

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

[May 14, 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 1:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Directors Present in San Francisco: Chair James Wunderman
Vice Chair Monique Moyer
Director Pippin Dew
Director Rosanne Foust
Director Michael Henneberry

Directors Present Remotely: None
Absent: None

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.

3. REPORT OF BOARD CHAIR

Chair Wunderman opened his remarks by acknowledging the passing of Gary Griggs, former Chief Capital Program Officer of SF Bay Ferry, describing him as an exceptionally capable and deeply committed leader. Chair Wunderman outlined Mr. Griggs' distinguished career, which included leadership roles at Parsons Brinckerhoff, where he served as president and oversaw 2,900 employees across 86 offices and 1,700 projects throughout the Americas. Mr. Griggs had also provided capital program leadership for major regional projects including BART to Warm Springs, BART to Silicon Valley, the San Francisco Central Subway, and California High-Speed Rail. Chair Wunderman noted that Mr. Griggs had been recruited specifically to bring instant credibility and a proven track record to SF Bay Ferry's capital program and that his contributions would be felt throughout the organization's future work. The meeting would be adjourned in Mr. Griggs' honor. Chair Wunderman also remarked briefly on growing momentum at the state level in support of expanded ferry service in the Bay Area, expressing optimism about future results.

4. REPORTS OF DIRECTORS

Vice Chair Moyer echoed Chair Wunderman's remarks regarding Mr. Griggs, describing him as thoughtful, level-headed, and an effective contributor on critical projects, particularly in connection with the REEF electrification program. Vice Chair Moyer extended condolences to Mr. Griggs' family. Vice Chair Moyer also formally welcomed Director Rosanne Foust to the Board, commending her breadth of regional, national, and global experience.

Director Dew similarly acknowledged Mr. Griggs' passing and the lasting impact of his tenure. Director Dew also reported on the recent Vallejo Ferry Fest, noting that the event was well-attended, well-received across social media, and featured favorable weather.

Director Henneberry offered brief remarks acknowledging Mr. Griggs as a smart, dedicated professional who would be missed.

Director Foust thanked Assembly Speaker Rivas for her appointment and expressed appreciation for the Board, the Executive Director, and his staff. She noted that she had reviewed past meeting materials in preparation for her first meeting and expressed her commitment to contributing to the Board's work. Director Foust also acknowledged the chairs of the Port of Redwood City Commission, who were present in the audience.

Chair Wunderman noted that the meeting would be formally adjourned in memory of Gary Griggs and directed that this be reflected in the minutes.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF

Executive Director Seamus Murphy added his own tribute to Mr. Griggs, noting that Mr. Griggs had come to the agency following a peer review process conducted by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), which had recommended that WETA recruit a capital program leader. Mr. Murphy described Mr. Griggs as a mentor to the agency's relatively young team and noted that Mr. Griggs' children had visited the office shortly after his passing. Mr. Murphy indicated that the agency would seek opportunities to formally recognize Mr. Griggs' contributions at upcoming vessel deliveries, groundbreakings, and ribbon cuttings.

Director of Planning Michael Gougherty presented an update on behalf of the Pilot Committee, which is composed of Directors Dew and Henneberry. Mr. Gougherty provided background on the pilot service program, which was established in 2024 pursuant to the approval of the 2050 Service Vision and aims to test new technologies, gauge the potential of new markets, and evaluate innovative first-and-last-mile solutions.

Mr. Gougherty reported that six pilot projects have been completed or are currently underway. Notable among these are the Sea Change hydrogen fuel cell demonstration project (completed January 2025), the Oakland–Alameda Water Shuttle, and the Redwood City Ballpark Service.

Regarding the work program for Fiscal Year 2027, Mr. Gougherty highlighted four initiatives:

Oakland–Alameda Water Shuttle Extension: The shuttle, originally scoped for two years, will be extended for an additional two years using funding secured by the City of Alameda through the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC). Mr. Gougherty reported cumulative ridership of 103,000 passengers to date, representing a 25 percent increase over the prior year. The service has also been identified as a mitigation measure for the Oakland–Alameda Access Project, which will temporarily close key access routes onto Alameda Island.

First-and-Last-Mile Partnership: A partnership with the Working Waterfront Coalition (WWC), MTC, and Uber to provide free ride-hail connections between the training sites in Mare Island and Alameda and nearby regional transit for WWC program trainees. The program has received positive feedback and will be extended into the next fiscal year.

Full-Foiling Battery-Electric Hydrofoil Demonstration: Staff are developing a pilot to offer full-foiling, zero-emission ferry technology manufacturers an opportunity to operate in a live service environment. The proposed concept would deploy the technology as a supplemental service on the Vallejo route, with an external funding source sought to cover vessel and incremental operating costs. Potential operation is targeted for as early as late Fiscal Year 2028. U.S. Coast Guard certification was identified as a key prerequisite.

New TNC Pilot at a Ferry Terminal: Inspired by a recent Uber–BART partnership offering discounted ride-hail access to BART stations, staff intend to design and implement a similar

TNC pilot at a yet-to-be-determined ferry terminal. Outreach to Uber and city partners is underway.

The total Fiscal Year 2027 Pilot budget includes approximately \$1.2 million for the Oakland–Alameda Water Shuttle, funded entirely by external partners, and \$150,000 in the planning and administration budget for consultant services to further develop the remaining three initiatives.

Director Dew expressed enthusiasm for the foiling vessel technology and the potential for future technologies capable of accessing shallower waters, citing Hercules as an example. Director Henneberry concurred with the interest in expanding to new service areas. Chair Wunderman expressed support for exploring shallow-water vessel technologies and referenced past interest from communities along the Carquinez Strait, including Benicia, Martinez, Hercules, Pittsburg, and Antioch.

Government and Regulatory Affairs Manager Lauren Gularte reported two updates. First, staff met with the office of Congressman Sam Liccardo to offer support for the "Save Willy Act," a bill intended to reduce whale strikes in San Francisco Bay by establishing two dedicated positions within Coast Guard Vessel Traffic Service to receive and disseminate whale-sighting information to mariners. Second, Ms. Gularte reported that Senator Schiff had submitted WETA's application for the Harbor Bay Electrification Project, which requested \$1.6 million for battery procurement. She noted this was one of 65 projects statewide selected by the Senator and, if awarded, would represent the agency's fourth federal earmark in five years.

Mr. Gougherty presented the ridership report. He highlighted three notable data points: (1) ridership has exceeded FY 2019 levels for five consecutive months; (2) April 2026 ridership reached 104 percent of April 2019 levels, marking an all-time high for the month of April, following a record March 2026; and (3) staff have refined their ridership capacity metrics to track "max outs" (trips at or above 99 percent capacity) and "near full" trips (at or above 80 percent capacity).

Chair Wunderman noted the strong ridership results and raised a concern regarding a projected 16 percent reduction in Regional Measure 2 (RM2) funding attributable to lower bridge toll revenues, questioning whether MTC's distribution formula should account for ferry ridership growth. Chief Financial Officer Lauren Gradia confirmed that the RM2 allocation is applied proportionally across recipients and that bridge crossings have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels, resulting in lower toll revenue across the board. Chair Wunderman indicated his intent to continue that conversation with MTC. Chair Wunderman noted that the agency's reliability figures remain in the high nineties and commended staff on the agency's operational performance.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

Director Foust inquired whether the two consent calendar items could be separated given that she had not been seated at the time the April 9, 2026 meeting took place. WETA Legal Counsel Steven Miller confirmed that Directors are legally permitted to vote to approve minutes of meetings they did not attend, and Director Foust indicated she was comfortable proceeding with both items together. No Board member requested that either item be heard separately.

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

- a. Approve Board Meeting Minutes – April 9, 2026
- b. Approve Amendment No. 2 to Clipper BayPass Pilot Program Participation Agreement

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

Vice Chair Moyer seconded the motion, and the consent calendar carried unanimously.

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

7. APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO AGREEMENT 24-007 WITH JT MARINE TO EXERCISE OPTION FOR THIRD UNIVERSAL CHARGING FLOAT

Senior Project Manager Jan Rybka presented the request for authorization to exercise the option for a third float under Agreement 24-007 with JT Marine, at an additional cost of \$6,160,000. Mr. Rybka explained that the option float would be constructed as a structural float only, without charging systems or batteries, for the Vallejo Ferry Terminal Reconfiguration Project.

Mr. Rybka explained that the original plan had been to repurpose the existing Pier 48½ float for the Vallejo reconfiguration, but that Pier 48½ has since been determined to be needed for continued operations. By contrast, exercising the existing competitively bid option with JT Marine provides a standardized float dimension, reduces risk, supports JT Marine's learning curve for the broader UCF program, and maintains a cost roughly at parity with the originally planned approach. Mr. Rybka confirmed the Vallejo Terminal Reconfiguration Project is fully funded.

Chair Wunderman expressed support for retaining the Pier 48½ float, citing its value for emergency response operations given the density of the surrounding Mission Bay area.

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

Director Foust made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-17 approving this item.

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

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

8. APPROVE SALE OF THE MV BAY BREEZE

Interim Chief Capital Program Officer Timothy Hanners presented a request for authorization to finalize the sale of the MV Bay Breeze to the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) for \$1,600,000. Mr. Hanners noted that the Bay Breeze, built in 1994 by Nichols Brothers Boat Builders, is the oldest vessel in the SF Bay Ferry fleet at 31 years old — six years beyond the FTA's recommended useful life of 25 years for passenger ferry vessels.

Mr. Hanners identified several factors supporting the sale: California emissions requirements would necessitate significant future investment to keep the vessel operating; aging propulsion and support systems are becoming more maintenance-intensive; and retaining a conventional diesel vessel of this age does not align with the agency's long-term zero-emission fleet strategy. Even if retained as a reserve vessel, the Bay Breeze would cost approximately \$473,000 annually in insurance and maintenance. With newer vessels in the fleet, including the Dorado class, staff determined that the Bay Breeze no longer provides sufficient operational value to justify those ongoing costs. Proceeds from the as-is sale will be returned to the agency's general fund to support future vessel replacement and capital needs. Mr. Hanners also noted that Nichols Brothers, the original builder of the Bay Breeze, is currently constructing SF Bay Ferry's new 400-passenger electric vessels.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Member of the public Isabelle Hodge noted that the Bay Breeze is a beloved vessel and that she was pleased it would continue in public ferry service.

Director Henneberry made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-18 approving this item.

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

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

9. APPROVE VESSEL NAMES FOR FUTURE BATTERY-ELECTRIC FERRIES

Director of Operations and Customer Experience Thomas Hall and Communications and Marketing Manager Alexis Matsui presented the results of a public vessel naming process conducted in partnership with San Francisco Chronicle's Peter Hartlaub. The process, which was grounded in the Board-adopted vessel naming policy from 2023, solicited nominations from the public, received approximately 1,400 name submissions, and was narrowed to 27 finalists. A public poll hosted on the Chronicle's website received more than 26,000 votes.

Ms. Matsui presented the five names selected by the public in order of vote totals:

Seawolf — referencing Jack London's novel, whose opening scene is set on a San Francisco Bay ferry

Rosie — a tribute to the iconic World War II "Rosie the Riveter" figure, closely associated with the Bay Area

Farallon — named for the Farallon Islands off the coast of San Francisco

Doubtfire — a reference to the Robin Williams film character, set in San Francisco

Say Hey — a nod to San Francisco Giants legend Willie Mays

Staff confirmed that existing vessels carry informational plaques about their names and origins, and that the same treatment would be applied to the new vessels. Legal Counsel Miller confirmed that the Board retains authority to modify the list.

Board members expressed broad enthusiasm for the names and commended the public engagement process. Director Henneberry noted his own preferred name had not advanced but affirmed the strength of the final selections. Director Foust noted appreciation for the name Rosie. Director Dew praised the community engagement effort.

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

Director Dew made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-19 approving this item.

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

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

10. REVIEW PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2026/27 BUDGET AND SALARY SCHEDULE; AND ADOPT AMENDED RESERVE POLICY

Chief Financial Officer Lauren Gradia presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2026/27 budget and an amended reserve policy. Ms. Gradia acknowledged the work of the broader staff team, including Hector Lopez and Erin McGrath, in preparing the budget.

Ms. Gradia reviewed highlights from the proposed operations budget. The budget maintains current service levels and incorporates the four percent average fare increase reviewed at the April 2026 board meeting. It projects an 18 percent increase in fare revenue and continues the Oakland–Alameda Water Shuttle partnership. The budget reflects a \$10 million contribution to reserves, contingent upon adoption of the amended reserve policy. A notable cost driver is fuel: the agency is budgeting diesel at \$5.00 per gallon, a 24 percent increase over the current year's budget of \$4.20 per gallon. Operating costs are projected to increase approximately 10 percent, with a 14 percent increase in facility operations and maintenance costs due to the timing of maintenance projects.

Ms. Gradia outlined a set of draft fuel price thresholds to guide future action: if fuel prices remain above \$5.20 per gallon, staff would return to the Board as early as December to discuss a fuel surcharge or service reductions; if prices fall, staff would consider establishing a dedicated fuel reserve as an alternative to a formal hedging program.

Ms. Gradia discussed the proposed capital program budget. The total capital program stands at \$490 million, encompassing vessel maintenance, facility maintenance, and the REEF electrification program. The REEF program has an unfunded need of \$121 million, and staff emphasized the ongoing need to leverage Regional Measure 3 funds with additional grant revenue and to prioritize projects against the service plan.

Ms. Gradia presented the proposed amended reserve policy. The policy update segments the operations reserve into a contingency reserve and an emergency reserve, each with defined minimum and maximum targets. The contingency reserve is intended to absorb normal revenue and expense fluctuations. A ten-year financial outlook was presented, illustrating that the agency maintains adequate reserves within a five-year horizon under baseline conditions, that SB 63 funding would significantly improve the long-term outlook, and that service expansion beyond the baseline would require additional partner revenues.

Chair Wunderman commended the quality of the budget presentation and suggested the Board consider establishing a task force or focused effort to address the agency's long-term financial position. Ms. Gradia recommended waiting until the outcomes of the ferry service operations solicitation and SB 63 are known.

Director Foust expressed strong appreciation for the transparency of the budget document and echoed Chair Wunderman's interest in monitoring the long-term financial picture.

Director Dew expressed support for a fuel reserve concept, endorsing the idea of setting aside budget savings during periods of lower fuel costs for use during price spikes. Director Dew also noted support for the proposed budgeted fuel price increase, having raised concerns about fuel pricing at the prior year's budget process.

Vice Chair Moyer expressed concern about geopolitical uncertainty affecting commodity prices and inflation assumptions, noting that 3 percent general inflation may not fully capture current conditions. She voiced strong support for building reserves and called for scenario analysis to help the Board understand potential financial trajectories. Vice Chair Moyer also emphasized the importance of SB 63 to the agency's financial stability and observed that fuel costs approaching the same magnitude as labor costs is a significant concern.

Director Henneberry commended staff for the quality of work.

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

Director Moyer made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-20 approving the Amended Reserve Policy.

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

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

The full budget will be brought to the Board for formal approval at the June 11, 2026 meeting.

11. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INTERN CAPSTONE PROJECT: FERRIES FOR GROWTH

Mr. Gougherty introduced Transportation Planning Intern Alisa Horiike, a graduate of the Master of City Planning program at the University of California, Berkeley, who presented her capstone project titled Ferries for Growth.

Ms. Horiike's project examined the alignment between land use conditions and transit-oriented development (TOD) potential at three future or planned SF Bay Ferry terminal locations: Mission

Bay (San Francisco), Redwood City, and Berkeley. Her analysis employed geospatial tools, U.S. Census Bureau data and American Community Survey (ACS), onboard survey data from 2024, and a review of local plans and policies, as well as permitting and development pipeline data from the three cities.

Ms. Horiike's key findings included:

Mission Bay: As a destination terminal, the site benefits from over 27,000 jobs within a 15-minute walk, anchored by UCSF Mission Bay and Chase Center. The neighborhood's master-planned origins, which emphasized density, transit, and walkability, directly support ridership. Ms. Horiike recommended continued coordination with Caltrain and Muni to reduce transfer friction.

Redwood City: As a destination terminal, the driving catchment reveals over 170,000 jobs within a 15-minute drive and approximately 37,000 within a 15-minute walk. Given that 56 percent of survey respondents walked or biked to their final destination, Ms. Horiike recommended emphasis on bike and pedestrian infrastructure and coordination with bus operators to extend access to nearby employment centers.

Berkeley: As an origin terminal, proximity to residential population is the key metric. Approximately 25 percent of Berkeley workers commute into San Francisco, representing a significant potential ridership base. However, very few people currently live within walking distance of the terminal, and regulatory constraints significantly limit adjacent development potential. Ms. Horiike recommended prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure connecting downtown Berkeley and University Avenue to the terminal.

Ms. Horiike concluded that land use conditions such as walkability, density, and development are outside SF Bay Ferry's direct control, making interagency coordination the agency's most powerful tool, and that there is no one-size-fits-all TOD solution across the three terminals.

Chair Wunderman reflected on the rationale behind the Berkeley terminal siting decision and affirmed the importance of facilitating bicycle access to that terminal.

Director Foust recommended that the report be shared with the Port of Redwood City, the City of Redwood City, and the City of Berkeley, and acknowledged the value of the geospatial methodology employed.

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

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

(Note: Agenda items 12 and 13 were reordered at the Chair's direction, with public comment heard prior to the closed session.)

Chair Wunderman called for public comments for non-agenda items

Stan Maupin, Chair of the Port Commission for the Port of Redwood City, offered congratulations to Director Foust on her appointment, describing her as someone who exemplifies the meaning of public service and has a demonstrated ability to listen to all perspectives and identify practical solutions. Mr. Maupin also congratulated the full Board on the appointment and expressed the Port Commission's interest in continuing and strengthening the relationship between SF Bay Ferry and the Port of Redwood City.

13. RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION

The Board recessed into closed session to discuss the performance evaluation of the Executive Director pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b). The Board reconvened in open session and Chair Wunderman stated that there was no reportable action taken in closed session.

With all business concluded, Chair Wunderman adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:30 p.m. in memory of Gary Griggs, former Chief Capital Program Officer of SF Bay Ferry.

- Board Secretary

END