

May 27, 2005
(For Board: June 10, 2005)



REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
AND PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE/
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Honorable Board of Directors
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway
and Transportation District

Honorable Members:

A meeting of the Governmental Affairs and Public Information Committee/Committee of the Whole was held in the Board Room, Administration Building, Toll Plaza, San Francisco, California, on Friday, May 27, 2005, at 9:35 a.m., Chair Boro presiding.

Committee Members Present (6): Chair Boro; Vice Chair Martini; Directors Dufty, McGoldrick and Reilly; President Middlebrook (Ex Officio)

Committee Members Absent (3): Directors Harrison, Kerns and Sandoval

Other Members Present (5): Directors Cochran, Eddie, Moylan, Pahre and Stroeh

Committee of the Whole Members Present (11): Directors Cochran, Dufty, Eddie, Martini, McGoldrick, Moylan, Pahre, Reilly and Stroeh; Second Vice President Boro; President Middlebrook

Committee of the Whole Members Absent (8): Directors Ammiano, Brown, Hernández, Kerns, Murray, Sandoval and Shahum; First Vice President Harrison

Staff Present: District Engineer Denis J. Mulligan; Auditor-Controller Joseph M. Wire; Secretary of the District Janet S. Tarantino; Attorney David J. Miller; Acting General Manager and Deputy General Manager/Bridge Division Kary H. Witt; Deputy General Manager/Bus Division Susan C. Chiaroni; Deputy General Manager/Ferry Division James P. Swindler; Public Affairs Director Mary C. Currie; Executive Assistant to the General Manager Amorette Ko; Assistant Clerk of the Board Karen B. Engbretson

Visitors Present: None

**REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION
COMMITTEE/COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MAY 27, 2005/PAGE 2**

1. Status Report on State/Federal Legislation

Acting General Manager Kary Witt reported on the status of the following state legislation:

- Assembly Bill 748 – He reported that Assembly Bill 748 (AB 748), for which the Board adopted a position of opposition at its meeting of May 13, 2005, passed by roll call vote with no discussion in the Assembly’s Appropriations Committee on May 26, 2005. AB 748 proposes a statutory ban on tolls for the passage of a pedestrian or bicyclist over any toll bridge in California that allows pedestrian and bicycle access, including the Golden Gate Bridge. He noted that AB 748 has not yet been brought up for a vote on the Assembly floor, but that since all current bills must be out of their houses of origin by June 3, 2005, it is certain that a vote by the Assembly on AB 748 will occur sometime next week. He stated that Assembly Members Joe Nation and Mark Leno have been added on as co-sponsors of the bill, and that new amended language has been added to AB 748 that would apply the provisions of the bill to all bike paths, not necessarily associated with toll bridges, in the State of California.
- Senate Bill 238 – He reported that Senate Bill 238 (SB 238), the bill that will implement, on a permanent basis, the Safety Enhancement-Double Fine Zone on the Golden Gate Bridge, was passed by both the Senate Transportation and Public Safety Committees, and that the bill is ready for a floor vote in the Senate. Since a vote by the Senate must occur by June 3, 2005, it is certain that a vote on SB 238 will occur sometime next week. Another update on the progress of SB 238 will be provided at the June 10, 2005 meeting of the Board of Directors.

Mr. Witt reported on the status of the following federal legislation:

- Federal Transportation Funding Bills – He reported that on May 17, 2005, the U.S. Senate passed its version of the federal transportation funding bill, known as Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005 (SAFETEA), in the amount of \$295 billion. He stated that the Senate’s SAFETEA version of the funding bill includes \$47 million for the Golden Gate Bridge Seismic Retrofit project, while the House’s version, the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (TEA-LU), in the amount of \$284 billion, includes \$50 million for the Seismic Retrofit project. Mr. Witt concluded by stating that the total federal funding for the Seismic Retrofit project could be as high as \$97 million, but that this outcome may be unlikely.

Discussion ensued, including the following:

- In response to an inquiry from Director Reilly regarding President Bush’s statements that he would veto any bill that exceeds the amount of \$284 billion that he has set aside for transportation spending, Mr. Witt replied that because the Senate’s bill is close to the President’s limit, a veto may not occur.

Action by the Board – None Required

**REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION
COMMITTEE/COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MAY 27, 2005/PAGE 3**

2. Status Report from the Board Appointee on the San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority (WTA)

Chair Boro, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority (WTA) Board Appointee, provided a status report on recent activities of the WTA. The following items were provided to the Committee:

1. Agendas for the May 26, 2005, and the April 28, 2005, meetings of the WTA Board of Directors;
2. Agenda for the April 22-23, 2005, Board Retreat of the WTA Board of Directors;
3. Minutes of the February 24, 2005, meeting of the WTA Board of Directors;
4. Agenda for the May 11, 2005, meetings of the Planning and Development Committee
5. Agenda for the April 12, 2005, meeting of the Administrative/Finance/Legislative Committee;
6. Notices of Cancellation for the May 11, 2005, and April 13, 2005, meetings of the Operations Committee; and,
7. Notice of Cancellation for the April 13, 2005, meeting of the Planning and Development Committee.

Copies are available in the Office of the District Secretary.

Chair Boro reported that the WTA is in the process of purchasing the first two ferryboats in the WTA's fleet, and is currently studying three potential facility sites to store the ferryboats, including property at Pier 48 and Pier 54 in San Francisco and Alameda Point in the City of Alameda. He noted that the City of Alameda has expressed an interest in being the home port for the WTA. He stated that the Senate's SAFETEA version of the federal transportation funding bill increased the amount in the Ferryboat Discretionary Fund from \$38 million in the expiring bill to \$57 million in the current bill, of which some of these funds could be allocated to the District.

Discussion ensued, including the following:

- President Middlebrook inquired as to why the two ferryboats that WTA will be acquiring have been characterized in the press as "back-up boats" for other ferry operators. In response, Chair Boro explained that due to eligibility requirements of Regional Measure 2 funding, the ferryboats had to be described as such, but that they would be "back-up boats" in name only. He further stated that the WTA is planning to use these two ferryboats for the South San Francisco ferry service.
- Director McGoldrick inquired regarding the environmental review process to be undertaken by the WTA for the proposed facility sites. In response, Chair Boro stated that at its May 26th meeting, the WTA agreed to set aside funding to begin environmental review of the proposed facility sites. He stated that there is a range of estimated project costs associated with each of the sites, as follows: (1) Pier 48, \$5 million; (2) Pier 54, \$20 million; and, (3) Alameda Point, \$10 million.

**REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION
COMMITTEE/COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MAY 27, 2005/PAGE 4**

- Director Pahre inquired as to whether the presentation by Senior Planner James Corless of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), provided at the May 26, 2005 meeting of the WTA Board of Directors, was the same presentation recently provided to the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit Board of Directors regarding transit-oriented development policies for new regional transit investments. In response, Chair Boro answered in the affirmative. He further suggested that the District invite Mr. Corless of MTC to provide the same presentation at a future Committee meeting.

Action by the Board – None Required

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Adjournment

All business having been concluded, the meeting was declared adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Albert J. Boro, Chair
Governmental Affairs and
Public Information Committee

AJB:JST:KBE:kbe