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NEWPORT CITY OFFICIALS, PRESERVATION SOCIETY AND RIPTA CELEBRATE RENEWAL OF NEWPORT'S TROLLEYS

Conversion from CNG to Clean Diesel Yields Savings

New engines, electrical and suspension systems add five years to life of trolleys

Providence, Rhode Island, October 15, 2008 —Officials from the City of Newport, the Preservation Society of Newport County and the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) celebrated the return of two of the five newly retrofitted and restored trolleys to the City by the Sea today. The five trolleys, which serve Newport and originally had compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling systems, are being converted to run on clean diesel fuel. In addition to a new fueling system, they are each receiving a new engine, new electrical and suspension systems and a refurbished exterior.

"Newport appreciates the strong and continuing partnership with RIPTA that will encourage residents and visitors to get out of their vehicles. RIPTA will provide alternatives for them to visit the various attractions around the City," said Mary C. Connolly, Vice-Chair of the Newport City Council, who represented Newport Mayor Stephen C. Waluk.

The drive to save the trolleys, initiated by the Preservation Society, was fulfilled when RIPTA General Manager Alfred J. Moscola decided that they could be converted to diesel fuel. "The conversion to diesel means big savings for us. Because RIPTA doesn't have a CNG fueling station, the trolleys had to be driven to the State's CNG fueling station in Middletown, using expensive fuel dollars. The monthly fee to use that facility, which is in poor shape, also increased our operating costs by thousands of dollars every

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month, “ said RIPTA General Manager Alfred J. Moscola. “We also expect to save on fuel because diesel is cheaper than CNG and provides better mileage. And by giving the trolleys new engines and other new systems, we’ve extended their useful life by five years. That means even more money saved because we won’t have to get new vehicles to replace them for another 5 years, ” explained Moscola.

"This would not have happened if not for the collective voice of hundreds of people, both residents and visitors, who chimed in to let RIPTA know how important these traditional trolleys are to the historic fabric of Newport," said Preservation Society of Newport County CEO and Executive Director Trudy Coxe. "RIPTA is an important partner with us in supporting tourism throughout the state, and we are happy to have worked collaboratively with them and with the city to achieve an outcome that both saves money and saves the trolleys," added Coxe.

RIPTA trolleys in Newport serve Route 67 (Bellevue Avenue, Mansions, Salve Regina University) seven days a week all year round.

For information on RIPTA services, call 781-9400 or visit ripta.com.