Date: April 23, 2025
W.I.: 1111
Referred by: Commission

ABSTRACT

MTC Resolution No. 4702

Resolution of Appreciation for **Karin Betts** on the occasion of her retirement from Metropolitan Transportation Commission after approximately 26 years of service.

Date: April 23, 2025
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RE: Resolution of Appreciation for **Karin Betts**

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Resolution No. 4702

WHEREAS, Karin Betts is retiring after 26 periodically abridged but always groundbreaking service to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission as a public information officer, editor, copyeditor, collaborator, curator, emissary and Andy whisperer extraordinaire; and

WHEREAS, before coming to MTC, Karin spent five years working a variety of temp jobs, during which time she turned down numerous offers of full-time employment to prioritize her passion for leading tours through jungles, nature preserves and historic sites around the world, and so unsurprisingly had a strong aversion to answering phones for a living; and

WHEREAS, Karin first came into contact with MTC's Legislation and Public Affairs section in 1999, when the sky was all purple, there were people runnin' everywhere, and her soon-to-be manager was struggling to find a good fit for the role and demanded that the temp agency "send someone with a brain;" and

WHEREAS, the exceptional attention to detail and creative problem-solving she displayed while executing such initial duties as categorizing and filing physical newspaper clippings are among the qualities that came to define Karin's career once the powers that be at MTC finally came to their senses and made her a regular staff member in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Karin is equally renowned for her stamina, demonstrated by her talent for copyediting scores of pages in a single sitting, leveraging her keen eye for translating from English to English on behalf of brilliant planners and engineers; always knowing when to properly choose a comma or a semicolon; when to spell out a number and when to use a numeral; when to capitalize the 'p' in plan; when to prioritize the active voice; when to use there,

their or they're; and when to simply split up the obscenely long sentences that all too often inundate MTC's time-honored resolutions of appreciation; and

WHEREAS, perhaps the literal high point of Karin's career was her years of work on the Bay Bridge East Span replacement project, where she excelled at building bridges of her own by forming strong, productive, collaborative and nonviolent relationships with people across the spectrum of partnerships behind the monumental undertaking; and

WHEREAS, Karin's gift of working with people to bring big ideas to fruition resulted in "The Bridge Builders," exhibition of Bay Bridge East Span photography featured at the Oakland Museum of California, San Francisco City Hall, San Francisco International Airport and even the Shanghai Minsheng Art Museum; and

WHEREAS, by dint of her ability to bring people together, whistle turf wars to a truce and metaphorically lubricate the wheels of government, Karin helped establish what is now known as the Judge John Sutter Regional Shoreline and also led to the execution of a memorandum of understanding to collect and preserve steel from the original East Span of the Bay Bridge for future art projects, much of which already has been used in installations across the state; and

WHEREAS, Karin also left her mark on and around the very building in which MTC operates, including the naming of rooms; the selection of artwork and indigenous history installations; and even Rincon Place, which is now recognized as a public park on Google Maps with a 4.8-star review average even though the installation of the street sign that designates this landmark was orchestrated by Karin sans permission from the City and County of San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, monumental policy development exercises such as the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force and the Transportation Regional Measure Select Committee that relied on

building consensus among leaders from across the Bay Area simply would not have been completed without Karin's skillful, tactful and tireless facilitation; and

WHEREAS, her unconventional approach, charm and creativity made Karin the go-to person for a myriad of tasks from MTC's Executive Office, which ranged from developing the "Ask Andy" blog during the agency's Bay Area Metro Center relocation to creating a specially curated box of American chocolates for Chinese President Xi Jinping, which were flown in and hand-delivered, thereby helping improve the balance of trade between the two countries long before the topic of tariffs became trendy; and

WHEREAS, in performance of yet another unusual task for the Executive Office, Karin served in a role she describes as 'Team Mom' for the Boccecrats, applying her steadfast leadership and peerless organizational prowess for the benefit of one of the Ferry Bocce League's original teams; and

WHEREAS, before the advent of Google Maps, Karin helped produce paper transit maps for all nine counties, documents so delicate that even the hardiest examples remained current for all of eight minutes after going to print; and also took it upon herself to experiment with Getting There on Transit by doing a full circumnavigation of the Bay on transit just to see if the guide worked and dedicating a full day to proving the affirmative; and

WHEREAS, Karin's reputation as a trailblazer was perhaps most whimsically demonstrated when she became the first and only known person to ever perform a handstand atop one of the towers of the Bay Bridge's West Span and her reputation for strength and flexibility was reinforced during a weekend closure of the Bay Bridge when she did the splits in the middle of the span simply because she could; and

WHEREAS, as varied, demanding and seemingly all-consuming as her brilliant work in public service has been, Karin's MTC career has been a figurative side gig when stacked against

her peripatetic proclivities and her frequent sojourns to satisfy her passion for leading nature and history tours around the world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the staff and commissioners of MTC as well as the hundreds of other people who have been lucky enough to work with her thank Karin for her decades of service to the agency and to the people of the Bay Area, the primates of Indonesia, the big cats of Africa, and all critters everywhere; applaud the creativity, talent and lovable sense of humor she brought to even the most daunting and stressful of projects; pray that, given the enormous weight of producing a written testimonial to her expert copyediting skills, this resolution meets her uNwaiv3rinNglee high editorial standards; and extend to Karin and her husband Ant the very fondest wishes for a new era of healthy, happy, active and satisfying adventures full of lions, tigers and bears.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Sue Noack, Chair

The above resolution was entered into by the
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
at a regular meeting of the Commission held in
San Francisco, California, and at other remote
locations, on April 23, 2025.