

Government Accountability and Transparency Board

August 18, 2011 Minutes

A meeting of the Government Accountability and Transparency Board was held at the Recovery Board Office in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, August 18, 2011, at 9:00 a.m. and continued until 10:10 a.m.

ATTENDEES

Board Members:

Earl E. Devaney, Chairman, Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board
Allison C. Lerner, Inspector General, National Science Foundation ¹
Daniel Levinson, Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services
Ellen Murray, Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources and Chief Financial Officer, Department of Health and Human Services
Calvin L. Scovel III, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Transportation
Kathleen S. Tighe, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Education
Daniel I. Werfel, Controller, Office of Management and Budget
David C. Williams, Inspector General, U.S. Postal Service

Proxy Attendees

Nani A. Coloretti, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury
Richard Ginman, Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy
W. Todd Grams, Executive in Charge for the Office of Management and Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Agency Staff:

Ross Bezark, Executive Director, GAT Board, and Chief of Staff, Recovery Board
Ed Pound, Director, Communications, Recovery Board
James Warren, Chief Innovation Officer, Recovery Board
Cynthia Williams, Board Secretary, Recovery Board
Michael Wood, Executive Director, Recovery Board

Guest:

Jack Lew, Director, Office of Management and Budget

Discussion:

Chairman Devaney opened the meeting and informed the members that Mr. Lew would be stopping by to address the members and answer any questions regarding the GAT Board mission and directive. By unanimous vote, of the members present, the minutes of the July 28, 2011 GAT Board meeting were approved. Mr. Devaney informed the members that the minutes will be published on the newly created GAT Board page on federaltransparency.gov. Mr. Bezark shared a screenshot of the new page and informed the members that the page will include the Administration's Executive Order, the GAT Board's mission statement, Board member names, and the minutes of each meeting.

¹ Attendance via Call-In

Chairman Devaney recapped the approved changes to the constitution and bylaws and opened the floor for further discussion. The revised constitution and bylaws were adopted. The members engaged in a brief discussion of the reporting requirement set forth in the Executive Order. Mr. Devaney proposed that he and Mr. Werfel begin drafting potential recommendations that the Board could present to the Administration. After which the members could read and deliberate over the proposal before a final collaborative decision is made.

Mr. Lew joined the group at approximately 9:15 a.m. and thanked the members and the Chairman for taking on this very important task of extending transparency and accountability to the larger federal government. He discussed some of the events that helped shaped the decision to create the GAT Board, noting the Administration's belief that the Recovery Act was a step in the right direction and is the stepping stone for moving forward. Mr. Lew emphasized some of the challenges to this effort. These include more disparate activities in the larger federal government environment, getting to the core of federal systems, and minimizing capital expenditures while establishing a single unified view to detect problems before they occur.

Mr. Lew also discussed the broader government financial picture. He recapped the events that preceded the recent budget debates and discussed the current agreement. The members engaged in a brief question and answer period with Mr. Lew concerning the fiscal year 2012 budget. Mr. Lew again thanked the members for their participation on the Board. He exited the meeting at approximately 9:40 a.m.

Mr. Devaney introduced Mr. Warren who provided the members an overview of the development of the Recovery Board's two websites Recovery.gov and FederalReporting.gov. Mr. Warren also discussed the Board's existing Information Technology (IT) portfolio, which includes the two sites named above along with EducationJobsFund.gov and the Recovery Operations Center (Accountability.gov). Mr. Warren concluded his presentation with a brief discussion of the lessons learned from the IT work of the Recovery Board and a vision for a government-wide IT portfolio.

Several members commented on the need to ensure appropriate scoping of the current universe of federal systems. Mr. Ginman noted that agencies will need more than spending data to prevent and detect fraudulent activity. There were also questions regarding the relationship of the Board's efforts to other systems being created. Mr. Werfel noted that a more detailed view of a system proposal would be beneficial. He suggested that a before and after view of systems operations be developed and presented for discussion. There was a brief discussion about performance measurement data. Mr. Devaney informed the members that a final decision on the inclusion of this type of data has not yet been made.

Mr. Devaney thanked Mr. Werfel and Mr. Williams for their interest in the position of Vice Chair. The members were asked to select the Vice Chairman by ballot before exiting.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for 9 a.m. on September 8, 2011.

Cynthia Williams
Secretary