

**Delaware River Port Authority**

**Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes**

**November 10, 2015**

**Attendance:**

NJ – Judy Boldurian, Martin Otremsky, John Boyle, Steve Benigno, Jeff Kessler, Jonathan Latko, Kathy Venuti

PA – Bob Melikian, Michael Rochester, Tom Jordan, Larry Davis

DRPA Staff: John Hanson, Ben Cornelius, Dawn Whiton, David Gentile, Kyle Anderson

Other: Mike Devlin

**Call to Order**

**Adoption of Minutes from October 14, 2015 meeting**

Minutes of the October 14, 2015 meeting were approved.

**Report of David Gentile, Inspector General**

David Gentile gave a brief overview of his bio, his department and his goals of introducing new ideas. Robert Melikian asked as to whether he felt he was “independent”. David Gentile replied “Yes, absolutely”. Jonathan Latko asked about the reporting structure. David Gentile responded that he reports directly to the Audit Committee and administratively to CEO John Hanson. Michael Rochester asked how large his staff was. Mr. Gentile replies that there were 4 individuals along with a new position of IT compliance specialist. The position has been posted and interviews will be starting. Mike Rochester asked if it would be possible for CAC members to participate in the interviews. Mr. Gentile thank Mr. Rochester and also replied that he felt that it would not be appropriate and that it may be viewed as a conflict of interest. Mr. Gentile stated that he has taken the same position with the Commissioners. Mr. Rochester stated that he did not agree with Mr. Gentile’s answer. Mr. Gentile further elaborated by stating that he himself would not be sitting on the interviewing panel so as not to open up for more criticism. Mr. Gentile stated that upon the decision of the final interviewers, he would bring their credentials to the committee for their information and consultation. Mr. Rochester stated that one of the problems we had, not so much with Mr. Hanson, was that this committee was considered “outside” and we would like to be more involved. David Gentile stated that there is a proprietary level that must be maintained and never breaching that level of confidentiality. I can answer your questions if I could and discuss anything with you discussed in open session, but not discussed in closed session. Mr. Rochester informed the IG that they had all signed non-disclosure agreement for internal information. Again, Mr. Gentile stated that he would do his best to answer any questions if it is his realm without violating a confidence.

Kathy Venuti stated that a year ago, the former IG had a conference call with the committee and is concerned with the independence of the actual audit reports, the former IG also mentioned names and departments. These were strong issues from the last IG and have you seen these reports. How many reports have you completed since you have come on Board? IG Gentile replied that there have been 3 reports, 1 completed and can be released to the public and 2 others are waiting to go to the board. The first was to do the OCIP program, and stated that the program is no longer in place. Kathy Venuti asked to view these report and are they up on the DRPA website? David Gentile said that the viewing of the completed report was fine and they were not on the DRPA website.

The second report is on an RFP of Risk Assessment for the entire authority designed to identify internal controls and weaknesses, opportunities for costs savings, upgrade internal controls. Ms. Venuti stated that how these reports different from the CGR and the Management Report? IG Gentile responded that the Management Reports are mandated. Ms. Venuti expressed concerns that these finding will never been implemented and will never be done.

The third report is for all monies spent on outside counsel fees spent over the last 5 years and have asked for an accounting on outside consultants. IG Gentile realized that the change in culture here is not done overnight and doesn’t come easily. He has experienced a few obstacles from commissioners. Another example of the fire and brimstone was that I had sent a memo inquiring as to the HRS hiring process because of the length of time it takes to fill a position and then perhaps offer strategies how we could compress the process.

Ms. Venuti agrees stating that we would asked a question and it would take a year to get answered. We felt that if we partner with the IG’s office it would help us, but didn’t work out and now you are here. There are concerns that the reports will be redacted before we see them as was done previously. Mr. Gentile stated that he is not concerned about past issues with predecessor and what he did or didn’t do.

Ms. Venuti then asked about the economic development. What are the findings of the grand jury matter? IG Gentile stated that the matter has not been officially closed, but for all intents and purposes it is and that no indictments were ever issued. Ms. Venuto then asked the IG if he would come back in three months to give a status update and Mr. Gentile replied affirmatively.

Jonathan Latko asked if there were several commissioners that recruited him. Mr. Gentile replied yes. Mr. Latko asked from which state and Mr. Gentile responded that it was from both.

## **PATCO**

Mr. Latko asked Mr. Cornelius about recycling on the platforms and lack thereof. There are no clearly marked containers for recycling. Ben Cornelius replied that he would look into the matter. Questions about the current schedule and the change once the Westmont Viaduct started. Gaps are too big on the weekends. Perhaps running one extra train. Mr. Cornelius stated that after the Eagles and Phillies, still the numbers didn't warrant an extra train. Beef up capacity was requested when concerts are playing. Committee would like to revisit as project wraps up and at the end of the viaduct project.

Larry David asked what the status was for the GCL project. Ben Cornelius stated that he had no knowledge of the status. Mr. Davis asked what the debt service was for PATCO and Mr. Cornelius stated never profitable. Mr. Davis asked if there was anything new on the request of discounts for PATCO. Mr. Cornelius stated that he was unaware if there was.

Mr. Kessler asked about a fence of ½ the parking lot in the Westmont Station. Mr. Cornelius confirmed that there are 60 spots reserved for heavy equipment for the Westmont viaduct and that it would remain this for the duration of the 2 year project.

A question was also asked about the \$1.00 charge to park in the Freedom Card parking lots on the weekend and the need to have to walk further – can you just charge the \$1.00 for M-F only. Mr. Cornelius stated that he would look into that and get back to the committee.

Mr. Melikian asked about refurbished cars' warranty and Mr. Cornelius replied that it would be 2 years from date of acceptance. There are 24 cars – 20 have been accepted. Last shipment is being held up with negotiation on the inductor whining sound – Alston is advising the sound is within decibel contract specifications and PATCO believes it is not. The sound is awful and the smoothing reactor needs to get fixed now before more cars can come through.

Mike Devlin stated that he was impressed with the Ambassador Project and asked if anyone was allowed to settle and rest on the stairway. Are the ambassadors not allowed to move them off the steps or is it not within their purview? Mr. Cornelius stated that it was within their purview and he would speak to them.

Martin Otremsky asked if the Freedom Card was serviced in house. Mr. Cornelius stated affirmatively and Mr. Otremsky stated that they do a great job.

Mr. Melikian asked if a press release could be put out again as they need more Pennsylvania Applicants for the CAC.

Jonathan Latko asked about the signage on the platforms in terms of "next train" information. Mr. Cornelius stated that the old cars/SCADA system is not equipped to handle it but the capability is there on the new cars. The next-train system will allow for the monitors and scrolling LED signs that can be changed. Won't be completed until all cars have been accepted. Mr. Latko asked if the CAC can advertise on this system in the stations. Mr. Cornelius stated that he would look into it, but he did not see any issues.

## **Report of the Vice Chairman**

No Report of the Vice-Chairman

## **Subcommittee Reports**

**A. Recruitment:** Bob Melikian asked that DRPA put out another press release for applicants in PA

**B. Personnel** – No Report of the Personnel Committee.

**C. Transit/PATCO:** Mr. Cornelius covered same.

**D. Finance:** Ms. Venuti asked how and who would be presenting questions?

## **Old Business –**

Is the walkway ramp in the capital program? Would like to ask Mike Venuto to come back and speak about the Bike Ramp. Mr. Melikian would like responses to questions that were asked at DRPA Board Meeting. Dawn will go through DRPA minutes to see if responses were given and send to committee.

### **New Business Open Forum -**

Jeff Kessler stated that using SEPTA CAC as a model, they give recommendations to employees. Are we interested in recognizing from messages from public to commend DRPA employees? Also, SEPTA CAC does an annual banquet.

**\*Next CAC Meeting January 13, 2016 @ 6:00 p.m.**

**\*\*DRPA Board Meeting Date: December 9, 2015 @ 9:00 a.m. at the One Port Center.**

Adjourn.