

Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Advisory Board Minutes
Meeting Wednesday, November 7, 2018 9:30am

Attendance: Jim Destino, Paul Talbot, David Gardner, Felicia Webb, Mitchell Vieira , Tony Marino, Stephanie Jackson, Laurel Eisenhauser, Bill Nelson, Jackie LaFlam, Bob Ryan

Call to order by Jim Destino 9:30am

Jim Destino: Request a letter appointing Laurel Eisenhauser for Essex and Tony Marino for Ipswich to the Board and submit it to CATA.

Jim Destino said today's agenda is about Paul retiring at the end of the year and the succession planning. As chair I want to put a process in place on hiring a new administrator. Also, if no objections I want to call an executive meeting just board members after to discuss litigation strategies.

Jim: I asked Paul for the job description documents, the bylaws, the state statues and the state statue is clear that the Advisory Board has the authority to vote on a new Administrator. This is an opportunity to take a look how it all works. After having a long standing Administrator for so many years. I spent the weekend looking at the other 14 RTAs and we are the smallest ridership and we need to find a way to expand. We need to address the audits and findings. CATA is the only RTA that has findings that need to be looked at. Also, my recommendation is to change auditors every five years. CATA has had the same auditor for 30 years. I spoke to Tom Schavione and he said the best practice is to change auditors every five years. CATA has had the same for 30 years.

Paul is leaving at the end of the year and I want the board to weigh in on forming a committee for the hiring of a new Administrator. If you or you know anyone who would want to serve on that committee we will put a steering committee together. It is not in the bylaws but general laws say the Board can do whatever we want to hire. Felicia has been running the show and has been terrific at what she has been doing. If this goes beyond the end of the year I as Chair would and hope the Board would appoint her Interim Administrator and she should get the salary that goes with it. She should have every opportunity to apply for the job. I heard before that there was a succession plan about her getting the job, but that was not a succession plan it was just stated in the minutes at a meeting.

Bill Nelson made a comment that things have changed over 30plus years ago maybe Paul could write up what he feels where CATA should be going in the future.

Jim: "I have no objections to an exit interview in writing from Paul Talbot about the future for CATA."

Paul Talbot: A little over 4 years I recommended a succession in place for when I retire. We did have a selection committee, we advertised, we interviewed 3 candidates and only 2 qualified. Felicia had the most experience with over 20 years. I ran into Jim Scanlon Administrator for Lowell and he had nothing but high praise for Felicia and highly recommended. I was hoping that she would replace me when I retired. She purchased a home here and also joined the Rotary and has taken an active role in this community.

Jim: I appreciate that comment but we are talking about a succession plan and hiring an Assistant Administrator is not a succession plan, it did not say anywhere that it was a succession plan and you were hiring her to take your position. Jim also said if that was a promise to Felicia I respect that and she has done a great job and she will have an inside track on the position. Your recommendation goes a long way towards that. Are you saying the Board should not look at the job description and go out for the hiring of this position?

Paul: I understand.

Bill: It was discussed and the Board assumed that she would replace him.

Stephanie: I recall you saying you took a reduction in salary and hours and she would be brought on.

Jim Destino: The Board is different now with new members he stated we need to set up a process for search committee and also read the job description. It seems very broad the job description and it needs to be looked at, probably was written when Paul started. So we need to look at it I think it would help.

Tony Marino: Is it an equal voting board?

Bill Nelson: It was always that Gloucester had the primary vote but that is not so anymore.

Jim Destino: Let me talk about the structure of the Board and our bylaws. Every June we are suppose to select a chairperson. The Mayor appointed me just like selectmen appointed you. The bylaws say that the officers should elect officers that's in our bylaws. The chair is elected, the vice chair and the clerk are elected every June by the Advisory Board. Can we add the election of officers to the December agenda?

Bill: The Mayor told me she had the final vote she has 2 votes and I have 1.

Jim Destino: When I asked the RTAs they said we run ours with an equal vote and an equal share. I don't understand how I have 50% of the vote. There is some information about Gloucester population and 49.4% of the weighted vote. What does that mean?

Felicia: In 161B the % votes are based on the assessment and the voting process. The Board can use their percentage for the vote or 1 for 1.

Jim Destino: I didn't see that in the bylaws so I don't know where this come from. It doesn't say anything about that structure of voting. All our communities are impacted and I feel that we should have equal say and if something controversial comes up we should deal with it then.

David Gardner: I think you articulated it very well, Jim is trying to make everyone a part and their vote is the same. Under the general law, like Felicia said, there is a formula and if a matter came up and 2 communities were passionate about then the weighted vote would count. I have never seen it happen that way.

Tony Marino: I would like to give everyone a fair shake at it.

Jim Destino: We will get a group together and whoever wants to be in the group just email me. We will set up a time for a meeting and put an agenda together. Everyone will read the job description at the same time all of us should be looking at the job description and if you have input on other issues that you think is important then forward it so we can put a timeline together. We will advertise and narrow it down to key people and always keep the board involved in that. When the time comes to a couple of finalist we will interview them. Having said that it really is the only thing on our agenda except I want to discuss with the board members another issue I am going to ask the administration to leave and just asked The Board members to stay.

Jim Destino Moved to go into Executive Session at 10:15
Seconded by Stephanie Jackson
All in Favor