



Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes

Wednesday, April 13, 2022

Location: via: Hybrid (Zoom & In-person)

Attendance:

New Jersey: Reggie Haynes, Alan Becker, Steve Benigno, Joe Russell, Bruce Schwartz, Marty King

Pennsylvania: Tyrone Wesley, Bob Melikian

Emeritus Member(s): Judy-Boldurian, Jeff Kessler, John Boyle

Potential Member(s): Scott Cohen

DRPA/PATCO: John Hanson, CEO; Jim White, CFO; John Rink, GM; Mike Rakowski, Engineer; Dawn Whiton, Executive Assistant

Public Member(s):

Call to Order

A motion was made to approve the March 9, 2022 minutes. The minutes were approved.

CEO, John Hanson

Update on scheduling a meeting with DRPA new Leadership:

CEO Hanson reported that Deputy CEO Obra Kernodle has resigned from the Authority. He took a job as Director of Government Relations with American Airlines. He had very mixed feelings about leaving the Authority, but it was a huge opportunity for him. We are sorry to see him go.

CEO Hanson also reported that since the last time we met, we have promoted Captain Cobbs to Chief of Police at the DRPA. He's a career officer and worked his way up as a Patrolman to Sergeant, to Lieutenant, to Captain, and now he's Chief of Police. He is a highly credentialed

individual with a Doctorate in Leadership Studies, and he is the first African American Police Chief at the DRPA.

In addition, we promoted another one of our Captains to a Chief Safety and Security Officer. His name is Robert Finnegan. It is not an officer position, but it allows us to become more focused on Homeland Security, the Safety Program on the PATCO side, and the Cyber Security Program. He will also be involved with Chief Cobbs in the leadership of the Police Department. We will introduce both individuals during the upcoming meetings.

“The Power of Improvisation” Will it be possible for the CAC to attend?

CEO Hanson reported that this is a program that has been underway for several years at the DRPA. Very recently, we did a live online seminar for Northeast Transportation Workforce Center which is headquartered at the University of Vermont. It included me; Director of Strategic Affairs, Christina Maroney; and our resident organizational development guru who is an internationally known Improviser, Nick Gillette. The CAC was sent the link to the presentation. The presentation talks about the development of the program and how we do it. It was not one of our typical Leadership sessions, but we are going to do another presentation where we do some version of that soon. If you are interested in having a session facilitated for the CAC, it takes about an hour and it would have to be a day where people who want to participate would be here at the DRPA. Throughout the pandemic, we did the best we could to simulate the program on Zoom with varying degrees of success, but this is something that’s best in-person. So, if it is something the CAC would like to do, let us know. We will have Christina Maroney and Nick Gillette along with Mike Venuto and John Rink join us.

Bob Melikian stated that he thinks it is a great idea. I am the one who asked that question and I would love to participate or be an audience member. Maybe it is something we can do when things start to calm down with Covid.

CEO Hanson stated that he would be happy to facilitate it and hopes that everyone will participate. We can do it during a scheduled meeting with the CAC or schedule it for another time. CEO Hanson stated that he recommends checking out the link provided to the CAC. The link gives you the background on what we did, why we did it, and what results we have been able to produce.

CFO, Jim White

Financial & Revenue Update:

Jim White reported that we started the year better than last year in terms of traffic and revenues but if you compare it against budget, we are behind on the budget side. Particularly, in January, our traffic was around 80% pre-Covid numbers because of the inclement weather and the omicron explosion in December 2021 and January 2022. For 2022, we essentially took what we thought was a conservative approach at 92.5% of pre-Covid budget. Obviously, there was a gap in January, but over the past couple of months the numbers have come back and are close to 90% of pre-Covid numbers. During the first quarter, I expect to be behind budget but not significantly. We ended last year around \$301M total revenues, but it is still around \$30M less

than we had in 2019 which was our second highest ever in total revenues. So, we are and have been in a stable environment except for a couple of months like January 2022.

Presently, there are some concerns in terms of traffic related to the increase in gas prices and the fact that more companies are bringing their employees back to the office. So, it is difficult to discern exactly which has the greater impact. As we study the last couple of weeks, I have seen numbers drop off at around 90% but, in the past few days, I have seen number rise above 90%, so we do not have a discernable pattern.

In terms of PATCO ridership, we had some challenges in January but came back to the point where we had numbers similar to the end of 2019, so we are still around 42-45% of pre-Covid numbers. We've seen at least 17K riders last week.

GM Rink added that ridership has been at 43-44%. Ridership always dips off when it is raining where you will actually see a dramatic change. We probably would have had the best week last week if it weren't for the rain. (As CFO White mentioned, we almost hit 17K riders yesterday which is at 45%.pre-Covid level) It will be interesting to see what this week brings. Lately, our Saturdays have been at 60% and Sundays around 50%. When the Auto show was here, the weekends were up at 75%.

Scott Cohen asked CFO White if PATCO forecasts parking revenues in Philadelphia to use as a metric as Philadelphia begins to get back to normal, but there are still some people who still work remotely.

CEO Hanson reported that the DRPA generally bases its projections on base level numbers, then we look at trends. We're also involved with Ready Set Philly and the Center City District Group where we get our information and that's what we base our forecasts on. Parking in the City is not something we use but it would probably confirm our forecasts. What we do know is that PATCO commuters are largely based on people going to work. If people are not going to work or people are working remotely, they are not leaving the house, so they are not using PATCO. I am not convinced that remote work is going to endure. There will be a certain amount of flexibility, but I think that people who continue to work are going to be primarily in the office.

So, I am not worried about the short or intermediate term. Our forecasts are primarily based on what is happening now, what trends we are seeing in ridership and bridge traffic, and what we are hearing from the groups in Center City.

CEO Hanson added that being inspired by the recent phenomenal success that SEPTA has had through promotions. Our Board is very interesting in promotions, so we will take these ideas and speak to Commissioner McKinney and Vice Chairman Nash.

Bob Melikian asked how the violence in Brooklyn, NY impacted ridership? What are you doing about increasing security?

CEO Hanson stated that PATCO has a very tight security plan on transit as well as on the bridges. When an incident like this happens, we were not concerned that anything similar would happen here, but we felt people would have a heightened level of anxiety, so we deployed more

police and added canines in the stations. One of the problems was that the camera system was not working properly. At the DRPA, we are always mindful of that possibility and Jack Stief always told me that it would keep him up at night. Our Homeland Security Department manages the repair maintenance on our cameras and they're all in great shape. Our Engineering Department has done a lot of work on our camera system for the past 15 years and we installed an additional 250 cameras in the 2010 timeframe. In 2014, 30 infrared cameras were installed in the tunnels and a lot of the cost included grant funds and we continue to add cameras.

CEO Hanson reported that the DRPA had a camera assessment project that has been completed, and all our cameras are highly functional. Less than 2% of our cameras are not working at any given time and it is under the direction of our Homeland Security Operation.

Reggie Haynes asked where the difference in money is coming from?

CEO Hanson reported that ridership and bridge revenues are down. Basically, we have constrained expenses to the point that's enabling us to live within our constrained revenues. We held back on hiring and other spending and that is making up the difference. We're hopeful that something will happen to give additional support to PATCO, but right now we haven't heard anything.

CFO White added, "that is correct". Last year we pulled at least \$10M out of the budget. So, where we have a revenue shortfall, we have somewhat of an offset.

Bob Melikian asked if the second-best year was 2019, or what was the best year?

CFO Hanson reported that 2018 was slightly better than 2019.

Engineering, Mike Rakowski

Update on Franklin Square Station:

Mike Rakowski reported that today was an exciting day as we actually broke ground. We put fences up so 7th Street is closed from Race Street to Vine Street.

CEO Hanson reported that we are actually a little behind schedule in starting the construction because we had some difficult negotiations with the City and Philadelphia Historic; however, the issues have been resolved. CEO Hanson stated that we are not taking any space from Chinatown, we are taking a small portion from Franklin Square. It's been about 26 months that we've been working on this project.

GM Rink added that our Government Relations Department and the community had numerous meetings with Chinatown along with the group that owns the Park. CEO Hanson said no one is happy when you are digging up the street and rerouting traffic; however, Philadelphia Historic has been the most vocal as they are the operators of Franklin Square. The complicated issues are that we received a broad set of rights to that area and the agreement with the City of Philadelphia is from 1932. So, in 1932, the agreement gave us broad rights to be able to do a lot of things throughout the station at that time. Somewhere in the intervening years, between 1932 and now, the City of Philadelphia granted many of those same rights to Historic Philadelphia. The City of

Philadelphia has a different view of this but, from our perspective, they had no right to do it. The rights we had were permanent and it complicated matters because Historic Philadelphia felt we were abrogating their rights and we do not see it that way. So, we needed to work things out and we have done that. Chinatown and the Chinatown organization, Mr. Chen, are all largely satisfied. But your thoughts about the grand opening and making sure we have it in appropriate languages will be a little further down the line.

Mike Rakowski added that we had stakeholder meetings and have translated all slides to Mandarin, and we have run it by them to make sure there was proper translation in how we presented things. They are happy with the traffic patterns as that was their biggest concern. Today, I drove the area and the park was full.

Mike Rakowski was asked if there was a webcam in the area and he responded that the cameras have not yet been set-up.

CEO Hanson added that we are working on the waterline this week because that must be removed and replaced. There is a fence up in that area and we just started the construction.

PATCO General Manager, John Rink

Status of regular updating of static GTFS:

GM Rink reported that Mike Williams has been working with our GTFS Vendor and Google to make the real-time feed. They're currently testing the custom-built dashboard that they created that allows us to upload our schedules and convert them to the format. They have been testing the status of the trip updates by using the service updates from April 6th. There is still more testing to do but it looks positive, and we hope to have it done in a couple of weeks.

CEO Hanson added that we identified someone in the equipment department that can do that work. GM Rink added that the employees who prepare the schedules can also do that work.

Update on countdown clock:

GM Rink reported that he does not have much on this topic. He added that our fonts are fixed per the sign manufacturer. We cannot change the fonts and they can only be done in red. We are still working with the sign manufacturer and the software company that is running the countdown clocks to see if we can increase the font size. We do not have many options with the signage that we currently have.

Feedback on terminal station countdowns:

GM Rink reported that he has seen it personally as he sat on the train and watched the countdown correctly leaving Lindenwold. We have a countdown clock at each of the terminal stations letting riders know how many minutes until departure. They're all working, and we haven't had any issues, or any problems reported.

Jeff Kessler stated that his feedback is to the contrary. He stated that the clock was working counting down to the schedule time, but a couple of weeks ago when he was traveling on a Saturday, there was a supplement in effect. It was counting down the scheduled time and the

scheduled time was ten minutes prior to and ten minutes after the special track schedule. There were a number of people on the platform thinking they had ten minutes until the departure and missed it because the train departed on the supplement schedule in time. So, if you do not have the ability to pull it from the GTFS, is there anyway that you will be able to suppress the schedule countdowns or make it clear that it is base schedule countdown.

John Boyle added that he too saw the same thing happen last night. He was coming from the Philllies game expecting a 10:42 p.m. train. He added that he looked earlier in the day for a special schedule and did not see one. When he was on the platform waiting for the 10:42 p.m. at 12th/13th, the countdown was going down to zero and then went back to 20. I checked ridepatco.org and was surprised to see that based on the schedule. I thought it was based on sensors along the track.

GM Rink stated that he will look into it. At the terminal stations, the trains have their doors open at all times. If riders are waiting on the platform in Lindenwold, I am not sure why they did not go into the train car because I rarely see anyone on the platform as they are all waiting inside the actual train car. He added that he thinks they were walking down to different car thinking they had time and then the doors closed.

Jeff Kessler also wanted to clarify one comment about the font size as it's not so much changing the size which is hardcoded by the number of lines but making it use two on the four lines for countdown departures that way it's easier to see - one line for a header being the height of two and then another subtitle line, if possible.

GM Rink reported that is what we are working on to try to make it larger. He agreed that each side has four lines, and he will look into the timing.

Opportunity to transition to electronic Freedom Card auto renewal notices:

GM Rink reported that PATCO's card is different from SEPTA's. Jeff Kessler stated that this was his Agenda item as he received a mailing that his credit card was about to expire and if he wanted to renew it, he can mail back a paper form. He happened to receive it when he visited his parents because that house address is still on file. It would be easier if I received an e-mail stating my credit card is about to expire.

GM Rink reported that he will look into that with fare collection, but our cards have a ten-year shelf life and there is not an expiration date. So, in nine and a half years, we reach out to all the card holders and most times the e-mail address that was provided does not work anymore. Then we mail it out and their home address is not correct either. The only difference is the Senior Citizens and those with disabilities expire in five years because they must come in and show physical documents. I will look into notifying a customer if a credit card is expiring, but it is up to the customers to keep that data updated.

Old Business:

Upcoming Advance Notice on Public Events (mid-April to mid-May)

GM Rink reported that he e-mailed everyone about the event that was supposed to take place last Saturday in Collingswood. It has been rescheduled to this coming Saturday.

DRPA CAC recruitment ideas

CEO Hanson reported that it is being worked on by Mike Williams. There is signage at all the PATCO Stations, but not on the BFB walkway. Advertisement has also been placed on social media.

Reggie Haynes stated that with a lot of people still working from home they are not necessarily seeing the signage, so we have to be a little more creative with ideas and how we are going to market this group.

New Business:

DRPA CAC Board Elections

The CAC unanimously passed a motion to reinstate the following:

Reggie Haynes	Chair
Alan Becker	Vice Chair
Daniel Norfleet	Secretary

Members moving to Emeritus Status:

Reggie Haynes stated that he is going to maintain a list of all members to determine who is eligible to become Emeritus. In May, Mike Devlin will become Emeritus Status. Another member will be eligible in September. The remaining members are good through 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2027.

Judy Boldurian asked what her Emeritus status was so she could reapply as member. Reggie Haynes stated that he will check the dates again but believes it is August so Judy will be able to reapply in September 2022.

Scott Cohen's nomination to the Audit Committee

Scott Cohen is ready to move forward to the Audit Committee after attending four meetings which has been scheduled in June 2022.

Next CAC Meeting: Will be held via Hybrid on May 11, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

Next DRPA Board Meeting: Will be held Hybrid (Conference Call & In-Person) on April 20, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.