

RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT
REGULAR MEETING
Friday, April 14, 2023
ETD Offices and via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. A quorum was established with the following Board members present: Chairman Strauss, Joan Gay, Charlie Norz, Jim Irish, Tim Griswold, Angus McDonald (briefly exited the meeting at 9:20), Beverly Lawrence, David Lahm, and Bobby Knoll Peterson.

Staff: Joe Comerford, Halyna Famiglietti, Brendan Geraghty, Mutez Ennab, Chris Dennison

Absent: John Hall, DG Fitton, Karl Kilduff

VISITORS' COMMENTS - None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Leslie Strass made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the 3/10/23 Board meeting as presented. Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the 3/28/23 Facilities Committee meeting as presented. Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the minutes from the 4/12/23 Finance Committee meeting as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

TREASURER'S REPORT – None.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Facilities A copy of the Facilities Committee meeting minutes was included in the Board packet. Joan reported:

- Negotiations with the consultant relative to the Master Plan have been finalized.
- Electrification – the use of smaller chargers will be necessary as the existing facility does not have the capacity to charge over 150KW.
- Shoreline Facility – owner is a willing seller. Negotiations can begin once NEPA and Title VI process are complete. Feasibility and Environmental studies will be added to the scope.
- A drainage pipe at the Middletown Maintenance Facility is being addressed.
- MAT Terminal - minor repairs are being done to keep the building usable until upgrades are complete.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Facilities Committee report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee

Charlie reported that the Committee met on 4/12 and reviewed all Finance documents prepared by Halyna. The “financials” of the District are healthy and will remain so for the foreseeable future. A copy of the Finance Committee’s meeting minutes was included in the Board packet.

Angus McDonald made a motion to accept the Finance Committee report as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Marketing Committee

Leslie reported that she meets regularly with the Consultant. The focus now is on the website. Content is being finalized. Samples of the website design have been shared with the Board.

Approximately 50 individuals attended the April 1 “Roll-out”. The event went well, presentations were done, “swag” was distributed, etc. A newly wrapped bus was unveiled, new logo, etc.

Additional marketing initiatives include town newsletters, Events magazines, and social media.

Brendan did a PR interview with Pete Mezzetti and Joe spoke on NPR.

Jim Irish made a motion to accept the Marketing Committee report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Committee

Joan reported that the Legislative Breakfast was a success, over 20 individuals attended the event. Talking points will be developed for Board member discussions with Legislators.

Tim Griswold made a motion to accept the Legislative Committee report as presented. Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Transit Advisory Committee - no report.

Service Study Committee - no report.

Personnel Committee - no report.

COG Update

Brendan encouraged Board members to provide feedback on the Transportation Plan. Towns have been appointing members to the COG’s Affordable Housing Committee.

David Lahm made a motion to accept the COG Update as presented. Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joe reported that the majority of his time has been spent on the new branding initiatives and the roll-out of the “new” District and fares.

The Town’s Municipal Grant program (State matching) will allow the District to add services to towns at no cost to them.

In addition, Joe reported:

- Work on the Micro-Transit Software is on-going.
- Training – dispatchers are being trained on the para-transit and Dial a Ride software.
- \$14,680 has been collected in the first week of fare collections. Mobile ticketing was 22% of the fare revenue.
 - As fares have been reinstated, ADA and Dial a Ride are less busy.
 - Ridership in the first week of fares was 7,000.
 - Fixed routes do not seem to have been impacted by the reinstatement of fares.
 - Note that there is not enough data yet to identify trends.

Jim Irish made a motion to accept the Executive Director’s report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TRANSIT PLANNERS REPORT

Brendan reported that he is working on the comprehensive state-wide Micro Transit 2-year Grant Application. He provided details on the application and was available to address questions/comments posted by Board members.

Brendan facilitated public outreach (public hearings both in-person and via ZOOM) relative to the recent service changes, roll-out of fares, etc. The new kiosk and electronic signage projects are moving forward.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Transit Planner’s report as presented. Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Copies of the Budget vs. Actual and Cash Flow reports were included in the Board’s packet. All documents have been reviewed by the Finance Committee and as reported above, the “financials” of the District are healthy and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Halyna was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members.

Angus McDonald made a motion to accept the Finance Director’s report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Operation Director’s report was screen shared. Joe reported that ridership is now at pre-Pandemic levels.

In addition:

- Staff and riders have been trained relative to the fares.
- New uniforms have been distributed to drivers/staff.
- Data from the first week of the fare reinstatement will be available at the next Board meeting.
- There has been a decrease in ridership (down by 15%) as a fare is now required on Extra Mile. Note that Wesleyan ridership has not declined as the university is funding this program.
- The new software will allow us to provide a “senior fare” on Extra Mile.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Operation Director’s report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR REPORT

The Maintenance Director’s report was screen shared and included:

- Preparation for Triennial
- Installation of fare boxes on vehicles (supply chain issues delayed this process).
- Buses will be wrapped ASAP – contract awarded for wrapping of the 4-bus procurement.
 - Will do procurement for wrapping of the larger buses.
- The State may use the District as the Pilot Program for the statewide fare collection system.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Maintenance Director’s report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Building and Facility Names

Currently, several District buildings and facilities are named after individuals. With the development of the new “brand” and signage, the Board discussed the appropriateness of continuing with naming buildings/facilities after individuals.

The consensus of the Board was to contact families and notify them that their family members will now be honored via a plaque inside the facilities. Building/facility names will no longer be “personalized” and buildings will now have a more “generic” name to identify the function of the building. The Marketing consultant will be asked to provide input on appropriate protocols.

Charlie Norz made a motion to “generically” name all facilities and to honor past eponyms with a plaque in recognition of their service/contributions. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Meetings will continue to be hybrid; however, Leslie encouraged members to attend in person if possible.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION- none.

ADJOURNMENT

Joan Gay made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting is 5/12/23.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski

Clerk