

SAN FRANCISCO BAY FERRY
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA WATER EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

[March 5, 2026]

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority met in regular session at the Bay Area Metro Center at 375 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA and via videoconference.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair James Wunderman called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Directors Present in San Francisco: Chair James Wunderman

Vice Chair Moyer

Director Jessica Alba

Director Michael Henneberry

Directors Present Remotely:

None

Absent:

Director Pippin Dew

Chair Wunderman led the Pledge of Allegiance. He welcomed directors, staff, and meeting guests, noted that the meeting was being conducted in person and by videoconference and was being recorded, and explained how guests could provide public comment and sign up to speak during the meeting.

3. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Wunderman noted his recent communication with Governor Gavin Newsom regarding SF Bay Ferry's progress and thanked the SF Bay Ferry and Blue & Gold Fleet (Blue & Gold) for their diligence and commitment to transportation.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Vice Chair Moyer shared highlights from her January trip to Whidbey Island accompanied by staff to attend the keel-laying ceremony for a new 400-passenger electric ferry at Nichols Brothers Boat Builders (NBBB). She noted the 40-year partnership with the shipyard and praised its skilled workforce. She thanked the staff and all involved for the great work.

Vice Chair Moyer also recognized MacKenzie Communications President Janis MacKenzie for being profiled as a "woman of inspiration" in the *San Francisco Examiner* in an article written by Ali Wunderman.

Chair Wunderman added that he had attended the keel-laying for a 150-passenger vessel in Bellingham, Washington.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF

Executive Director Seamus Murphy introduced SF Bay Ferry WETA Legal Counsel Katherine Tsou of Hanson Bridgett to present guidelines for political activities related to the Connect Bay Area Revenue Measure. Ms. Tsou noted that a fact sheet describing how the agency would use revenues if the measure were approved would be permissible, but that care must be taken not to cross into advocacy.

Capital Planning Manager Chad Mason presented a status update on the Berkeley Pier Ferry Project. He explained that the project's purpose is to revitalize the historic Berkeley Pier for dual use as a public recreational pier and a zero-emission ferry terminal.

Vice Chair Moyer asked about the previously identified challenge of vessel draft and ingress and egress at the terminal. Mr. Mason noted that the environmental process is clearing a larger footprint to accommodate a range of vessel sizes.

In response to a question from Chair Wunderman about the project timeline to construction, Mr. Mason indicated that the current target is 2028–2029, contingent upon securing grant funding.

Director of Operations & Customer Experience Thomas Hall presented an overview of the March 2026 schedule changes, focusing on the two he described as having the biggest impacts and the biggest opportunities for current and potential riders.

Mr. Murphy introduced and invited EV Maritime Founder and CEO Michael Eaglen to share his presentation about electric ferry development and project insights. Mr. Eaglen discussed challenges encountered during the project and offered key takeaways.

Government and Regulatory Affairs Specialist Terence Candell reported that the bipartisan Congressional Ferry Caucus introduced the Federal Enhancement and Revitalization of Reliable Infrastructure for Essential Seaways Act (FERRIES) Act. Mr. Candell explained that the bill would expand several federal ferry programs established under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, strengthen funding for existing ferry grant programs, establish a new program supporting fleet modernization, vessel electrification, and domestic shipyard capacity, clarify eligibility between federal programs, and expand access to funding for both urban and rural ferry operators.

Transportation Planner Gabriel Chan presented the ridership report for January 2026 and a preview of the encouraging February 2026 ridership numbers. Mr. Chan invited Manager of Public Information and Marketing Alexis Matsui to talk about some of the winter promotions that helped to bolster ridership.

Ms. Matsui described the Winter Ferry Fun campaign, which she stated was the major driver of ridership growth seen over the winter months. The campaign, which offered promotional fare products, was designed to address a historically observed dip in recreational ridership from November through January.

Mr. Murphy invited Chief Capital Program Officer Gary Griggs to present the quarterly review of the capital program covering the period through December 31, 2025. Mr. Griggs shared his presentation summarizing key activities during the quarter. He addressed the complex challenge of the downtown San Francisco electrification. Chair Wunderman noted the deadline approaching for the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) commitment and offered to assist in elevating discussions with San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) if needed.

Mr. Murphy provided written reports and offered to answer any questions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Team Folds Representative Aleta Dupree addressed the Board about the electrification program.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Vice Chair Moyer made a motion to approve the consent calendar:

- a. Approve Board Meeting Minutes – January 8, 2026
- b. Approve Amendment to Agreement with Maze & Associates for Independent Financial Auditing Services to Extend the Term for an Additional Two Years
- c. Designate Authorized Agents to Apply for Federal or State Disaster Assistance Funds
- d. Approve Contract Award to Bay Ship & Yacht Co. for MV *Dorado* Repairs and Drydock Services
- e. Approve Contract Award to Marine Group Boat Works, LLC for Quarter Life Services for the MV *Hydrus*

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Alba seconded the motion, and the consent calendar carried unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

7. APPROVE ACTIONS RELATIVE TO AGREEMENT # 25-049 WITH MARINE GROUP BOAT WORKS, LLC FOR MV INTINTOLI REPAIRS AND DRY DOCK

Senior Project Manager Jeffery Powell presented this item recommending approving the following actions relative to Agreement No. 25-049 with Marine Group Boat Works, LLC (MGBW) for the MV *Intintoli* Repairs and drydock project:

- (1) Approve Amendment No. 1 to Agreement No. 25-049, increasing the total contract amount by \$830,217, resulting in a new total contract amount of \$1,385,282;
- (2) Establish a new 25% contingency for Agreement No. 25-049 in the amount of \$346,320; and
- (3) Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute Amendment No. 1 and take any other related actions necessary to support this work.

Mr. Powell explained that the 29-year-old vessel underwent its routine standard biennial U.S. Coast Guard inspection which resulted in findings requiring correction before a new Certificate of Inspection would be issued. Mr. Powell expressed particular concern that several of these findings were not identified until the vessel reached the shipyard.

Director of Project Delivery and Engineering Timothy Hanners provided additional context and noted that a third-party naval architect survey had been conducted on the vessel and did not flag any of the identified issues. Mr. Hanners stated that staff is in the process of debriefing with all relevant parties and is considering engaging additional outside naval architect firms for third-party fleet inspections going forward.

Mr. Powell confirmed that the MV *Intintoli* is currently the oldest vessel in the fleet and is slated to be retired in approximately 2028, making the repairs necessary to sustain reliable service through that date.

Vice Chair Moyer expressed significant concern about what the findings imply for overall maintenance oversight. She questioned whether a safety stand-down had been conducted and whether all vessels had been comprehensively inspected.

Mr. Powell clarified that regulatory thresholds are designed to trigger corrective action before safety is jeopardized.

Chair Wunderman echoed concerns and encouraged staff to examine the inspection culture.

Director Henneberry made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-08 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Vice Chair Moyer seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

8. AUTHORIZE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO AMEND PIER 48 FERRY DOCK LEASE WITH PORT OF SAN FRANCISCO AND ENTER INTO A LANDING RIGHTS AGREEMENT WITH SWITCH MARITIME

Mr. Murphy presented this item recommending authorizing the Executive Director (i) to enter into an amendment to the SF Bay Ferry's lease with the Port of San Francisco (Port) for continued and expanded use of the Pier 48 Ferry Terminal and (ii) to enter into a long-term limited landing rights agreement with SWITCH Maritime for landing rights at the Oakland and Pier 48 Terminals in exchange for the lump sum payment of \$500,000.

Mr. Murphy outlined several benefits of the agreement for SF Bay Ferry. First, it supports continued operation of the MV *Sea Change*. Second, it establishes commute ferry service to Mission Bay, building public awareness and support for the service SF Bay Ferry itself intends to operate in the future. Third, Switch Maritime will make a financial contribution toward replacement of the existing modular float at Pier 48 which is needed because the current float is planned to be relocated to Vallejo to support the Vallejo terminal reconfiguration project.

Director Alba made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-09 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Henneberry seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

9. AUTHORIZE RELEASE OF PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2024-28 FARE PROGRAM AMENDMENT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Director of Planning Michael Gougherty presented this item recommending authorizing the Executive Director to release the proposed Fiscal Year 2024-28 Fare Program Amendment for public comment.

Mr. Gougherty explained that the proposed Fare Amendment is intended to maintain competitive alignment with regional transit fares.

The Directors raised concerns about the complexity of the specific differential increases but expressed appreciation for early public outreach.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Wunderman referred the Directors to written comment submitted by Joanna Campbell.

Director Alba made a motion approving this item.

Director Henneberry seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

10. APPROVE CONTRACT AWARD TO THE WORKING WATERFRONT COALITION FOR PROVISION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Chief Financial Officer Erin McGrath presented this item recommending approving a contract award to the Working Waterfront Coalition (WWC) for the provision of workforce development training.

Ms. McGrath explained that a \$2 million workforce development allocation was included in the SF Bay Ferry's successful Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Ports Program grant, a grant that also funds a 400-passenger vessel and downtown electrification.

Ms. McGrath said that the proposed contract would provide \$2 million to the Working Waterfront Coalition over three years for maritime workforce training. Key components include a 10-week training program for new maritime industry entrants, a two-week water transportation skills program for deckhands and similar trainees, and a new training module being developed in collaboration with Cal Poly Maritime Academy focused on entry-level skills needed for electric vessels.

WWC Project Director Sal Vaca noted that the program originated two years ago. He expressed gratitude for the Board's encouragement, which he said had allowed the program to grow significantly, culminating in the graduation of the WWC fifth cohort.

The Directors thanked Mr. Vaca for the great work and his leadership.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU) San Francisco Regional Representative Marina Secchitano spoke in support of the item.

Director Henneberry made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-10 approving this item.

Vice Chair Moyer seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

11. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA WATER EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (SF BAY FERRY)

Mr. Murphy presented this item recommending the appointment of Lauren Gradia as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (SF Bay Ferry), following the departure of current CFO Erin McGrath.

Mr. Murphy said the search process yielded a strong candidate pool with the exact qualifications sought, which included transit finance experience and complex grant management and budgeting skills. He stated that Ms. Gradia rose to the top, noting that her Master's in Transportation Engineering positions her to support multiple departments.

Mr. Murphy also acknowledged that Ms. McGrath's departure was not immediate and that an overlap period had been arranged, confirming that this would not be her last Board meeting.

Chair Wunderman invited Ms. Gradia to address the Board. She expressed enthusiasm for SF Bay Ferry's work and ambitious projects. Chair Wunderman welcomed her warmly and acknowledged the challenging work ahead.

Vice Chair Moyer asked Ms. Gradia to speak to how strategy has played a role in her career to date. Ms. Gradia explained that she has served as Director of Finance and Capital Programs at Marin Transit for 20 years, having begun as a transportation planner before transitioning to finance because that was where the strategy was. She noted that Marin Transit is similarly transitioning to

a zero-emission fleet and that many of the strategies she has developed around financing that transition are directly parallel to what she has been learning about at SF Bay Ferry.

The Directors thanked Ms. McGrath for her contributions.

Ms. McGrath offered her own brief reflections. She noted she was familiar with Ms. Gradia during her own tenure at Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) and expressed confidence in the transition.

Vice Chair Moyer made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-11 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Alba seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

The Directors congratulated and welcomed Ms. Gradia.

12. APPROVE AMENDMENT TO FISCAL YEAR 2025/26 SALARY SCHEDULE

Mr. Murphy presented this item recommending approving the amendment to the fiscal year 2025/26 salary schedule to add a new position: Senior Director of Financial Strategy.

Mr. Murphy explained that while the agency reorganization has largely held up well, an emerging need has been identified in long-term financial analysis and budget strategy. The new position would be dedicated to assessing and developing options for financial sustainability including go it alone revenue strategies and implementing approved strategies. He framed it as an urgent need given the fiscal challenges on the horizon.

Chair Wunderman expressed support for the recommendation.

Vice Chair Moyer made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-12 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Henneberry seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

13. APPROVE SF BAY FERRY'S 2026 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Mr. Murphy introduced this item noting that Mr. Candell was available to provide some context on the item recommending approving SF Bay Ferry's 2026 Legislative Program.

Mr. Murphy offered to accept a motion directly in the interest of time noting that the written report outlined the key changes from the previous legislative program including a focus on Senate Bill (SB) 79 and the associated cleanup language.

Chair Wunderman confirmed he had read the report and found it thorough, and that he appreciated its recognition of the potential need to respond to unanticipated legislative situations. He did not request a formal presentation.

Director Henneberry made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-13 approving this item.

Chair Wunderman called for public comments, and there were none.

Director Alba seconded the motion, and the item passed unanimously.

Yeas: Alba, Henneberry, Moyer, Wunderman. Nays: None. Absent: Dew.

14. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Wunderman called for public comments for non-agenda items.

Ms. Secchitano addressed the Board regarding concerns about the recently issued Request for Proposal (RFP) related to ferry operations services.

International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots Regional Representative Sly Hunter addressed the Board expressing concerns about the compensation structure in the RFP.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

- Board Secretary

END