

MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING OF THE GASPARILLA ISLAND
BRIDGE AUTHORITY
April 22, 2020

A Quarterly Board Meeting of the Gasparilla Island Board of Supervisors was called to order at 10:00 am on April 22, 2020. The meeting was held via Zoom as permitted by State of Florida Office of the Governor Executive Order Number 20-69. This executive order allows Sunshine Law based legal entities to hold required meetings by telephone or video conferencing without a quorum present in the room. All other Sunshine Law requirements still apply. Voting Board Members present were Gay Darsie, Jay Feinberg, Bill Klettke, Drew Tucker, and Ginger Watkins. Advisory Members present were Randy Hicks and Jean Hoysradt. Also present was Executive Director Kathy Banson-Verrico, GIBA attorney Rob Berntsson, community volunteer Peter Strong, and advisory candidates Ronald Drake and Ken Richardson.

Chairman's Report

Peter Strong resigned as an advisory member of the GIBA Board. He will act as a community volunteer to GIBA and remain as Chairman of the Engineering Committee to work with Randy Hicks, as the successor Chairman in the future. The Governance Committee meeting that was scheduled for April was postponed. There will be a Governance/Board Member informational meeting scheduled in the fall. Bill Klettke was appointed as Chairman of the Governance Committee.

Public Comments/Questions on Agenda Items:

None

Advisory Board Candidates:

Two letters of interest were received regarding open advisory seats, #8 and #9. Both candidates for the positions participated in the electronic meeting, asking, and answering questions about the responsibilities. **On motion by Feinberg and seconded by Tucker, Ronald Drake was appointed to the advisory seat #8. On motion by Feinberg and seconded by Darsie, Ken Richardson was appointed to the advisory seat #9.**

Minutes Approval:

The next order of business was the approval of the minutes from the February 4, 2020 meeting. On the last line of the first paragraph under Old Business there was a typo. "note to excess" should read "not to exceed". **On motion by Feinberg and seconded by Darsie the minutes from the Quarterly Board Meeting on February 4, 2020 were unanimously approved as revised.**

Executive Director Report:

Covid 19

New safety measures to protect GIBA staff and customers from Covid 19 have been implemented. The administration building is closed to foot traffic with services provided through phone contact. To limit contact between the toll tender and the customer, a new toll policy was initiated to limit payment types to bridge pass or credit card. Staff has been instructed to collect cash if the customer does not have another form of payment. Staff has access to masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer at each workstation. While less staff hours were required due to the lockdown, each employee was guaranteed payment for same number of work hours as before the reduction in traffic.

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There was a discussion regarding the COVID 19 pandemic effects on local businesses and bridge pass holders. There were options discussed regarding the steps GIBA could take to try to help alleviate some of the economic strain due to forced shutdown. **After a lengthy discussion, on motion by Klettke and seconded by Feinberg the Board voted to extend each bridge pass account expiration date by 180 days. This extension applies to all accounts that were active on April 1, 2020. The vote was not unanimous with Darsie dissenting.** The Governor of Florida signed the Safer at Home Order on April 1, 2020. Staff will work with the toll system company and the change will be initiated by May 15th.

Traffic and Revenue

For the current fiscal year traffic and revenue were up 4% before the beach closure on March 20th.

From March 21st thru April 16th traffic was down 50K vehicles and revenue was down \$250K. If the area closures continue through the month of May an estimated revenue loss of \$500K is anticipated.

Administrative Staff

The office is looking for a new customer service assistant. The current plan is to hire someone by the end of summer.

Toll System

The data migration is in process. After all migration and back end reporting is verified, the website will be finalized.

Bridge Openings

For the current fiscal year bridge openings are down 20% compared to last year.

SIB Loan Refinancing Options

At the last meeting, Feinberg requested staff research the possibility of refinancing the current SIB loan. A SIB representative in the agency office confirmed that they do not offer refinancing for current obligations. This information prompted a discussion regarding the upcoming estimated loan principal prepayment for the SunTrust Bank Loan. **On motion by Feinberg and seconded by Tucker the Board unanimously voted to forgo the next two scheduled quarterly prepayments set for August and December.**

Finance/Audit Committee:

Finance/Audit Chairman Tucker presented the FY20 second quarter financial statements. GIBA continues to build cash reserves to fund long term bridge and causeway capital projects and to prepay long term debt.

Legal:

Berntsson presented the deed approved by Charlotte County to transfer property to GIBA at the southernmost portion of the current GIBA right of way. This property was necessary to finalize the southern roadway sidewalk project. **On motion by Darsie and seconded by Feinberg the deed was accepted.**

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Old Business:

The Board reviewed RFP2020-01 for the southern roadway sidewalk project. The final buildable design plans will be completed in the next few weeks and the RFP will be advertised in June. The plan is to have the bids back and a contractor selected at the August 2020 Board meeting. **On motion by Darsie and seconded by Feinberg RFP2020-01 was approved.**

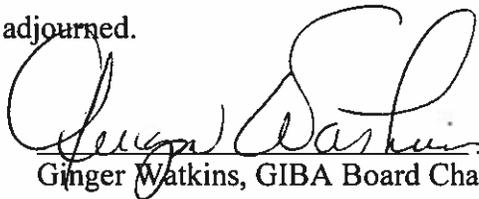
The Board had previously voted to have an additional cell phone tower discussion at this meeting. Due to the COVID 19 restraints regarding public gatherings, it was decided that the matter would be tabled until a fully open public meeting could be held in the fall.

New Business:

None

Public Comments/Questions on Non-Agenda Items: No Comments

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.


Ginger Watkins, GIBA Board Chairman