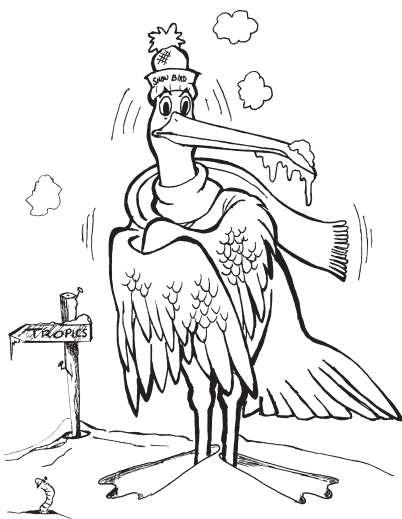


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***"Don't forget Where You Put
Your para-phernalia."***



A Message From Your President

We are once again about to enter the Holiday season. Can you believe it? Somehow these special times seem to roll around faster and faster each year. Wasn't it only yesterday that we were sweltering in the stifling heat of the lazy, dry summer? This is a time to reflect on this past year and to look ahead to another cycle. We wish for each and every one of you that this coming year will be marked with joy and peace and good health. Yes - as retirees we especially look for all of these.

In these past few weeks, it seems that the floodgates have opened one more time regarding Port Authority issues. After a relatively quiet - and hot - summer, the media seemed to be filled with PA related items once the Labor Day holiday was over. We have continued our practice of posting a range of articles on the PARA website (see Current Issues on the homepage) as a way to provide you with ongoing current media reports. There are a number of issues being reported in recent weeks including, among others, the effort to pass bi-state legislation on PA reform, the several investigations regarding Bridgegate, the United Airlines issue with the former PA chairman, the allocation of PA funds to rehabilitate the Pulaski Skyway in NJ and the proposal for a new rail tunnel under the Hudson River. In addition, beyond media items, it is our understanding that the PA is still pursuing the executive search for a new CEO and once this is resolved the PA Board chair may rotate to a New York person for a two-year cycle in accordance with earlier agreements. Our information, based on the comments from earlier this year, indicated that this CEO decision was expected by year-end (as of this writing - early fall - there has been no announcement as far as we know). PARA's request from earlier this year to reconsider the reinstatement of our E-ZPass retiree benefit remains in limbo in the face of all these other items but we will continue our efforts to monitor the changing landscape and we will pursue the issue as best we can given the prevailing realities.

For most of us, our primary "official" contact with the PA in our retirement years is with the benefits group (212-435-2870) in the Human Resources department when we have a question or concern regarding some specific aspect of our retiree benefit plan. We know that when this occurs we need an accurate reliable answer and we need it in a timely way. Hopefully, in the vast majority of cases, that answer is received and the immediate issue is resolved in a satisfactory manner. But in those (hopefully infrequent) cases where a member may experience some difficulty contacting the benefits representatives we have been able to provide some assistance in reaching the proper staff person to help with the question. We have had several such instances over the past few months. Since there are so many variations in

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The Port Authority Retirees Association, Inc. does not provide, and this newsletter does not constitute, legal, accounting, tax or other professional advice. We recommend you contact your own legal, accounting, tax or professional advisor as neither The Port Authority Retirees Association nor anyone associated with the Newsletter assumes responsibility for your relying on the information provided even though we have attempted to ensure that it reflects our understanding of what is presented.

President's Message - continued from page 1

the benefits plans, we do not have the specific expertise (or the authority) to provide the answer in all cases. Nevertheless, we have been able to help our members make the needed contact with the PA staff. We know how important an accurate and timely answer is, so if we can help just let us know.

Finally, as you become aware that one or more of your "active service" colleagues are retiring from the PA we would urge you to invite them to join our PARA organization. Personal contact is highly effective and this is one way for you to participate as an active member of PARA. It's a simple process and it's a way for all of us to continue to build the community of Port Authority retirees. All are welcome.

From all of us on the PARA Board we wish each and every one of you and your family the very best for a terrific Holiday season and for a happy and healthy 2016!!

Dave Gallagher
President, PARA

Re-Election of Officers

The Annual Meeting of the Port Authority Retirees Association was held on Thursday, July 22, 2015 in Times Square Hall at the Port Authority Bus Terminal. (Additional information on the Annual Meeting can be found in the Board Highlights.) Results of all ballots received for the Annual Election of Officers were announced. The eight current Board members re-elected for a three-year term were: Elizabeth DeLaura, Rita DuBrow, Al Graser, Rich Hellenbrecht, Richard Lee, Chuck Seliga, Jack Savage and Ken Vitty. The two current Board members re-elected for a four-year term were: Robert Isaacs and Ken Philmus. The current Board remains the same as 2014 since there were no vacancies on the Board this year.

In total, 1041 proxies were received, of which 54 were either unsigned; dues had not been paid; or, contained no vote; and therefore not counted in the final tally. Of the 987 valid ballots received, 821 members voted for the entire slate.

Meeting With Port Authority Executive Director

PARA President Dave Gallagher, Vice President Rae Ann Hoffmann and Board members Peter Rinaldi, Maria Malone-Hodges and Steve Borrelli met with Port Authority Executive Director Patrick J. Foye on October 9 at 4WTC, to discuss ways that PARA could work more closely with the PA, and build on the relationship that PARA has been developing with the PA during the past several years. Mr. Foye welcomed ways that PARA could work with the PA more closely, which could strengthen that relationship, and encouraged our future participation. Your PARA Board will provide updates between our printed newsletters via PARA's eBulletins (sign up at paranynj.org). Please sign up!

The following are excerpts from an article on Austin Tobin which appeared in The New York Times, dated Thursday, February 9, 1978. It is most interesting in light of the unfavorable press the Port Authority has been experiencing.

When Mr. Tobin joined the agency as a law clerk it had 300 employees. When he retired as Executive Director in 1972, the agency had 8,000 employees and an investment of \$2.6-billion in bridges, airports, ship terminals and other facilities, including the vast World Trade Center.

Mr. Tobin saw the agency's image change from one of benevolent servant of the area's millions to that of a conservative, money-oriented banker-dominated organization bent on defending its profit-making activities in the face of public demands that it take on such tasks as improving mass transportation.

When Mr. Tobin left the authority at the age of 68, "to allow for the orderly transfer of executive responsibility to other hands" he was himself the central target of most of the criticism directed at the agency.

At the time, critics of the authority were demanding that its considerable financial surpluses be channeled into mass transit, particularly the region's ailing commuter railroads. The agency was seen as the creator of many of the region's transportation problems because it catered, with its tunnels and bridges, to automobiles.

Mr. Tobin's refusal to involve the authority in rail projects was taken as evidence that the authority's primary concern was for its investors, mostly the big Wall Street banks.

Mr. Tobin maintained that he did not care what he operated so long as it made money. The Port Authority, he always insisted, had to make money, or it would die.

Unlike other port authorities in this country and elsewhere in the world, Mr. Tobin insisted, the Port Authority had no power to tax and no access to public funds. Its single lifeline was public credit and unless it dealt only with what he called "self-supporting" projects, its ability to borrow would disappear.

In the years after Mr. Tobin's retirement, that is almost what happened. When the Legislatures of New York and New Jersey passed bills that would have permitted the Port Authority to be used for deficit rail projects, the sale of its bonds fell off drastically. The laws later were declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court, and Port Authority bonds have since regained most of their old prestige.

Recent years have seen much of the enthusiasm for commuter rail projects disappear in the face of raging inflation, and many of Mr. Tobin's predictions that such projects were a "bottomless pit" for either public or private funds have come true.

Under Mr. Tobin, the Port Authority embarked on two of its most controversial projects, acquisition and rehabilitation of the former Hudson and Manhattan Railroad, now known as PATH, and the 110-story, twin towers of The World Trade Center.

Actually, the two were closely allied. New Jersey, which had long felt slighted by the agency, agreed to permit construction of the Trade Center only if the Port Authority took over the decrepit Hudson and Manhattan. Both New York's and New Jersey's Governors' have the power to veto the authority's minutes and thus prevent its carrying out plans.

In agreeing to take on the Hudson and Manhattan, the bi-state agency got both states to agree that it would never again have to involve itself in a deficit commuter-rail project.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE AT THE PORT AUTHORITY

By the late Richard C. Leone
(former Chairman of the Port Authority)

The strange case of Governor Chris Christie and the George Washington Bridge may reveal just how far the mighty have fallen. I don't mean the governor and his vaunted political operation. Rather, a lesson in the decline and fall of one of the nation's great builders and managers of critical public assets.

For decades the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PA) was admired and imitated around the globe. But now, thanks to the Fort Lee traffic caper the agency is well on its way to becoming just another Jersey joke. How did it come to this?

To find an answer you have to roll back the clock to 1972 when, after thirty years at the helm, Austin Tobin retired as operating head of the agency. Few could have imagined at the time that the departure of Tobin, respected by political leaders in both parties for his independence and professionalism, would open the door to increasing intervention by politicians from both states. It didn't happen overnight. Perhaps the first stage involved the growing gap between the states' resources and expenditures. The annual budget crises had states scrambling to find the money to balance their budgets. Whatever would get the governors and state legislators through the night became fair game – including the revenues of “independent” agencies.

The Port Authority was something, apparently, that a new generation of politicians could not quite grasp – an institution designed especially to be insulated to some extent from the short-term policies of Albany and Trenton. Instead, they saw the PA as a kind of honey pot of money and jobs that cried out to be divvied up as soon as possible. The idea that preservation of the PA's independent financial capacity would enable the agency to take on long-term, expensive and complicated public projects just seemed outside of their notions of what a cash strapped state could and should do.

Both states were overwhelmingly “successful” in rearranging the PA's cash flow to divert large sums to their coffers. But the changes didn't stop there. Not so long ago, the notion that the states governors' offices would fill agency jobs based on politics would have sounded

ridiculous. What was the point of the agency, if not to insulate it from short-term politics and patronage? Even the notion that New York automatically gets to pick the executive director and New Jersey selects the chairman is a relatively recent phenomenon.

My own experience as commissioner and chairman of the PA is revealing. I am a staunch Democrat but a New Jersey Republican governor, Tom Kean, appointed me. During his first term, Kean also kept in place as chairman of the agency Alan Sagner, another hard core Democrat. The staff of the agency then was composed of almost all career professionals. In later years, giving top jobs to political appointees must have had the effect of stunting the career growth of those same professionals. Why knock yourself out for the PA if the best jobs were going to go to those who knocked themselves out for gubernatorial candidates?

But by the mid '90's the new world of the rich potential patronage of the PA's top jobs, proved irresistible to governors on both sides of the Hudson. The process was simple: “You got one, I get the next one.” Looking back, the old Port Authority was the product of a more optimistic time.

What does all this have to do with Governor Christie's current embarrassment? Well, it is simply inconceivable that the professional staff of the past would have executed an order from the governor's office to tie up traffic at the George Washington Bridge. To carry out missions of this type a governor needs his own people in place at the PA, an acquiescent board and a cynical public, which will take such pettiness as simply politics as usual.

We may never know the true motivation for the ugly attempt to strangle Fort Lee's traffic, but we must face up to the fact that changes in the agency made such a caper possible. The PA was far from perfect in the “good old” days: it could be hard-headed and unresponsive and it probably leaned too far in the direction of independent action. But I'll bet this morning, Governor Christie would take that PA over the situation he's got in a New York minute.

(Reprinted from an article appearing in the Huffington Post which was posted on January 11, 2014 and updated on March 13, 2014.)

2016 Dues are Due

The Dues Remittance envelope, provided in this issue, is for payment of your Annual Dues for the year that begins on January 1, 2016 and runs through December 31, 2016. Of course, if you haven't paid your 2015 dues, you can include them with your 2016 dues. Dues are only \$10 per year. Your all-volunteer and uncompensated Board members are dedicated to keeping current on matters of concern to you and continue to function on behalf of PA retirees. All revenues support PARA's mission: **to serve PA retirees and to promote their welfare.** This is achieved by informing membership about relevant matters, engaging in activities to further our interests, and fostering and encouraging legislation that maintains or promotes our pension and health benefits. Remember, your dues provide the funds required to cover the cost of our Newsletter, maintaining our website, contact with Albany and Trenton and other retiree organizations, any required special mailings, and of course our eBulletins. Fill in the required information on the enclosed Dues Remittance envelope, insert your check and add postage. Easy, right?

Bob Isaacs, Treasurer



Congratulations to Ken Vitty, one of our PARA Board Members, who was honored by the NY NJ Port Authority Retired Detectives Association (PARDA) at its Annual Awards Dinner on Thursday, November 12, 2015.

Daniel Moffit elected to SIUSBC Hall of Fame

Daniel Moffit has become the fourth member to be inducted into the Staten Island United States Bowling Congress (SIUSBC) Hall of Fame since its formation in 2005, gaining entrance for his service and dedication to the sport of bowling on Staten Island. Moffit was honored for his contributions at the 10th annual Staten Island USBC Awards & Hall of Fame Dinner held on Friday, May 22, 2015.

In his professional career, Moffit retired from the Port Authority in 2003 after a 37-year career. At the time of his retirement, he was Manager of E-ZPass Customer Services for the Authority. Following retirement, Moffit became active in the Supervisory and Board Committees of XCEL Federal Credit Union. He was appointed Director in the fall of 2007 and then elected Board Chairman at the same time. Since joining the Board, the Credit Union has doubled in asset size and membership. XCEL FCU is currently recognized by The National Association of Federal Credit Unions as 2014 Credit Union of the Year for its asset size.

Board Highlights

The second Quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors was held on April 7, 2015, at 10:00 am in the Times Square Hall at the Port Authority Bus Terminal. Reports of the Committees of the Board were given. Treasurer Isaacs reported a slow quarter with very few expenditures. Dues continue to be received regularly thereby increasing our balance. PARA will be given time to speak at upcoming pre-retirement seminars in an effort to inform and recruit potential retirees. The PARA website continues to be well maintained and well utilized on a regular basis. Director Savage reported no expected action in Trenton on the immediate horizon that would adversely affect Port Authority retirees. However, the current administration in Trenton continues to advocate for public employee increased contributions toward pensions and benefits and this will be closely monitored. It was also reported that, at this time, the New York State pension system remains financially sound. The Board approved the nominations of the 10 returning Directors for election and confirmation at the Annual Meeting in July. Diannae Ehler, General Manager of the Bus Terminal and Lincoln Tunnel, gave a brief overview of the long and short-term plans for the Bus Terminal. While the long-term effort is ongoing, several short-term initiatives are currently under way. President Gallagher continues to maintain dialogue with the Chairman on various issues affecting the current culture at the Port Authority.

The Annual Meeting of PARA and the third Quarterly meeting were held on July 22 at the Bus Terminal. President Gallagher reported on the following ongoing investigations: The trials for Bill Baroni and Bridget Kelly are currently scheduled for November but likely to be postponed. (NOTE: We have learned that the trial date has been reset to March, 2016.) Also the Manhattan District Attorney and Securities and Exchange Commission are questioning information given to Port Authority bond holders regarding the redirection of Port Authority approved ARC tunnel funds to the refurbishment of the Pulaski Skyway. Also under possible investigation is former Chairman Samson's involvement in agreements between the PA and NJ Transit covering the park/ride lot in New Jersey. A national search for a Port Authority Chief Executive Officer is ongoing. The annual election results are as follows: Directors Lee, DeLaura, Graser, DuBrow, Savage, Seliga, Vitty and Hellenbrecht were approved for 3-year terms and Directors Isaacs and Philmus were approved for 4-year terms. The Board officers were re-elected as follows: President Dave Gallagher, Vice-President Rae Ann Hoffmann, Treasurer Bob Isaacs and Secretary Jerri Raczynski.

At the third Quarterly meeting of PARA it was reported that the Association's finances remain healthy and stable. The Board reflected on the recent passing of former PA Chairman, Richard C. Leone. Although we are not certain about the legal basis regarding the benefits for New York state retirees, it was our understanding from reports that these benefits may be increased but may not be diminished in any way. Director Seliga reported that New York State introduced bills for increased cost of living adjustments to the pension system over and above the capped COLA currently in existence. This will be closely monitored. New York recently adopted Port Authority reform legislation, however, it cannot be implemented until New Jersey adopts similar legislation. That legislation is not moving forward because NJ is arguing for stronger reforms.

Jerri Raczynski

Remembrance Through Renewal Program

Since 2008, Port Authority employees have had the opportunity to participate in an annual Remembrance Through Renewal (RTR) Program. This year was no different, but what marked it as a significant milestone was that it was the first RTR program since the PA moved back home to 4 World Trade Center, which occurred earlier this year.

To honor the 84 colleagues who were lost on 9/11, over 300 employees (as of August 31st) have volunteered for community service projects throughout the month of September. This year's kickoff event, called Remembrance Through Renewal, Resilience, and Returning Home, was held on Wednesday, September 2nd in the Board Room on the 23rd floor of 4 WTC. It was sponsored by Human Resources (HR), in collaboration with the 9/11 Tribute Center.

To set the tone and to commemorate the return home, five veteran speakers were invited to share their stories of survival and resilience during and following the 9/11 attacks. The storytellers included four current employees – Earlyne Alexander, Aviation Wayfinding and Customer Experience Manager, David Hood, HR Policy and Program Administration Manager, Steve Plate, WTC Construction Director/Deputy Chief of Capital Planning, and Mary Lee Hannell, Chief of Human Capital – and one retiree – Frank Lombardi, retired Chief Engineer.

The program, which was videotaped and streamed to the rest of staff, was facilitated by Joseph Monte, Employee Communications. It was introduced by three Leadership Fellows: Jeffrey Brauner; Rebecca Cassidy; and, Megan Maxwell. Also making introductory remarks were Andrew O'Brien, Leadership Fellows Program Manager, and Jennifer

Adams-Webb, Co-Founder of 9/11 Tribute Center.

Earlyne and David shared their own personal story of survival that horrific day. Frank did the same but he credited his survival on PA improvements made after the '93 bombing. Steve presented a fantastic time-lapse video, accompanied by pop music, of the WTC construction. And, Mary Lee ended the program with the human effort needed to move staff back home to The World Trade Center, a place where some of them had not been back to since the attacks.

All in all, these stories demonstrated the breadth and depth of the PA's greatest resource – its staff. By remembering the acts of 2/26/1993 and 9/11/2001, both tragic and heroic, and by remembering how unified they were at working hard at work worth doing, staff can continue to renew their spirit and, in turn, their willingness to serve others.

Here is a recap of Frank Lombardi's presentation as he shared his story of survival and resilience in 9/11 words:

Little did I know how the '93 WTC bombing would lead to a PA rebuilding effort that saved countless lives, including my own, on 9/11.

In '93, trapped in an elevator with eight fellow workers, we managed to get out, and safely walked down 58 flights in total darkness.

As part of the rebuilding effort that followed, we installed emergency backup lighting in all stairwells to provide for speedier and safer egress. We also renovated the lobby of the Vista Hotel, which by 9/11 had become the Marriott.

To open up a portion of the hotel's

second floor, so that more natural light could enter the street level lobby, we installed 80" deep steel girders to support an enlarged entrance area.

Fast forward to 9/11: That morning, I was in my office on the 72nd floor when the first aircraft hit 20 floors above. Conditioned by the '93 bombing, we left the floor and started to walk down a lighted stairwell. Eventually a dozen of us ended up in the lobby of the Marriott. To find a place where we could sit and talk about what we should do, we walked south along an inside wall. At that point, we did not know that Tower Two had also been hit earlier during our stairwell descent; and, we had no clue that, at that precise moment, the building was collapsing on the hotel and on us.

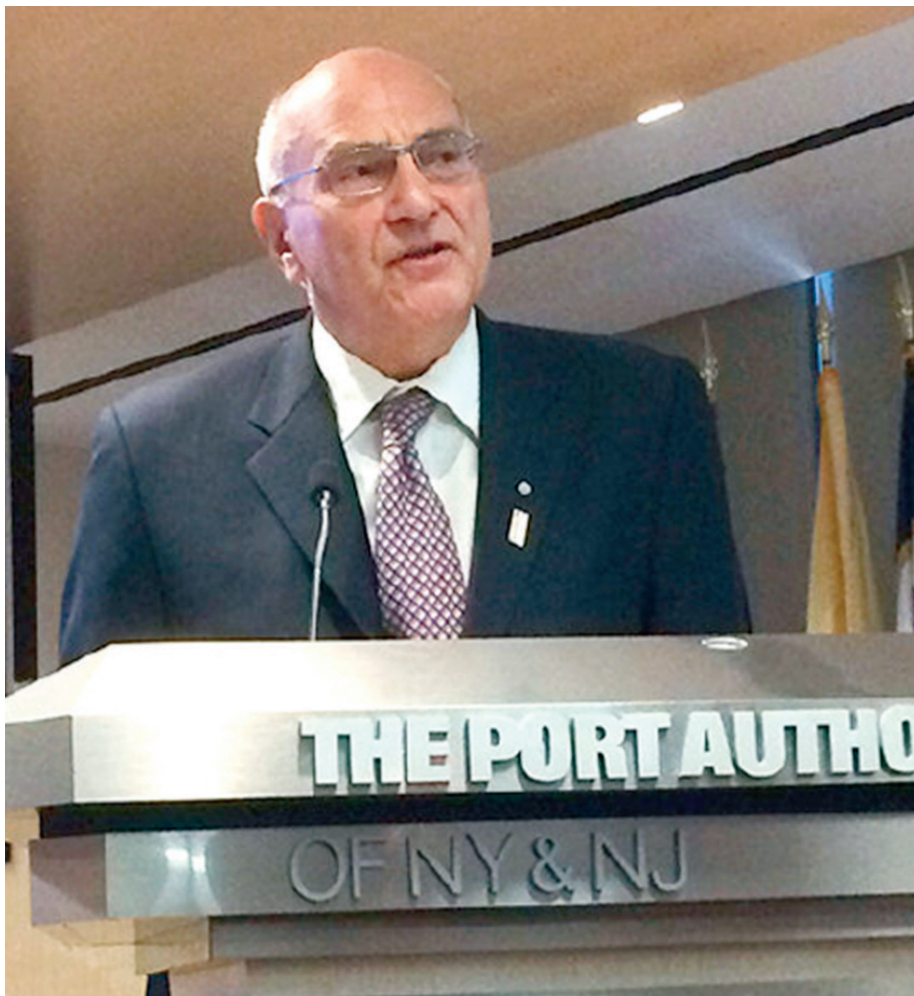
The lobby windows suddenly exploded inward. A tremendous force of wind picked us up and flung us like leaves.

I thought: This is it! Everything went dark, and the air became extremely sooty. Lying on my belly, I reached down to feel the rest of my limbs. I got a handkerchief to help me filter the difficult-to-breathe air. Everything was intact. My eyes burned. But, I was OK.

In that chaos, I worked my way south to Battery Park. That's when I looked back. Stunned, I thought: Where was Tower Two? I could not compute. Tower One was still standing, but there was no Tower Two. Then, a few minutes later, to my utter horror, I saw Tower One come down.

Back at a make-shift office in NJ, I figured out what had saved us. With the emergency backup stairwell lighting in place, we were able to walk down to street level in minutes rather than hours. And,

Continued next page



Frank Lombardi

Photo courtesy of Port Authority of NY & NJ

miraculously, we happened to be beneath those very same girders that we had installed after the '93 bombing!

Acting like giant umbrellas, the girders shielded us from the rain of falling debris!

It was hard for me to come to terms with the tragedy that transpired that morning and why we made it out alive while others did not. If we had been 10 yards in any other direction, surely, we would have died. I was full of both gratitude and sorrow.

And, personally, I had pangs of survival guilt. Yet, so much was happening in the days immediately following 9/11 that there was no time to dwell on these thoughts.

For many of us, adrenaline surged

and duty called. A lot of work needed to be identified, planned and accomplished.

Diving into the rescue, recovery and rebuilding efforts helped me mask these feelings and thoughts. That was until I started to recount my story and share it with others. This story-telling activity morphed into an ongoing series entitled "Report from Ground Zero". Every time I spoke, my voice cracked less in severity, and less often.

A couple of months after 9/11, a former Executive Director and his daughter, came to visit the site to see the progress. Here are Karen Goldmark's observations:

"The sadness and disbelief that this part of our lives (yours more than mine) is gone is difficult. But what I saw also left me with a

strange feeling of hope. More than the wreckage, I noticed people working. I felt a purposeful energy of lives dedicated to rising to this challenge. The wound is huge, but today I saw the healing effort is just as big. I must add that I never viewed cranes and bulldozers as instruments of healing before ...".

Can you imagine: Viewing construction equipment as instruments of healing?

It was not only the construction equipment but also the operators who exemplified Teddy Roosevelt's apt adage: "Working hard at work worth doing". These operators were also aided by hard working engineers, architects, rescue workers, and other construction laborers – some – from all over the country – all working hard to accomplish a common goal.

It was clear to PA staff that we had a cause. The 16-acre site was not a blank slate. We needed: to respectfully clear it; to plan for the Memorial and Museum; and, to plan for rebuilding office towers, retail spaces and a permanent train station.

Of these, our immediate project focus was getting commuters back directly to the WTC. With sheer determination, we finished the Interim WTC PATH Station, in record time!

Shakespeare said: "Action is eloquence"; but I believe that: Purposeful action is simply divine.

We owed it to the families of all the souls lost, to ourselves, to the city, to the region and to the world. By remembering the acts of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001, both tragic and heroic; and, by remembering how unified we were, working hard at work worth doing, we continue to renew our spirit, and, in turn, our willingness to serve others.

Thank you!

Francis Lombardi (09/02/2015)

WTC 9/11 PATH Car Finds a New Home



Actual welcome ceremony for Car 745 in East Haven

This past August, I was privileged to participate in a ceremony welcoming PATH Car 745 to its new home at the Shore Line Trolley Museum in East Haven, Connecticut. Car 745 was the lead car of a 7-car train that left Hoboken for The World Trade Center on the morning of September 11, 2001, arriving at World Trade on Track 3. It never left.

PATH Car 745's long journey to Connecticut actually began back in 1972 in Ontario, Canada. It was part of the order for forty-six PA-3 aluminum bodied passenger cars being added to the PATH car fleet. It was the first H&M/PATH car to be made outside of the United States, the contract being awarded to Hawker-Siddeley of London, Ontario, which was also building equipment for the Washington Metro. The car went into service that year and in September of 2001, the axle mounted odometer registered 201,104 miles traveled.



Car 745

I first encountered Car 745 on the morning of September 30, 2001 while inspecting the remains of the WTC PATH station. In the aftermath of that tragic day, I had been assigned (on loan) to provide engineering technical assistance to New York City's emergency response team that was handling the search, recovery and clean up

operations at the WTC site. On that morning, along with several other engineers and police and fire emergency personnel, I entered the north emergency exit stairway on West Street and climbed down to the track level. At that time, we were performing a number of inspections of the below grade portions of the WTC site, Levels B1 to B6, to try and determine existing conditions – what areas were intact, collapsed, etc. The tunnels and station tracks were flooded so we brought along rafts to inflate and paddle our way in. When we reached the station, we were able to climb out onto the platforms in an intact portion of the station.



It was then that I first saw Car 745, perfectly intact, sitting in the dusty dark, along with two other intact cars. The remaining four cars that had left Hoboken that day were buried under the rubble of what once was the WTC. When the unthinkable happened, the entire PATH station had been ordered evacuated, employees included. As a result, there was no loss of life on the train or in the station.

It was during that inspection, while standing in Car 745, that I first had the idea of maybe trying to save one of these intact PATH cars as an artifact for future use. There was a small team of people on site during the recovery and cleanup that were focused on identifying and trying to save various artifacts from the site, so the idea was not foreign. However, the logistics and sheer size of the car, some 50 plus feet and 60,000 pounds of mass, located deep down beneath the smoldering remains, made it an unlikely candidate for saving. Also, the primary focus of operations at the site was search, recovery and clean up, not saving things.

Then in early February of 2002, as the recovery and clean up operations progressed into the former PATH station area and the remains of the PATH cars peaked into the daylight for the first time, the opportunity to extract and save a car intact presented itself.



On February 22, 2002, after presenting a plan and getting approval to proceed, two of the PATH cars were extracted and lifted out safely from under the remains of the station. Several weeks later, after completing a structural access ramp down into the site, the two cars were loaded onto low-boy trailers and transported out to Hanger 17 at JFK, where they were stored along with other artifacts from the site.



Peter Rinaldi with Car 745 in East Haven

Some 14 years later, I found myself again standing in car 745 as it traveled down River Street in East Haven to its new home at the East Shore Trolley Museum. Along with me, riding in the control cab seat, was Al Zelazo, a PATH Train Engineer and board member of the museum, who had driven Car 745 many times during its life on the PATH system. It was a day filled with many memories.

Peter Rinaldi

BLOGS

Have you visited the Port Authority's on-line Blog? You can access it at: <http://portfolio.panynj.gov>.

Here are just two examples of what you can find there:

1. The First Port Authority Police: A Few Husky Men!
2. Port Authority at the Movies Starring "The HOLLAND TUNNEL"

Social Security recently launched its new blog, Social Security Matters. You can think of this blog as a dashboard for the latest news and updates that affect retirement, survivors and disability benefits, veterans, the chronically ill, and anyone entitled to a broad range of social security services. It can be accessed at: <https://blog.socialsecurity.gov/>. The following are examples of what you can find there:

1. Replacing Your Social Security Card? Know Before You Go – 8/3/2015
2. Best Ways To Do Business With Social Security – 03/17-2013

PARA Membership and Recruitment

Recruiting new members for PARA is becoming increasingly more challenging. Privacy issues within the Port Authority make it difficult for our Membership Committee to contact current retirees. Therefore, we encourage all PARA members who still have friends and associates, either currently still working at the Port Authority, or recently retired, to help us recruit new members.

In February 2014, working closely with Human Resources, the Membership Committee sent out over 900 letters to individuals who retired between 2010 and mid-February 2014. We hope to repeat this effort again sometime in the near future. In the meantime, you are urged to continue your own recruiting drive from among your circle of friends and acquaintances, both in the retiree and active ranks, and together we will be a bigger, better, more effective spokesperson for retirees. Any effort you make to increase our membership roster is greatly appreciated.

PARA President Dave Gallagher's Testimony Before NJ Senate Committee

PARA President Dave Gallagher was invited to testify in a public hearing before the New Jersey Senate Legislative Oversight Committee on October 20, 2015. The hearing was the third in a series being held in NJ to discuss a proposed bill designed to reform the Port Authority. This legislative effort stems from the Bridgegate scandal and several other actions taken at the Port Authority in the recent past. A Port Authority reform bill was passed in the New York Legislature several months ago and identical legislation must be passed in New Jersey this year in order for it to apply to the Port Authority. The NJ proposed bill goes beyond the NY legislation and, if approved with any changes, it must go back to NY for consideration and re-approval. We have been posting relevant press articles on the PARA website (www.paranynj.org) to keep our members updated about the developments on these issues.

The comments shown below were followed by an extended Q&A session on the bill and other aspects of the PA's activities.

STATEMENT TO NJ PANEL OCTOBER 20, 2015

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen

My name is David Gallagher. I am pleased to be invited here to discuss the legislative proposals regarding reform measures affecting the Port Authority. I am a retiree from the Port Authority having served there for 33 years in a variety of positions including Human Resources, Engineering and the Tunnels, Bridges and Terminals (TBT) Departments. At the time of my retirement, I held the position of Assistant Director of the TBT department having responsibility for all non-field activities including budget, customer information, project engineering and planning, and tenant leasing. In addition, I concurrently served as the project director for the E-ZPass program during its final testing and initial implementation stages prior to it being launched across the PA's facilities.

The events that have occurred at the Port Authority over these past several years have

been most disheartening and they fly in the face of long standing Port Authority policy and by-laws. As a Port Authority retiree, I share your frustration – and your anger – at the actions that were taken by some individuals. They do not reflect the Port Authority that I knew over more than three decades of service there. I wholeheartedly agree that there is a need for some change and indeed I'm happy to see that a number of positive changes have already taken hold.

I have followed the media reports from the very outset of the revelations regarding Bridgegate and the various other issues which have surfaced as well. For me and for many of my retiree colleagues and current staff, they are shocking and jaw dropping to put it mildly. I am very pleased that there has been a good deal of scrutiny in these past months and in an effort to address these problems – in an appropriate way – and I appreciate the opportunity to share my views on the proposed legislation and to discuss these matters with you today. I fully support the effort to “get it right”.

So, as I have followed the reports over these many months and have listened to the epithets being hurled at “the Port Authority” and then as I read through this bill, I continue to ask myself: “What exactly went wrong?” and “What are the specific problems that are needed to be solved?” We certainly are all very aware of the circumstances and the particular actions that have caused much of this controversy. But I ask myself: “What is the underlying root cause? And – to what extent does this legislation address that?” In each case the genesis – the initiation of these highly questionable actions – comes back to individuals assigned or appointed to the Port Authority from outside. None of the actions were the work of the PA's career professionals. **All of it was undertaken by those whose allegiance was directed to others – but not to the Port Authority or to the region.** So I ask myself – and I ask you – “Does this bill address these key problems?”

Improving the organization's transparency, requiring more disclosure of its actions, protecting whistleblowers, clearly delineating

the role and responsibility **and allegiance** of Port Authority commissioners, having the CEO be selected by the PA Board (not by the governor), and re-stating or clarifying the mission of the Port Authority makes all the sense in the world given the prevailing concerns. The proposed bill seems to address these items fairly well.

Just a quick aside regarding transparency and openness --- I find it to be more than ironic – perhaps even inexplicable – when people are pounding the table demanding transparency from the PA – that the New York bill currently being considered for amendment here today was essentially developed behind the scenes and passed with no public meeting, no public input and no public discussion. It seems to have been done with no transparency at all. As it stands, it is hardly the model of a transparent legislation or public policy process, so I applaud your efforts in these hearings.

I mentioned earlier that these events occurred **at** the Port Authority but I re-emphasize that they were neither undertaken nor initiated **by** the Port Authority professional career staff. In each case, these actions were taken by political appointees, patronage appointees whose allegiance and behavior were demonstrably **NOT** in support of the Port Authority or the region but **rather were directed to serve their patron (on the one hand) or they were taken to promote their own self interest.** The notion of acting for the benefit of the public or the region was far from their agenda. And therein lies a root cause of these recent problems. It goes directly to those who are **NOT** PA career people and these actions were undertaken in brazen defiance of the PA's longstanding policies, operating procedures and by-laws.

In my view, the root cause(s) fall into several categories: first, the inappropriate and politically driven interference in the PA's activities and priorities. This interference was designed specifically to promote a partisan political agenda as opposed to meeting this region's needs.

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Second, more than 70 patronage appointees were spread throughout the ranks of the PA staff to serve as eyes and ears for political leaders and their allies. These individuals were not selected in accordance with traditional recruitment practices or because of their particular expertise or because there was a particular vacancy in the staffing ranks. They were simply directed to be appointed. These actions were – and are – absolutely wrong. They were counterproductive and divisive.

These two factors have gone a long way to tarnish the organization's reputation and they have impeded the ongoing efforts of the PA to serve this region. The presence of those patronage appointees served to create an environment riddled with dysfunction, suspicion, fear and intimidation. The remnants persist among the staff even to this day. This is most unfortunate in view of the long term challenges facing the PA as it works to modernize the airports, maintain safe bridges and tunnels, port facilities and terminals and execute a myriad of other essential tasks. It is a tribute to the current PA staff that they remain committed to fulfilling their role of public service with professionalism and dedication despite these politically motivated intrusions.

Fortunately, from what I can tell, the current chairman, John Degnan, has exercised outstanding leadership over these past 15 months or so in his effort to lead the board and to re-energize the organization and restore the public trust in the midst of a number of complex and controversial policy issues. This is no easy task after all that has happened and all of the derogatory comments about the PA over these past months. From all reports, his calm demeanor, his sense of reason and his political independence have been exemplary at this critical juncture in the PA's history. I'm fully aware of the proposed provision in the bill, which calls for rotating the chair and vice-chair from one state to the other every two years beginning one year from the effective date of this bill. This proposal has merit and I support this waiting period as a way to provide this chairman with sufficient time and space to continue the effort to "get things right".

I have had an opportunity to read the proposed bill with the recommended

amendments. My general comments fall into three broad areas.

First, it would seem that legislation ought to be directed mainly toward establishing key public policy requirements but in this bill there are a myriad of basic management practices which would now become a matter of legislative mandate. Many of these requirements, such as issuing an annual report or a capital plan, are already part and parcel of the Port Authority's management practices and this has been the case for decades. They are readily available on the PA's website. To require these practices (and others) to be a legal mandate strikes me as being superfluous and essentially results in legislating a structure of inflexibility. What happens when circumstances change or when other options develop in the future? Apparently new legislation in two states would be required. Is there really a desire for that? It's been a tortuous process already just to get to this point.

Second, I disagree with the effort to have the Port Authority be subject to direct legislative involvement as a matter of law or to have a liaison person from each state assigned to the Port Authority staff – again, as a matter of law. To me, this is a clear case of political overreach and flies in the face of long standing provisions of the Port Compact and historical precedent. As I see it, it is counterproductive and can only add to an environment of dysfunction and distrust. It provides an even greater opportunity for exerting political favoritism – this time from hundreds of legislators in two states. I think it is a grave mistake and I hope these provisions would be deleted from the bill. I completely understand your desire to have the legislators be more involved and I know that it has been particularly frustrating in your dealings with the executive branch. But those frustrations ought not be resolved by redefining the historical relationship of the PA with the two states. There are several other avenues to pursue that desire.

If you, as legislators, have been thwarted in exercising your "check and balance" function with the executive branch, then that is a problem for you to solve with the executive – but not by way of hamstringing the PA's professional staff. I'm sure that this frustration is not limited to issues of the Port Authority alone. It seems to pervade the governance of

the state more broadly. I urge you not to take out your frustration on the PA when the core problem is elsewhere.

Third, this goes back to my earlier comment about the root cause of these problems. As I mentioned earlier, to me the root cause is the inappropriate involvement of political outsiders and the imposition of patronage appointees into the ranks of the organization. But I see nothing in this bill that addresses that in any way whatsoever. While I completely understand the anger and lashing out, I think the growling has been directed (or misdirected) broadly at the Port Authority – including its staff – rather than at the source of these inappropriate actions. If this bill is passed what will prevent the continuation of patronage largess? What will prevent the directives from outside the organization which are **not** in the interests of the Port Authority region?

There is no question in my mind that patronage appointments should be halted completely once and for all. All recruiting and hiring below the position of Executive Director (or CEO) should be accomplished through normal Human Resource policies and procedures employed by the PA staff. That's clear. Is legislation required to accomplish that? Each governor has the right to nominate six individuals to serve on the PA Board and they can only serve once they are approved by the legislature. In effect, all PA commissioners have received the legislature's seal of approval – for better or for worse. Is a bill needed to strengthen that legislative responsibility in order to assure a more effective outcome?

In addition, a key point – any policy directive from outside the organization that is not consistent with the proper role, responsibility and policies of the Port Authority must be resisted by the PA Board. This is a crucial and intrinsic element of their role. It is their fundamental responsibility to act on behalf of the organization and its basic regional purpose – but not as servants of the governor of one state or the other. They need to stand firm and resist improper requests or directives. Is legislation needed to assure that? That is the basis for the PA being an independent organization -- independent from partisan political agendas. The board definitely needs to work **with** the elected officials and business leaders in the ongoing

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efforts to meet the regional and public interests. Unfortunately, throughout this ordeal and prior to Chairman Degnan's appointment, their silence has been deafening and their apparent subservience has been both disappointing and disheartening.

Finally, in the absence of context, it is not clear why some of these provisions (eg on subsidiaries, lobbyists, etc.) are included in the bill so it is difficult to comment on them specifically except to say that they too seem to be superfluous and will undoubtedly add to the PA's bureaucratic load. In addition it's not clear just how this bill impacts existing provisions as reflected in documents like the Port Compact or the PA By-laws or other laws which apply to the PA. Again, many of the items are already a matter of ongoing and longstanding practice at the PA so it is hard to understand the need for legislating them. It would seem to me that the goal of having these practices to be in effect has in fact already been accomplished in great measure. For me, I encourage more continued and constructive vigilance, less legislation.

In conclusion, I support the efforts to "get it right". Those efforts require a clear description or definition of the problem to be solved and an objective focus and assessment of the underlying cause(s). The solution, in the form of legislation, needs to clearly address those underlying causes. Otherwise the effort misses the target and

basically serves as window dressing for the public while allowing for the continuation of the very actions that contributed to these problems in the first place. In the future, others may still be allowed to misuse the Port Authority to meet their own short term political agenda.

In the final analysis, the Port Authority Board (each member's qualifications and commitment having been reviewed and approved by the legislature) together with the senior leaders of the agency need to be able to "live with" the mandates of this bill and still be able to apply top level professionalism and political independence in executing their regional mission. I would hope they have been an integral part of the process of developing these requirements.

I've offered some observations and concerns based on my own experiences over more than three decades but it is they -- the current and future leaders -- who must carry on the PA mission in today's world -- and in my view they need to do so with your support and collaboration -- not retribution, retaliation and punishment, with professionalism -- not bureaucracy, and with a regional perspective -- not with political parochialism. If this bill -- whatever form it takes -- can do that then I think it may be fair to say that you've "gotten it right".

I look forward to continuing the discussion. Thank you.