

TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNANCE

Over the past several months, at the request of the Chairman, staff has been considering issues related to the way in which the Port Authority and its wholly owned corporate entities conduct the business of the public. As an agency with a vital public mission of creating a world-class transportation infrastructure and fostering growth in our region, it is clear that the Port Authority cannot accomplish its goals without public confidence in the agency. To this end, the Commissioners of the Port Authority are committed to holding the agency and its wholly owned corporate entities to the highest standards of accountability and transparency.

Staff has completed a review of the Open Meetings Policy adopted in 1992, particularly the Procedures and Subject Matter Exceptions, and has recommended that the procedures be replaced by Open Meetings Rules and Regulations more consistent with a number of initiatives adopted by the Board.

Among those initiatives, the Board has invited the public to participate in its public Board meetings during a comment period, and has begun individual consideration of and voting on items presented to it. Furthermore, to underscore this commitment to open consideration of the public's business, meetings of the committees of the Board are being conducted in public, unless there is a significant security or financial rationale for closing them.

So that the public's input can be meaningful and directed to the actual business of the agency, Board agendas and those for the committee meetings are being released to the press and posted on the Port Authority's Web site, with explanations for any meetings scheduled to be held in executive session. The public comment period procedures are also highlighted.

Other changes underway include the manner in which Port Authority business is being reported and disclosed. The Office of the Secretary will now begin to post on the Web site minutes of meetings as they become finalized and are no longer confidential; it is intended that the minutes will be archived on the Web site for informational purposes as well. Similarly, contract awards are to be published in more detail and with more regularity, and archived for information. And, recently, the proposed 2007 Budget and Ten-Year Capital Plan prepared by the staff were posted and issued for public comment before Board consideration at today's meeting.

Pursuant to the foregoing report, the following resolution was adopted with Commissioners Blakeman, Chasanoff, Coscia, Ferer, Gargano, Genova, Mack, Pocino, Sartor, Silverman and Steiner voting in favor; none against:

RESOLVED, that, as the governing body of The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Commissioners express our continuing commitment to transparency in the conduct of the public's business, so that the Port Authority and its employees may hold the respect and confidence of the people of the States of New York and New Jersey; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the actions of the Chairman reported to the Board in connection with the conduct of the meetings of the Board and its committees, the

issuance of notice and the participation of the public be and they hereby are ratified; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Commissioners of the Port Authority are committed to: (1) considering and voting on items presented to it individually; (2) releasing the agendas for meetings of the Board and its committees to the public prior to the meetings; (3) publishing the minutes of meetings through the Port Authority's Web site; (4) providing explanations for actions taken or meetings held in executive session; (5) encouraging public input; (6) publishing contract awards; and (7) providing for public consideration of and input into the annual Budget of the Port Authority; and it is further

RESOLVED, that it is the policy of the Port Authority to encourage and permit participation by the public in the business of the Port Authority, consistent with the resolution of the Board entitled "Open Meetings – Port Authority Policy" adopted on June 11, 1992 (appearing at page 305 of the Official Minutes of that date; the "Open Meetings Policy Resolution"), by considering matters in public session whenever possible and by providing for public comment at each meeting of the Board of Commissioners; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Executive Director be and he hereby is authorized and directed to continue to take steps for increasing public reporting and disclosure of the business of the Port Authority; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the resolution of the Board entitled, "Policy on Open Meetings," adopted on August 13, 1992 (appearing at pages 326, *et seq.* of the Official Minutes of that date), be and the same hereby is rescinded; and it is further

RESOLVED, that, in accordance with the Open Meetings Policy Resolution, the following "Open Meetings Rules and Regulations" submitted to the Board (including procedures and subject matter exceptions) be and the same hereby are adopted and approved for and on behalf of the Port Authority: