

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT ETD MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT
REGULAR MEETING
Friday, April 19, 2024
91 N. Main Street, Middletown, CT and
Via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. In attendance included: Charlie Norz, John Hall, Leslie Strauss, Robert Brown, Joan Gay, Kathryn Russell, David Lahm, Jim Irish, Christine Marques, DG Fitton, Tim Griswold, Beverly Lawrence, and Irene Haines.

Guests: Mikaela Maroltullo, DOT, Sam Savvidou, DOT, Attorney Jonathan Shapiro and Attorney Matthew Ruan.

Staff: Chris Denison, Mutez Ennab, Joe Comerford, Brendan Geraghty, Halyna Famiglietti, Jared Whitcomb, Pat Hevrin, Lisa Gibson

New Board members Richard Brown, Clinton and Kathryn Russell, Deep River were welcomed to the Board.

VISITOR COMMENTS – None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

DG Fitton made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:08 a.m. for the purpose of a discussion on Healthcare. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Invited into the Executive Session: Board members and Attorney Ruan and Attorney Shapiro.

Regular Session resumed at: 9:35

No action taken.

COMMUNICATIONS

A letter from the DOT regarding the Connecticut Integrated Transit Mobility Project was included in the Board's packet. The DOT will reimburse the District \$160,000 for conducting a fare technology pilot project. These funds may be used for the purchase of fare validators, software implementation and contingency costs. If the pilot program is successful, the State would like to expand the service to provide a common fare structure across the state.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the minutes of the 2/9/24 Board meeting as presented. John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed with Kathryn Russell and Rob Brown abstaining from the vote.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the minutes of the 2/26/24 Finance meeting as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed with Kathryn Russell and Rob Brown abstaining from the vote.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the minutes of the 2/27/24 Board meeting as amended. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed with Kathryn Russell and Rob Brown abstaining from the vote.

Note that the 2/27/24 meeting was a Special meeting, not a Regular meeting as reported.

Tim Griswold made a motion to accept the minutes of the 3/8/24 Transit Advisory meeting as presented. DG Fitton seconded the motion. The motion passed with Kathryn Russell and Rob Brown abstaining from the vote.

Jim Irish made a motion to accept the minutes of the 4/16/24 Facilities meeting as presented. John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed with Kathryn Russell and Rob Brown abstaining from the vote.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the minutes of the 4/17/24 Finance meeting as presented. Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed with Kathryn Russell and Rob Brown abstaining from the vote.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Charlie Norz reported that the Finance Committee met on Wednesday 4/17/24. The finances of the District were reviewed and found to be in good order. The financial documents included a report on the District's unrestricted assets. As of the end of April, the assets total \$2.4 million dollars. The cash position for the next several months remains healthy.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Kathryn Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Committee

A copy of the 4/16/23 Facilities Committee meeting minutes was included in the Board packet and provided a status report of Facilities initiatives. Joan Gay, Chairman of the Facilities Committee was available to address questions and comments posed by Board members.

The DOT is working on the MOU for the bus maintenance facility.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Facilities Report as presented. John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee – no report.

Marketing Committee – Leslie reported:

- The consultant is facilitating the plans, as required by the DOT, for the micro transit pilot program as requested by the State.
- Bus wrapping is on-going.
- New brochures are being developed.
- As requested by the State, the District will again market the Park Connect Program.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Marketing Report as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Committee – no report.

Transit Advisory Committee -

Tim Griswold reported:

- The process to hire new drivers is being updated. The District is now able to participate in a Pilot Program to train for CDL licensing.
- The District has funding for 3 Micro Transit programs – Middletown, E. Hampton and Guilford.
- We've provided input to the State relative to the location of bus shelters.
- An RFP has been issued to solicit bidders for the Taxi Voucher program.

Tim Griswold made a motion to accept the Transit Advisory Committee Report as presented. DG Fitton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Expansion Committee – Tim reported:

- The Committee recommends inviting Portland and E. Hampton to join the District.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Expansion Report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Committee – no report.

COG Update – Brendan reported:

- Work on the Thrive Grant is progressing. Public Meetings will be scheduled, and consultants will be hired.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the COG Update as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joe reported:

- Bus driver training – The State is allowing the District to participate in Pilot Programs to train drivers; one program for endorsements on commercial licenses and one for full CDL. DOT is funding these programs.
- The District is gearing up for the new services to start in May.

DG Fitton a motion to accept the Executive Director’s Report as presented. Kathryn Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TRANSIT PLANNERS REPORT

Brendan reported:

- Brochures are being updated to reflect the new schedules, Micro Transit, Extra Mile.
- Drivers are being hired to facilitate the expanded services including Extra Mile.
 - The Extra Mile program is being marketed.
- Vehicle Technology Software – upgrades to the terminal and train station are complete. However, the information on the screens is not accurate. Due to the on-going issues, the District is well within its rights to now use a different vendor.
- As reported above, the District has provided 10 “priority” bus shelter sites to the State as requested.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Transit Planner’s Report as presented. John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

A copy of the Finance report was included in the Board packet and discussed. These documents have been reviewed by the Finance Committee.

Halyna reported:

- No issues with Budget vs Actual
- Grant applications are on-going and will meet due dates.
- Cash flow remains healthy.
 - 4.6% interest has been realized totaling \$10,623.
- Buses have been received and delivery of additional buses is anticipated in the summer.
- The HR software will assist with hiring, benefits, payroll, etc.

Halyna was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Finance Director’s Report as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Jared Whitcomb reported:

- Ridership is not back to prior Pandemic numbers, but Portland continues to grow.
- Additional dispatch hours will be needed to accommodate the expanded services.
- Two drivers have been hired for Middletown.
 - Several drivers are out on medical leave.

Christine Marques made a motion to accept the Operations Director’s Report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – no report.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution – Angus McDonald

Joan Gay made the following motion:

WHEREAS, Angus McDonald, Jr. has served on the Estuary Transit District Board of Directors as the representative for the Town of Deep River since October 2106; and

WHEREAS, He has served as the Board Chairman of the Nominating Committee since February 2021; and

WHEREAS, He has served on the MOA/Expansion Transition Committee, the Facilities Committee and the Legislative Committee; and

WHEREAS, He has been a key contributor to the Board in all areas of transit concern offering invaluable insights with wisdom;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Estuary Transit District wholeheartedly thanks him for his many years of outstanding contributions and service.

DG Fitton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval – East Hampton and Portland Membership Dues

DG Fitton made the following motion:

THE UNDERSIGNED, being all the members of the Estuary Transit District (the ETD) Board of Directors (the Board), hereby unanimously consent to adopt the following resolution for and on behalf of the Company:

WHEREAS, pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. 7-273b, the municipalities of Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, and Westbrook established the ETD in 1981;

WHEREAS, the municipalities of Durham, Middlefield and Middletown joint ETD in 2022 as Middletown Transit District combined with ETD;

AND WHEREAS, Conn. Gen. State 7-273b(e) provides that “the legislative body of any municipality may vote to establish a transit district or to join with any one or more municipalities to form such a district. Any municipality may at any time be included in the district if the legislative body thereof so votes and if accepted by a majority vote of the directors of the transit district”.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVE, the Board hereby invites the Towns of E. Hampton and Portland to join the ETD in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. 7-273b;

RESOLVED, that all actions heretofore with respect to the foregoing matters be and each of them hereby is approved and ratified in all respects; and

RESOLVED, that this resolution and consent be placed in the minute book of the ETD and become a part of the records of the ETD.

Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note: dues will be set at the FY2024/25 rate.

Snow Removal and Landscaping Authorizing Resolution

John Hall made the following motion:

WHEREAS, bids for an experienced Contractor to assume responsibility for snow removal and landscaping services to serve its two Middletown locations, were solicited and opened on February 29, 2024;

BE IT RESOLVED, that Central CT Services, LLC be awarded the bid to assume responsibility for the aforementioned tasks;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford, hereby is authorized on behalf of the ETD to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents with Central CT Services, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.

David Lahm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Security Camera Authorizing Resolution

John Hall made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Executive Director Joseph Comerford, hereby is authorized on behalf of the ETD to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents required to install a new security camera system for the Estuary Transit District from Security 101 dba Advance Security Integration, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$65,000.

David Lahm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Fare Validator Authorizing Resolution

DG Fitton made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Executive Director Joseph Comerford, hereby is authorized on behalf of the ETD to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents required to purchase and install fare validator software from SC Soft Americas and fare calculation software from Littlepay for the ETD in an amount not to exceed \$160,000.

John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5311 Authorizing Resolution

DG Fitton made the following motion:

WHEREAS, the ETD, pursuant to Chapter 103a, Section 7-273k of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, as revised, is empowered to enter into contracts for the purpose of subsidizing transit services, therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED, that Leslie B. Strauss, Chairman, and/or in her absence of inability to act, the Vice Chairman, Joan Gay, having been since April 19, 2024, hereby are authorized to act on behalf of the ETD, in filing an application with the Connecticut DOT under the RTA Section 5311 Nonurbanized Area Formula Program and negotiating the executing agreements/contracts, and all appropriate and necessary contractual instruments for the aid in the financing of operating, administrative, capital and/or technical assistance projects with the Connecticut DOT.

John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

On-Demand Authorizing Resolution

DG Fitton made the following motion:

WHEREAS, bid for an experienced Contractor to perform and provide on-demand transportation services to satisfy ETD's need were solicited and opened on April 1, 2024;

BE IT RESOLVED, that Transportation General, Inc. dba M7 and UBER Technologies, Inc. be awarded the bid to assume responsibility for the aforementioned tasks;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Executive Director Joseph Comerford, hereby is authorized on behalf of the ETD to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents with Transportation General, Inc. dba M7 and UBER Technologies, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000.00.

John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AAA Authorizing Resolution

DG Fitton made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford and/or in his absence or inability to act, the Chairperson, Leslie B. Strauss, are hereby, authorized on behalf of the ETD to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents required to obtain funds from the Senior Resources Agency on Aging.

John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note: Dates on Resolutions will reflect 4/19/24.

Discussion of Fare and Service Change Policy

A copy of the Fare and Service Change Policy was included in the Board's packet. Note that the document should be dated 4/19/24, not 4/12/24.

Changes to the document were highlighted and Brendan Geraghty was available to address

questions/comments posed by Board members.

DG Fitton made a motion to approve the Fare and Service Change Policy as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Leslie Strauss offered suggestions for committee assignments as follows:

Finance – DG Fitton was added to the Committee.

Facilities – includes Jim Irish, Christine Marques and John Hall

Legislative – Christine Marques was added to the Committee.

Expansion – includes DG Fitton, Tim Griswold and Charlie Norz

John Hall made a motion to accept the committee assignments as recommended. DG Fitton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

John Hall made a motion to appoint DG Fitton (Chair), Jim Irish and Tim Griswold to the Nominating Committee. DG Fitton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Board members are required to serve on at least one committee. New Board members will let Leslie or Joe know what committee they would like to serve on.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Leslie welcomed the new members and thanked members for their attendance at today's meeting.

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Leslie Strauss made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 a.m. DG Fitton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting – June 14, 2024 - 9 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk