



## Record of Meeting | September 27, 2023

On Thursday, September 27, 2023, The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority's ("Tollway") Board of Directors met in a special session in the Arbor Room of the Hyatt Regency Lisle Hotel in Lisle, Illinois. The meeting was held pursuant to the By-Laws of the Tollway upon call and notice of the meeting executed by Chairman Arnaldo Rivera and posted in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1, *et seq.*

[*Bolded entries indicate issues which may require follow-up to present or report to the Board.*]

## Call to Order / Roll Call

Chairman Rivera called the meeting to order at approximately 8:50 a.m. He then asked the Board Secretary to call the roll, those Directors present and absent being as follows:

Board Members Present:
Director James Connolly
Director Jacqueline Gomez
Director Karen McConnaughay
Director Melissa Neddermeyer
Director Scott Paddock
Director Gary Perinar, Jr.
Director James Sweeney
Director Mark Wright
Chairman Arnaldo Rivera

Board Members Not Present:
Governor JB Pritzker [ <i>ex officio</i> ]
Secretary Omer Osman [ <i>ex officio</i> ]

The Board Secretary declared a quorum present.

## Public Comment

Chairman Rivera opened the floor for public comment. No comment was offered.

## Chair's Items

Chairman Rivera welcomed the Directors to the Special Meeting. He explained that today's discussions would guide the Tollway's next steps following the Move Illinois capital program.



Chairman Rivera, having no further items, turned the floor over to Executive Director Cassandra Rouse.

## **Executive Director's Items**

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Executive Director Rouse stated that today's discussions are intended to gather insights and perspectives from the Board, which can be communicated to Tollway staff. She then introduced Rocco Zuccherro, former Tollway Chief of Planning and current Principal at Metro Strategies Group.

## **Subjects for Discussion**

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### **6.1 Governance**

Mr. Zuccherro led a discussion regarding governance, committee structures, and Tollway goals. Directors and staff discussed the objectives and goals the Board set in 2011, assessing their relevance given subsequent technological advances. A consensus emerged that the goal is to position the Board so that it can be proactive and adaptive, ensuring it responds effectively to challenges and changing customer needs in a shifting transportation environment. Board members discussed their vision for the Agency's future and identified priorities and potential strategic planning areas.

Key portions of the discussion focused on the significant role of technology in Tollway operations and its integration into various Agency goals. The discussion also touched on the Tollway's position within the wider transportation infrastructure landscape. One Director emphasized the importance of exploring innovative approaches to bolster the Tollway's role as an economic driver, including the potential for public-private partnerships.

There also was discussion regarding the structure and direction of the Board's committees. Emphasis was placed on the need for enhanced communication with the Board and the need to provide for greater opportunities for collaboration among Board members, as consistent with the Open Meetings Act. Directors suggested creating a framework, possibly through existing committee systems or a new working group, to ensure the Board remains fully engaged and well-informed on strategic planning matters, especially concerning the development of the new capital plan.

Lastly, Directors and staff discussed next steps in the development of the new capital plan. The consensus was that the Tollway built public trust during the development of the Move Illinois capital plan and that a similarly transparent process should be used to develop the new capital plan.



## 6.2 Educational Topic of Focus

Executive Director Rouse introduced Michael Catolico, Chief of Business Systems; Pat Taylor, Chief of Operations; and Jonathan Hart from CDM Smith to guide a discussion on the future of tolling. The team provided a summary of innovations currently offered by the Tollway to efficiently serve its users, including the Pay-By-Plate system, which boasts 3.8 million users, a mobile app with over a million downloads that sends push alerts to encourage monthly payments, e-Invoicing to reduce the use of paper invoices, a forthcoming shift from hardcase transponders to sticker tags, and the I-PASS Assist program.

The discussion then transitioned to growing challenges in the transportation sector. Among the critical issues highlighted were dwindling fuel tax revenues for infrastructure, changes in the demand for public transit since Covid, evolving mobility options, and the vital need to integrate equity and environmental considerations into transportation planning.

Directors and staff discussed potential innovations to expand Tollway services and adapt to the shifting transportation environment. A notable proposal was the potential development of a Tollway "Clearing House" - a universal, scalable platform for payment processing. This platform could pave the way for services like predictive travel times, measures for congestion mitigation, dedicated lanes for commercial and electric vehicles, and integration with on-demand transit/mobility services for amenities like parking, EV charging, and retail drive-thru payments. The platform would also have utility in the realm of road usage charging ("RUC"), wherein revenue could be tied directly to road usage, offering equitable pricing and ameliorating revenue losses from out-of-state users.

Directors and staff reviewed upcoming Tollway initiatives and business opportunities, which include the E-ZPass hub integration, the transition to sticker tag transponders, and a forthcoming integration with a retail payment network.

On the legislative front, there was consensus on the need to begin legislative efforts to expand authority for innovations like those discussed during the meeting. The importance of crafting legislation that is broad enough to accommodate unforeseen future needs, while still being specific enough to gain approval, was stressed. There was a recognition that while technology is advancing rapidly, a significant challenge lies in addressing privacy concerns, ensuring data protection, and gaining public trust.

## 6.3 Agency Visioning

In a detailed discussion regarding the future direction of the Tollway, Board members and staff engaged in a comprehensive dialogue about services, strategic objectives, and perceptions of the Agency. They considered the views of various stakeholders, including internal staff, Tollway patrons, and industry representatives.



A significant theme throughout was the Agency's desire to remain relevant in a rapidly changing landscape. Suggestions included enhancing partnerships, embracing technological advances, and positioning the Tollway as a thought leader in infrastructure investment. The idea of designated lanes, particularly for frequent users or specific types of vehicles like trucks, emerged as a potential solution to some traffic concerns. However, the Board acknowledged the need to avoid creating solutions that could alienate certain users.

Safety was underscored as a paramount concern. The Board highlighted the importance of not only maintaining safe infrastructure but also ensuring rapid responses to accidents or obstacles, a service that sets the Agency apart from other transportation options. Participants reflected positively on completed projects like the I-90 corridor but expressed a need for more consistent customer feedback mechanisms, possibly through focus groups or surveys.

The conversation highlighted the Agency's unique relationship with its customers. The Board recognized that customers expect high-quality service due to the tolls they pay and a smooth, reliable, and speedy journey. Addressing these expectations requires a combination of infrastructure investment, adoption of advanced technology, and proactive community engagement.

Lastly, the discussion touched upon the Agency's outreach efforts. There was an emphasis on ensuring transparency, establishing a more robust community presence, and actively seeking feedback. The Board also entertained the idea of potentially expanding the Tollway system to serve unmet regional demands and collaborating with other entities to pool resources and deliver a seamless transportation experience across different regions.

In conclusion, following Executive Director Rouse's summary of the ideas discussed, the Board expressed appreciation for the in-depth dialogue, emphasizing its importance in guiding the Agency's future. Directors highlighted the need for a well-defined timeline that sets out the goals and milestones for future Tollway initiatives.

## **Adjournment**

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There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Rivera entertained a motion to adjourn. Director Sweeney made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Director McConnaughay. The motion PASSED unanimously by voice vote.



The Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:10 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Christi Regnery'.

Minutes taken by: \_\_\_\_\_

Christi Regnery  
Board Secretary  
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority