

WRTA narrows its Search for a New Administrator

WORCESTER, MA. Tuesday, February 20th, 2007 — The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) Personnel Committee is pleased to announce it has selected three candidates for the position of administrator of the WRTA. WRTA Director of Public Affairs and Governmental Relations, Richard J. Glavin, was named interim administrator on Oct. 5, 2006 and will remain in that capacity until a finalist is chosen by the Advisory Board on March 1, 2007. Glavin took the helm of the WRTA after Mary MacInnes moved to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority to be its administrator. MacInnes had been administrator of the WRTA since 2000.

The Personnel Committee received 26 applicants, which were narrowed down to three finalists: Stephen F. O'Neil, of Worcester, Michael L. Abegg, of Minneapolis, MN and Carla L. Lakatos, of Dayton, OH.

Stephen O'Neil is currently working in the Worcester City Manager's Executive Office of Economic Development as the director of project management. His position entails working directly on various capitol improvement projects such as the Union Station Intermodal Transportation Center's bus terminal, parking garage and interacting with Federal and State Transportation Agencies, along with helping to strengthen economic development in the city of Worcester. He also served from May 1994 through October 2006 as the city manager's representative to the WRTA Advisory Board.

Michael Abegg presently is the planner for the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) and has worked in that capacity since 1995. Some of his duties include operating schedules for a 112 bus transit agency in the suburbs of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. He has been responsible for preparing annual reporting and operating budgets, six-year capital plan, and capital grant applications. He represents the MVTA before regional policy boards, as well as city and county organizations.

Carla Lakatos has nearly 30 years experience in both public and private sectors. Over 16 of those years have been spent working directly in the public transportation field. Lakatos has spent the last five years doing consulting work in the public transportation industry. Current and past clients include public transportation and non-profit industries specializing in executive management, strategic and operational planning, program development and evaluation, finance and grant management, marketing and communications.

"All the candidates selected have a strong background in transit operations or experience with the administrative structure of transit authorities, and all the candidates have demonstrated experience as an administrator or senior manager in the public sector," said Dennis Lipka, chairman of the WRTA Personnel Committee.

"One set of candidates have the day-to-day hands on transit authority background as the administrator. Another set of candidates have experience as senior managers in a transit authority and are looking to move up to the administrator level or move to a larger authority. The last set of candidates have experience working in upper levels of government, working with people on a national, state and local level in the transit world infrastructure," Lipka said. "From this diverse group, we chose one candidate from each category as a finalist."

According to Lipka, on March 1 the Advisory Committee will meet and have a 90-minute interview with each candidate. After the interviews, the board will hold discussions and then vote to select the finalist.

"We are hopeful that on March 1 we will select new administrator for the WRTA," he said. " I think all of these candidates will do well in the interview process. It's just a matter of which candidate the board feels will give us the best leadership to continue to advance the cause of

mass transit in Central Massachusetts.”

Lipka added that while one candidate is local, the other two have central New England ties.

“We conducted the widest search possible in order to get candidates who we feel are knowledgeable and experienced and will use that background to help improved the WRTA, increase rider-ship and expand services. We want this person to help us move forward and strengthen our organization and operation.”

Members of the WTRA Personnel Committee are Chairman Dennis Lipka, Director, Growth Management for Holden, Worcester City Manager Michael O'Brien, Shrewsbury Town Manager Daniel Morgado, William Lehtola of Spencer, Millbury Council on Aging Director Judith O'Connor and Leicester Board of Selectman Douglas Belanger.