

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT RIVER VALLEY
TRANSIT MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Friday, July 14, 2023
91 N. Main Street, Middletown Ct and via
ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A quorum was established with the following members present: James Irish (via Zoom), Leslie Strauss, Beverly Lawrence, John Hall (via Zoom arrived at 9:55 a.m.), Charlie Norz (via Zoom), Angus McDonald (via Zoom), Joan Gay (via Zoom), Tim Griswold, Karl Kilduff and DG Fitton.

Staff: Brendan Geraghty, Joe Comerford, Halyna Chris Dennison, (via Zoom), Halyna Famiglietti, (via Zoom)

Absent: David Lahm, Bobbye Knoll Peterson

SECRETARY'S REPORT

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the minutes of the 6/9/23 Board meeting as presented. Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the minutes of the 6/27/23 Facilities Committee meeting as presented. Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the minutes of the 7/10/23 Legislative Committee meeting as presented. Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS - None.

TREASURER'S REPORT – No Report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities – meeting minutes included in the Board packet contain a detailed report relative to Facilities Committee initiatives.

Joan reported:

- * Conceptual plans for the Middletown and Shoreline facilities are due at the end of July. The committee will review at their 8/8 meeting.
- * The Mayor of Middletown has requested that property on Union Street be considered as an alternate site (40 Union Street). If considered, the timing of the project will be impacted as additional studies on that site will be necessary.
 - * Committee members expressed concerns as that site is not in the “downtown”

area.

* Joe reported that the DOT has done a preliminary review of that location.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Facilities Committee report. DG Fitton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Marketing

Leslie reported:

- The Committee met on Wednesday, 7/12 and is in the final stages of designing new signage.
- Website – the majority of the content is written and is in the process of being “loaded” to the website. It is anticipated that the site will launch at the end of Summer.
- Press Conference – the Lt. Governor attended the Park Connect Program Press Conference. The program is centered on the beach areas and is weather dependent.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Marketing Committee report. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative

Joan reported it is anticipated that the next Annual Legislative/First Selectman breakfast will take place in mid to late January. Details of the last event were included in the Legislative Committee meeting minutes.

Joe reported that the State Association met last week to discuss next year’s Legislative Session and agreed on priorities including the electric bus timeframe and workforce development for bus operators. The Association also assessed the importance of having a Lobbyist working on the District’s behalf at the Capitol.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Legislative Committee report. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Transit Advisory

Tin reported that the Committee forwarded a list of recommended Transit Advisory Committee appointees for Board consideration. All individuals expressing an interest in serving on the Committee were offered an interview.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Transit Advisory Committee report. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Joe reported:

- * The fiscal year has been closed. To date, the DOT has not yet provided the District’s TOD (budget).
- * The importance of receiving Town dues during the time was stressed.

- * The need for the potential use of the line of credit was discussed.
 - * Joe reported to the District’s “new” bank (Webster) that they must meet their commitment regarding the line of credit.
 - * Note that the line of credit has not been used in recent years; however, it may be necessary depending on when the State provides funds.
- * Mobility Management Program (facilitated by the Kennedy Center) – this program helps individuals connect with transportation services. The ombudsman has met, along with District staff, at senior centers and events to teach people about public transportation. Unfortunately, funding for this position was not renewed due to an oversight. Joe has been working with area COGs to have these funds reinstated but this may not happen until March 2024. To keep this important programming, Joe recommended that the District “hire” the Kennedy Center and then get reimbursed.
- * Staffing continues to be an issue and Lisa is actively recruiting drivers. The difficulties in finding qualified drivers were discussed.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Executive Director’s report. Karl Kilduff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TRANSIT PLANNER’S REPORT

Brendan reported:

- * Bus upgrades, terminal upgrades/signage and AVL installation in on-going.
- * New brochures are being developed.
- * The new Micro Transit service providers are being updated.

A copy of the Proposed Service Changes Public Outreach Presentation was included in the Board packet and “screen shared”. Brendan provided a comprehensive overview of the presentation and Joe and Brendan were available to address questions/comments posed by Board members. Recommendations for changes in service were included in the presentation.

DG Fitton made a motion to accept the Transit Planner’s report. Karl Kilduff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

DG Fitton made a motion to appoint Tim Kellogg, Heather Granja, Artha Slade, Joann Ewing, Will Goble and Laurie McElwee to the Transit Advisory Committee. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Management Contract – The current contract with Firs Transit expires in November. The Committee (DG, Charlie, John) will meet on Wednesday, 7/19, to discuss the next steps.

Bus Advertising – At a previous meeting, the Board agreed to defer future discussions related to advertising on the buses until the next fiscal year. However, the contractor provided an offer increasing the District’s minimum income from \$30,000 to \$41,250 for Board consideration. The Consensus of the Board was to defer further discussions on advertising until next year.

Board Training

Anyone interested in attending the CTAA (Community Transportation of America) 2-day on-line class should contact Chris and she will register you for the event.

OLD BUSINESS

Service Changes

DG Fitton made a motion to adopt the all route and service changes as presented in the Proposed Service Changes Public Outreach Presentation as determined by the Transit Planner and Executive Director. Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CHAIR REPORTS

Leslie reported on the importance of Board representation from the Town of Durham. Jim Irish will follow-up with Durham.

BOARD COMMENTS

DG commended an Essex route driver for his enthusiasm for the District.

ADJOURNMENT

Angus McDonald made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 a.m. John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting: 8/11/23

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk