

# Memorandum

SR 24-311

Date: July 27,2024

To: AC Transit Board

From: Diane Shaw and Murphy McCalley

RE: Notes from the American Public Transit Association (APTA) Transit Board Member Seminar held in San Jose, CA July 14-17, 2024

## **Session: Setting Your Board Up for Success**

Discussion focused on:

- Critical features of a functional board.
- The leadership role and responsibility of TBMs.
- Establishing an effective relationship with the CEO.
- The TBM-TBA relationship, and.
- Successfully attracting and onboarding new TBMs

Key Takeaways:

- Focus on the big rocks and not the pebbles
- Board must not focus on the weeds but on transformational issues
- Board members need to clear the path outside of the organization
- We all need to succeed together to help our communities succeed
- The Board/CEO relationship is critical to the success of the organization
- Trust is the most important thing between a Board and the CEO
- Important to have standards of conduct and code of ethics defined
- Need to be supportive and honest in a healthy respective way
- Our CEOs are a key aspect to our organization, and we need to treat them like that and protect them
- Must have common goals
- Assessments should be done yearly so that they are expected and not something to be afraid of. And to insure you're still working to a common goal.
- They suggest meeting individually between CEO and board members ahead of meetings so that at the meeting you all talk with one voice.
- No one wants to be surprised and that goes both ways
- Another reason to meet individually is that you ensure board members are prepared for meetings.
- Do need to discuss what kind of communication is important to each BM.

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- Orientation is very important and might even take up to a year.
- One organization does yearly workshops with board-on-board governance. Even if they don't have any new members.

Additional sessions were held on Transit in the Bay Area, Federal Legislation updates, Communicating Economic Value of Transit, Developing an effective CEO/Transit Board Member relationship, Navigating Bus Procurements, Innovations in transit, and Transit Workforce and Labor Relations. Below are some highlights:

### **Session: Addressing Public & Employee Security**

- Safety and security becoming a bigger part of the team. Need to be more proactive and not just reactive.
- Tri Met has almost 500 people in safety and security which includes their ambassadors. Their campaign was called Reimagine Public Safety and it's been very successful. Mostly all unarmed personnel. They give monthly updates to board on what they are doing because it is so critical.
- RTD has 80 officers moving to over 100.
- Transit can be an island when it comes to politics, funding, etc. and yet we are so affected by what is going on in our communities.
- We can no longer ignore the social issues and the transit system needs to be reflective of your community in general.
- When asked about fare enforcement, they said, you just need to be visible which helps with enforcement as well as safety.
- Security audits should be done regularly as well as security certifications for programs and not just projects.
- VTA and Portland have contracted armed security while RTD has brought it all in house.
- All "after action" reports should be provided to the board
- Safety should be reflected in our policies and budget
- TriMet contracts with the District Attorney's office for two FTE dedicated to transit
- AB 1730 would restrict passengers riding the system

**Sessions: Bus Procurement Zero Emission Buses and Federal Procurement Regs** Moderated by President Joel Young

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- Bus manufacturing industry is down to two vendors. Ideas to help the industry survive include, 1. reduce customization of buses 2. Make progress payments and upfront payments, and 3. Index pricing and equity contract adjustments.
- Should have a procurement plan for all acquisitions and ongoing contracts. Instead of SOW should be looking at statement of objectives
- Adds time and cost when Board Members drill down on contracts and go into too many details. You can have an acquisition plan which includes a milestone chart to keep board updated.
- Need to understand when technology gets in the way of delivering service. Need to learn to pivot when it doesn't do what you expect.
- Relationships can be better than data
- FTA defined the difference of a "Single Source" vs. "Sole Source"

### **Session: Ensuring a Robust Transit Labor Relations**

- Lane Transit lost 50 percent of its new recruits i.e., they didn't know job was harder than expected (shifts, security, etc.).
- LACMTA developed an Emerging Leadership Academy for front line/mid-level management
- VTA has a mentor program
- MTI has a good summer program for high school, transit leadership programs, elementary students, and other research papers that might be of interest.