

Westport RTM Transit Committee Meeting Report, June 20, 2023

Meeting via Zoom

Agenda:

- The Committee met to discuss and interview candidates for the open position of Westport Transit District Director.

In Attendance:

RTM Transit Committee Members

- Kristin Schneeman, Brien Buckman, Ross Burkhardt, Peter Gold, Nancy Kail, Sal Liccione, Dick Lowenstein, Claudia Shaum

Others

- Transit District Director candidates Karina Betfarhad, Sal Liccione
- RTM members Andrew Colabella, Harris Falk, Lou Mall, Don O'Day
- Thane Grauel (Westport Journal reporter), Jamie Walsh, John Suggs, Stephen Carpentieri

The Transit Committee met via Zoom on June 20th to interview two candidates for the open Westport Transit District position (Peter Gold holds the other Director position), and to make a recommendation to the full RTM regarding the appointment of one of them. Personnel issues such as this are typically handled in an executive session; however, Sal Liccione exercised his right to request that his interview be held in public meeting, and the committee did so. Members asked a series of questions that were asked of both candidates, including:

- Why are you interested in serving in this position?
- What are some of your prior leadership experiences? What skills and expertise do you feel you can bring to the table?
- Do you have thoughts about the strategic direction of the Westport Transit District, what the most pressing transit/transportation needs in Westport are?
- Have you had experience (professional or volunteer) in organizational management, budgeting, grant-writing, communications/marketing?
- What attributes do you think are essential for successful board members? What do you see as a board's role and responsibilities?

At the conclusion of Mr. Liccione's interview, the committee voted to go into executive session to interview Ms. Betfarhad, employing the same set of questions. At the conclusion of her interview, the committee discussed both candidates in executive session and then voted to return to public session.

Claudia Shaum moved to recommend that the RTM appoint Karina Betfarhad to the position of Westport Transit District Director for the term of four years, and Brien Buckman seconded. The vote was six in favor, with Mr. Burkhardt opposed. Mr. Liccione abstained.