for those months.

#### **Item No. 7**

Motion by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., passed unanimously to approve a task order in the not to exceed amount of \$24,044.00 for Modjeski and Masters (M&M) to perform additional load rating work and revisions to the most recent load rating for the Sakonnet River Bridge conducted in June 2023. The original task order included extra work to perform special analyses for legal loads and some permit loads, at RIDOT’s request. After submission of the load rating report, RIDOT received numerous overweight permit requests for various 3 and 4-axle cranes with high axle loads, each requiring a special review. RIDOT requested that RITBA perform special analyses for RI3 and RI4 vehicles, which would greatly reduce the volume of individual analyses for every crane permit, as the results can be applied to future crane permit applications. The task order amendment was reviewed by RITBA staff and RIDOT, and both found it to be reasonable. Mr. Seabury shared that RITBA staff believes these numerous overweight permit requests to RIDOT for cranes has occurred because the Authority has denied those cranes permits to use the Newport Pell Bridge because their high axle loads are not permitted.

#### **Item No. 8**

Motion by Peter Alviti Jr., seconded by Darrell Waldron, passed unanimously to approve two purchase orders in the total amount not to exceed \$7,800.00 for Evan Fall Protection (Evan) to conduct Fall Protection Systems Inspections for the Newport Pell and Mount Hope Bridges, a lump sum of \$3,900.00 per bridge. These bridges have numerous cables mounted to their structures that aid bridge inspectors and maintenance workers with access during routine inspections, maintenance, and repairs. The purpose of the cables is to provide safe locations to attach harness lanyards for fall protection. The cables and their attachments require periodic safety inspections to ensure functionality and compliance with industry standards. Evan, located in Jamestown, RI, has conducted these inspections in the past and will provide a deliverable of a written report attesting to the condition of the system and its conformance with OSHA standards. If repairs are required, Evan will provide an estimate. RITBA staff reviewed the quotes and found them to be reasonable. RITBA staff did not seek additional quotes because Evan has performed these inspections numerous times before and their quotes for each bridge are more than reasonable.

#### **Item No. 9**

Motion by Peter Alviti, Jr., seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to approve a task order in the not to exceed amount of \$73,633.00 for AI Engineers (AIE) to perform the routine inspections of the Sakonnet River and Evans Avenue Bridges. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires routine bridge inspections every two years, and these bridges are due this year. The inspections follow the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS), and as such are detailed and labor-intensive. RITBA will receive detailed reports as deliverables, which will then be used to plan required maintenance and capital projects. RITBA solicited cost proposals from five prequalified On-Call Infrastructure Professional Services consultants. All five responded with pricing ranging from \$73,633 to \$107,589. AIE provided the lowest cost proposal, and it was substantially less than the subject bridges’ previous routine inspections. The savings to budget will be approximately \$41,000. Director Alviti asked how these two bridges rated in their last routine inspections. Mr. Seabury replied that he believes both the Sakonnet River Bridge and the

Evans Avenue Bridge inspection results were good. Director Alviti suggested, as these bridges age, and their inspection reports are lowered to the fair category, the Authority consider increasing the scope of work and/or the frequency. Mr. Seabury concurred. He shared that his staff has an upcoming meeting with RIDOT staff to discuss new bridge inspection standards that are being established, and the fracture critical requirements that are coming next January. All fracture critical components will be required to be inspected annually. Mr. Seabury anticipates he will need to have one of the Authority's on-call consultants perform a study to prepare a list of all fracture critical elements.

#### **Item No. 10**

Motion by Karen D. Pinch, seconded by Peter Alviti, Jr., passed unanimously to approve a task order in the not to exceed amount of \$75,915.00 for AI Engineering (AIE) to provide Design and Construction Administration Services for Solar Photovoltaic (PV) panels and roof replacement at the Authority's administration and maintenance buildings located at 1 East Shore Road in Jamestown. The administration and maintenance buildings' roofs were constructed with traditional three-tab shingles which are failing. Multiple repairs have been performed on these roofs after high wind events to replace missing shingles. During budgetary discussion, RITBA staff decided it would be prudent to add solar PV panels while replacing and upgrading the roofs to current code. AIE is one of RITBA's On-Call Infrastructure Professional Services consultants with appropriate design capability. The firm was interviewed and selected by RITBA staff to perform the design and construction administration services for this work. It will include complete system design, structural analysis, preparation of bid documents, bid review, cost estimate and construction administration services. Director Pinch asked how old the shingles are that are failing. Mr. Seabury stated they are not as old as they should be to be failing. The administration building was rebuilt in 2012 and reopened in 2013. The shingles are not architectural shingles, which are required per code for a waterfront facility such as these buildings. Director Pinch asked if there is any recourse in terms of warranty. Mr. Seabury indicated the time is well past any warranty. Executive Director Caron Silveira asked Mr. Seabury to address Exhibit C3, Section B, of the task order proposal. Mr. Seabury noted the proposal indicates the fee is a lump sum amount. It was, in fact, negotiated as a not to exceed amount and Mr. Seabury will be asking the consultant to make that correction before the proposal is executed.

#### **Director of Engineering Eric Seabury - Capital Projects Status Report:**

- Phase II – AET Construction - Newport Pell Bridge: The new gantry is up and Emovis is now installing the equipment and beginning testing. All four lanes and Structure E are fully open. The new highway will not open until the tolling system goes live, the remaining old toll plaza is demolished, and the final realignment of the roadway takes place. All four lanes will remain open during daily commute times and staff will take daily lane closures as needed which should not cause any issues to motorists.
- Mt. Hope Bridge Suspension Cables & Anchorages Investigation and Dehumidification: Final invoicing from the cable air flow test is due soon from the contractor. The final design of the project continues, and RITBA staff anticipates putting this project out to bid in a few months. The timing of the bid may need to be altered due to the award of \$17M from the PROTECT grant. The Authority does not want to begin work on the project and jeopardize reimbursement of any construction work until the grant agreement is finalized. Federal Highway may allow the bid process to take place as long as the work does not begin before the award is fully executed.
- Rubberized Asphalt Chip Seal Design – Mount Hope Bridge: The design of the project is ongoing. This project should take place at the end of summer or beginning of fall. The work will be planned for two nights but will likely be completed in one night. Some of the prep work will take place during day hours.
- Compression Link Phase II Work – Newport Pell: The Authority is about to go out to bid for the final work on this project. Final revisions to the contract specifications are taking place.
- Safety Barrier Feasibility Studies: Draft reports for the Mount Hope Bridge and the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge have been received and are being reviewed and finalized. The Newport Pell

Bridge and the Sakonnet River Bridge studies are being developed and are on schedule. Director Alviti inquired if there were any reports to share on the draft results of the Mount Hope Bridge and Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge studies. Mr. Seabury indicated RITBA staff have been reviewing the draft results and the Mount Hope Bridge is not being recommended for any barrier because of structural and wind reasons. There is a flutter instability that has come up in the analysis that is causing a risk, as well as the load carrying capacity. A new load rating for the bridge was recently completed and the bridge was posted for a lower capacity as a result. Any additional weight would further lower the load rating and reduce the ability to carry vehicles over the bridge. The study does not recommend any structural application, such as a fence or barrier, but recommends looking at other means of deterrent, like additional signage. The Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge is feasible. However, the bridge has shear cracks that were allowed during its design. Shear cracks are no longer allowed by today's design standard. The recent load rating result is that the bridge does not rate for serviceability. In its current condition, no dead load can be added to the bridge. This means if a barrier is added, it will require the removal of the current railing on the bridge to offset the weight of the barrier. The system that was studied, and that would be feasible, weighs the same per linear foot as the current railing. Director Caron Silveira noted the final reports for the Mount Hope Bridge and the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge are due June 3rd. Final results will be available at the next Board meeting.

**CFO Jeff Goulart – Financial Summary Report:** March YTD financial performance continues to be strong. YTD Financial Statement Notes – Actual vs. Budget material variance analysis: Total revenue YTD was higher than budget by \$5.9M or 20%. Gas tax revenue was higher than budget by \$318K or roughly 3%. YTD Operating expenses were lower than budget by \$528K. Personnel expenses, utilities, contractual services, insurance, and repairs and maintenance were all lower than budget. With respect to prior year, total revenue was higher by \$1.1M or 3% due to higher toll revenue. Gas tax revenue was flat year over year. Operating expenses were higher than prior year by only 68K or roughly .07%. Mr. Goulart noted that next month he will be presenting the fiscal year 2025 budget.

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

- **Plaza Road Design Work** – Director Caron Silveira noted the return to two lanes in each direction at the “pinch-point” occurred on May 15<sup>th</sup> which was two days sooner than promised.
- **Mount Hope Bridge Cable and Anchorages Dehumidification Project** – The cable air flow testing finished three weeks earlier than planned. RITBA staff used a week of this time to conduct necessary scupper work.
- **Federal Funding Opportunities** – As noted last month, the Authority has been awarded \$17M from the PROTECT grant for the dehumidification project. On May 30<sup>th</sup>, RITBA will be celebrating with the co-delegation at the Mount Hope Bridge. The Authority is still waiting to hear word on the RAISE 2024 grant submission and the Bridge Investment Program submission. While the Authority will proceed with the chip seal treatment of the Mount Hope Bridge, efforts are still being made to obtain funding for the full rehabilitation of the deck of the bridge. Director Caron Silveira referred to an article in the previous day's news about the George Washington Bridge (GWB) in NY, which is the same age as the Mount Hope Bridge, which noted the GWB is currently at the two billion mark in terms of rehabilitation costs. Director Caron Silveira feels the Authority is doing everything possible to see that its 95-year-old Mount Hope Bridge continues to serve the needs of all who cross it.
- **Bridge Security and Safety – Update of Ongoing Meetings and Resources** – The Authority is having ongoing meetings, and the Director will provide an update on Bridge Security and Safety at next month's Board meeting. Given what happened in Baltimore at the Francis Scott Key Bridge, the Authority is taking the opportunity to make certain that plans are in place and that it is well coordinated with all agencies. RITBA recently hosted a meeting with twenty-six people in attendance, representing the Coast Guard, the Pilot's Association, state and local law

enforcement, area Fire Chiefs and RIEMA staff. Plans were discussed if there were to be an incident in the water or on top of the bridge. Director Caron Silveira showed the Board a new tool that the RITBA Traffic Management Technicians will be using; it is a marine radio, which uses Channel 16. Communication can take place between a pilot who is out in the waterway near the Pell Bridge and RITBA's staff, to notify the Authority immediately of any issue of concern. Following the Baltimore incident, Director Caron Silveira has gotten to know the President of the Northeast Pilot's Association and he has assured her that if there is any unusual activity, any kind of imminent threat, either near the Pell Bridge or the Mount Hope Bridge, the Authority would receive word immediately. Lastly, Director Caron Silveira shared that there are additional meetings RITBA staff are attending relating to this topic. Recently staff made a trip up to the Coast Guard offices in East Providence to attend a meeting. Fire Chief Kettelle from North Kingstown will be conducting more than one meeting on this topic with area Fire Chiefs at the Authority's offices in the coming months. Next month Director Caron Silveira will provide a comprehensive report on all that has been learned since the first hours after the Baltimore bridge collapse took place.

- **Next Board Meeting – June 12, 2024**

Legal Counsel, Mr. Joseph Rodio asked the Board to make a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Section 5 (a) (1) Personnel Matter – Executive Director Job Performance Review, in accordance with § 42-155-5, the Quasi-Public Transparency Act. The Director has been notified of her right to have the meeting conducted in Open Session and has not so elected, as such, the Board may proceed into Executive Session on the matter. Mr. Rodio also asked the Board to make a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Section 5 (a) (2) Chapman vs. the Authority, RICHR NO. 24 EMP 222 and EEOC NO. 16J-2024-00147. Mr. Rodio asked for a motion to that effect, a second, and a roll call vote. Director Waldron made a motion, Director Pinch seconded the motion, by roll call vote the motion was approved unanimously. At approximately 9:19a.m., the Board moved into executive session.

At approximately 9:50a.m. by motion made by Director Alviti, seconded by Director Pinch, the Board voted to return to open session.

A motion was made by Director Pinch, seconded by Director Alviti to seal the minutes of the foregoing executive session. The motion passed unanimously.

The Chair stated for the record, that no votes were taken in executive session.

At approximately 9:52a.m., a motion was made by Director Waldron, seconded by Director Alviti to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

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