

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 August 21, 2024.

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

**Members Present**

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

**Members Absent:**

Darrell Waldron, Vice Chair  
Peter Alviti, Jr., P.E., Ex Officio

**Invited Guests:**

Lori Caron Silveira, Executive Director  
Eric Seabury, Director of Engineering  
Jeffrey Goulart, Chief Financial Officer  
Remmy Villacis, Manager – IT Services  
Joseph Rodio, Rodio & Ursillo, Legal Counsel  
Marianne Durgin, Executive Assistant to the Director  
Jeffrey Wiggan, Project Manager  
Jamie Swanberg, Manager of Tolling Operations and Customer Service  
Frank Flowers, Chief of Maintenance Operations  
Vincent Jacques, Human Resources Manager  
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 June 12, 2024 Board meeting.

**Item No. 4**

Motion by Karen D. Pinch, seconded by Peter M. Janaros, passed unanimously to approve Partners Technology’s statement of work to incorporate additional phone Interactive Voice Response (IVR) call flow updates to the E-ZPass phone system in the not to exceed amount of \$9,000.00. In January 2024, \$29,700.00 was approved by the Board for Partners Technology to make updates to the E-ZPass phone IVR system in preparation for the new back-office system. The original proposal underestimated the amount of effort needed for the changes. Discrepancies between the legacy system documentation and the new system were found, and some logic and options were not working as they should have been. New logic needs to be introduced to manage invoice payments via the IVR and the development of this between Partners Technology and Emovis needs to occur to update the remaining greetings. The statement of work estimates it will take 40 hours of work at \$225 per hour to accomplish these changes. The back-up documents from Partners did not include a breakdown of the pricing by hour. Once received, RITBA staff will share with the Board. Director Janaros asked that Partners be clear that the amount is not to exceed and that RITBA will be billed for only the hours used. Mr. Goulart indicated staff will make certain this will be included in the follow-up documentation that will be sent to the Board.

**Item No. 5**

Motion by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to award a task order for AI Engineering (AI) to design HVAC replacement and upgrades for RITBA’s administration facility rooftop

units (2), develop bid documents, and provide construction administration services in an amount not to exceed \$53,098.00. The current rooftop units that provide heating, ventilation, and air conditioning are over twelve years old and one unit has been problematic for the past two years, requiring service on multiple occasions. Rooftop units in a marine environment have an expected service life of approximately fifteen years. RITBA's on-call contractor advised that one unit will need repairs at approximately one third of its replacement cost. Modifications have been made inside the building which have increased the employee and computer count. All factors considered, RITBA staff propose to have the building's HVAC load demand assessed, and a bid specification document developed to advertise for public bids for replacement of both rooftop units, a new software control system, and system balancing. AI has already been tasked with providing design and construction administration services of solar PV panels and roof replacement. AI is well suited to perform the same services for the HVAC system. Director Caron Silveira commended Frank Flowers, Chief of Maintenance Operations, for the challenging work he did to keep the building cool for employees, and to protect the computer system while dealing with this issue.

**Item No. 6**

Motion by Karen D. Pinch, seconded by Peter M. Janaros, passed unanimously to award a task order to GM2 for design and bid phase services for miscellaneous steel and other repairs to Fishing Pier Access Road Bridge and joint replacements on the west approach section of the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge in an amount not to exceed \$96,245. GM2 performed the most recent routine inspection for the Fishing Pier Access Road Bridge and identified the repairs needed. They are familiar with the current repair requirements and have historical knowledge of the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge, which they gained while participating in the original design of the west approach spans. RITBA staff reviewed the proposal and found it to be reasonable. Upon request from Director Janaros, Mr. Seabury provided an overview of the joint replacement needs on the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge and the plan for replacement. Chair Salome inquired about the life expectancy of joints. Mr. Seabury indicated strip seal-type joints need to be replaced often. There will be seven replaced on the bridge, and the design will consider bridge joint types with greater expected longevity.

**Item No. 7**

Motion by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to award a task order for Atane to perform the routine inspection of the Mount Hope Bridge in the not to exceed amount of \$215,758. RITBA solicited cost proposals from five prequalified On-Call Infrastructure Professional Services consultants and received four submissions. Modjeski and Masters (M&M) submitted the lowest cost proposal at \$213,630. Atane had the next lowest cost proposal. M&M has performed the last three routine inspections of the bridge. By selecting Atane, RITBA will have a "fresh look" for this routine bridge inspection. While \$200,000 was budgeted for this year's inspection, the higher cost is due to requiring the consultants to provide their own equipment and traffic control, which allows RITBA maintenance personnel to focus on continued bridge maintenance. Director Janaros noted he feels it is wise to have a new set of eyes inspecting the bridge. Director Pinch noted due to recent events, she feels it is prudent to have a new consultant inspecting the bridge other than the one who most recently performed the inspection.

**Item No. 8**

Motion by Peter M. Janaros, seconded by Karen D. Pinch, passed unanimously to award a construction contract to Mohawk Northeast, Inc. for replacement of the Newport Pell Bridge east tower southeast compression link in the amount not to exceed \$867,000, and to execute a purchase order in the amount not to exceed \$16,000 for RITBA to purchase the existing access platform components from Aetna Bridge Company and to assume two, third-party rental contracts for the scaffolding stair tower and jacks in the amount not to exceed \$5,000 per month for the period necessary to complete the compression link replacement. Chair Salome asked if this is common for a company to sign off on a third-party contract with another company. Mr. Seabury stated that in this situation it is common. Aetna Bridge submitted one of the proposals for the project and indicated up front they would have liability concerns related to

the scaffolding and jacks if they were not awarded the contract. These actions will release Aetna Bridge from their liability concerns during the replacement construction. Mr. Rodio noted if Aetna Bridge had to take down their access platform equipment, they would have had to bill RITBA for that work and then RITBA would have had to rent and have reinstalled new equipment to proceed with the project. Director Janaros asked if RITBA staff anticipates replacement of other compression links on the bridge. Mr. Seabury indicated there are two to three other links that are original. He anticipates when the steel painting contract takes place under the INFRA Grant projects there may be more compression link work at that time, and this has been included in the funding for the INFRA Grant.

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

Motion by Karen D. Pinch, seconded by Peter M. Janaros, passed unanimously to select the following consultants to provide engineering investigation, design, and construction support services for the INFRA Grant projects: 1) Suspension Cables and Anchorages Dehumidification to AECOM, 2) Concrete Deck and Joints Rehabilitation to Modjeski and Masters, and 3) Steel Repairs, Painting, and Tower Elevator Rehabilitation to WSP. RITBA's selection committee, which included HDR, the Program Manager for the INFRA Grant projects, reviewed each proposal and interviewed all of the consulting firms. RITBA's selection committee reviewed and concurred with the recommendations from HDR's summary of interviews and proposals. Director Janaros complimented Mr. Seabury and RITBA staff on the level of effort put into evaluating and selecting the consultants for this work. Mr. Seabury followed up with an explanation of how the funding will proceed for these projects under the INFRA Grant.

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

**Discussion: Safety Barrier Feasibility Study – Mount Hope Bridge and Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge (JVB)** - Mr. Seabury shared the results of the safety barrier feasibility studies for the two bridges. RITBA received \$1,000,000 to perform safety barrier feasibility studies for the Mount Hope and Jamestown Verrazzano Bridges. The final study concluded that no form of safety barrier can be installed on the Mount Hope Bridge for several reasons including weight and wind considerations, and that installation of a safety barrier on the JVB would require removal of the existing railing to maintain the current load carrying capacity. The height of the barrier would also have to be limited to two feet shorter than the recommended effective height due to the weight of the installation. The estimated total cost of a safety barrier installation on the JVB is between \$8.9M and \$10.3M. Chair Salome asked when the final reports were received and if there have been requests from the public to see the reports. Mr. Seabury stated the final reports were received June 1, 2024. Senator DiPalma requested the reports and they have been shared. No one else has requested them. Director Janaros noted the cost of \$10M is not even remotely close to what the cost would be, and he feels it is important for all to understand that. The barrier at that cost would only cover approximately 60% of the bridge. Because of the nature of the barrier, new equipment would need to be purchased to perform inspections, and the barrier would affect capital projects down the road, requiring additional funding. Chair Salome asked what material the barrier is made of. Mr. Seabury replied that it was priced as a marine grade stainless steel vertical fence. Director Janaros discussed some of the points noted in the study prepared by the consultant, Atkins. Director Janaros felt Atkins did a comprehensive job preparing the study.

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

- Phase II – AET Construction - Newport Pell Bridge: Construction has resumed. The demolition of the old gantry will take place on August 26<sup>th</sup>. The contractor will be realigning the remainder of the roadway.
- Mt. Hope Bridge Suspension Cables & Anchorages Investigation and Dehumidification: Final design for this project is proceeding. RITBA staff anticipates advertising the project for construction bids in October.
- Rubberized Asphalt Chip Seal Design – Mount Hope Bridge: The design of the project should be completed soon and RITBA will then advertise for bids.

- Compression Link Phase II Work – Newport Pell: Mohawk will begin the construction, and the construction support services will be provided by WSP.
- INFRA Projects – Newport Pell Bridge: Will be negotiating a new scope of work and fee with HDR, the Program Manager for the INFRA Grant projects.
- New Roof, Solar, and HVAC Design – Admin Building: A 30% design submittal has been received for the new roof and solar.
- Safety Measures Feasibility Study for NPB & SRB: The consultant is on track; 40% of the study has been completed.

Director Janaros asked Mr. Seabury to comment on the under-budget status of the Mount Hope Bridge and Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge safety measures feasibility study. Mr. Seabury indicated these studies came in approximately \$119K under budget. Director Janaros made note that this is an example of a not to exceed budget whereby the Authority only pays for the work needed. If it were budgeted as a lump sum, the Authority would have paid the entire amount.

**Executive Director’s Report:** Director Caron Silveira noted Mr. Goulart will not be presenting a financial report this month as the Authority is currently undergoing its annual audit. Next month there will be a presentation of the draft FY 2024 Audited Financial Statements.

- **Federal Funding Opportunities** – The Authority is keeping an eye out for any funding opportunities for the redecking of the Mount Hope Bridge. This project is not included in any of the federal grants awarded to the Authority to date.
- **Bridge Security and Safety – Update of Ongoing Meetings and Resources** – Comprehensive meetings have taken place to make certain the Authority’s plan for response to an incident in the water or on top of the bridge are thorough and up to date. The Authority has an immediate response system in place in the event of a vessel strike. Preparations for a bridge closure and evacuation plans have been developed. In addition, plans are being updated for response in the event of a chemical spill, large fire, extreme weather condition, bomb threat, or terrorist incident. The Director will be joining a Board of Inquiry meeting concerning this topic, convened by the Federal Government and held at the Coast Guard offices in East Providence directly after the Board meeting.
- **PaybyCar Gas App** – RITBA staff met with the company head of PaybyCar. Their product is an app that can be used to pay for gas and items at convenience stores. The app is used in conjunction with a division of E-ZPass called “Driven by E-ZPass” which allows an E-ZPass motorist’s transponder to be used for on-arrival vehicle identification only, at participating gas stations and convenience stores. The transponder only announces the arrival of the vehicle, and this is its only connection to E-ZPass. No charges are made to an E-ZPass account. It should have no burden on RITBA’s customer service operations. The product is in development for this area and will not be launched for several months.
- **Fitch Rating for Motor Fuel Tax Bonds** – Good news, RITBA remains at A- with a stable outlook.
- **Next Board Meeting** – September 25, 2024.

Director Caron Silveira introduced Vincent Jacques, RITBA’s new Human Resources Manager. Vincent noted he was pleased to join the RITBA team. He offered information about his background, and the Board of Directors welcomed him.

Legal Counsel, Mr. Joseph Rodio asked the Board to make a motion to enter into Executive Session for a session pertaining to one potential litigation matter, a letter from IAG to the NY Port Authority regarding the E-Z Pass service marks, a session pertaining to litigation pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(2).

At approximately 9:19 a.m., a motion was made by Director Pinch and seconded by Director Janaros. By roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

At approximately 9:28 a.m. a motion was made by Director Janaros and seconded by Director Pinch to return to open session. The motion passed unanimously.

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

A motion was made by Director Pinch and seconded by Director Janaros to adjourn at 9:29 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

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