

I appreciate the concern expressed in the letter but the context is relatively more benign than suggested by your correspondence.

I inquired of Mr. Pereira whether videotaping (as opposed to audio recording) of our meetings was required to be allowed and he felt it was discretionary. I was not involved in the follow up discussion with Mr. Ahlquist but did observe that he was approached by Mr. Pereira and took offense. In light of his position the matter was quickly dropped by Mr. Pereira and he was allowed to tape. The entire discussion took perhaps 60 seconds.

Attorney General opinions indicate that "recording" open meetings is allowed unless disruptive. I am not aware of any guidance that distinguishes between audio and video taping but I am concerned that members of the public, who often speak about personal difficulties when making public comment about RIPTA services, might be uncomfortable speaking when being filmed.

I am happy to discuss this issue but want to be sure the record is clear. There is no prohibition on recording RIPTA meetings and Mr. Ahlquist did videotape the entirety of the meeting he attended yesterday.

RIPTA will continue to allow Mr. Ahlquist (and others, without regard to journalist credentials) to videotape meetings. If Mr. Ahlquist attends future RIPTA meetings, I intend to follow up with him to ask whether he will voluntarily to refrain from videotaping public comment as I believe that presents a barrier for some who may want to be heard at our meetings. I will be sure to communicate that position as a request and not as a directive so as to avoid potential controversy.

Very truly yours,  
Wayne Kezirian

Wayne M. Kezirian, Board Chair  
Rhode Island Public Transit