

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT ETD MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING  
August 12, 2022  
Middletown Offices and via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Leslie Strauss, Chairman at 9:12 a.m.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with the following board members were present: Leslie Strauss, Charlie Norz, Tim Griswold (left the meeting at 10:05), Irene Haines, James Irish, Joan Gay, John Hall, Angus McDonald, David Lahm, and Beverly Lawrence.

Also in attendance: Joe Comerford, Christina Denison, Halyna Famiglietti, Lisa Gibson, Brendan Geraghty, Sam Gold, Ryan Curley, and Robert Yamartino.

Absent: Karl Kilduff, Middletown rep, Durham rep., DG Fitton,

VISITOR COMMENTS – None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Angus McDonald made a motion to accept the minutes from the Board Meeting dated 7/8/22. John Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Expansion Transition Committee minutes of 7/26/22. Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Finance Committee minutes of 8/10/22. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE –

Passenger Letter

The District was copied on a letter to the Governor, thanking him for the free fares on public transportation. The letter was submitted by Joelle Kentfield, Middletown.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Charlie reported:

- The Finance Committee met on 8/10.
- Staff was commended for developing the first set of “combined” financial information.
  - No concerns were noted relative to the financial reports.

Tim Griswold made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. David Lahm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Expansion Transition Committee

Joan reported:

- The HR Study will be completed in the upcoming weeks. Personnel policies will be presented to the entire Board.
- The consultant continues to collect data relative to the Fare Study.
- The AVL RFP is progressing but there are delays due to supply chain issues.
- Facilities – the appropriate representatives from DOT have not attended Expansion meetings.

John Hall made a motion to accept the Expansion Transition Committee report. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee – None.

Marketing Committee

- The Park Connect Program has been marketed
- Work on the website is on-going and website “hits” are up.
- When the Board determines the new “DBA,” branding efforts will begin

Legislative Committee

Joan reported:

- The 2022 Legislative breakfast was well attended.
  - Those not in attendance were forwarded the presentation

Transit Advisory Committee – None.

Service Study Committee – None.

Nominating Committee – None.

Personnel Committee

Proposed changes to the Manual have been discussed by the Personnel Committee. Final recommendations will be forwarded to the entire Board for review and comment.

COG Update

Sam Gold reported:

- The COG is pursuing a Technical Assistance Grant from the State. This program calls for improvements to road safety for drivers, pedestrians, and transit.
- Other Federal Transportation programs are being “watched”. There will be mandatory Federal “set asides” for planning funds to focus on transit and bike trails.
- DEEP is doing an RFP on broadband internet. It has been suggested that WIFI be offered in transit vehicles.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

A copy of the Executive Director’s Report was included in the Board packet. Joe Comerford reported:

- The fire in New Haven is being investigated. Electric bus orders have been put on hold pending the results of the investigation.

Joe was available to respond to questions/comments posed by Board members.

Angus McDonald made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Bank Statements (Webster Bank), Cash Flow Forecast, and Budget vs. Actual reports, for both Middletown and Shoreline, were included in Board packet and "screen shared". No issues reported.

Halyna reported:

- The DOT "covered" lost revenue as a result of the free fares.
- All figures provided are "pre audit" and there may be some slight adjustments.
- Fare revenue is down due to increased fuel costs and low ridership throughout the Pandemic. The DOT will permit us to use Cares Act funds to address lost revenue.

Halyna was available to address concerns/questions from Board members.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Finance Director's Report as presented. Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### OPERATIONS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jared Whitcomb reported that new drivers have been hired and several applications have been received for additional drivers.

#### Ridership

Steady increases have been realized in ridership and as ridership increases, we are getting back to the pre-Pandemic numbers. Free fares and increased fuel costs have had a positive effect on ridership.

Angus McDonald made a motion to accept the Operations Director's Report as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Pat Hevrin reported that the new employee is working out well and has been inspecting the vehicles. Building projects are on-going. Pat expressed concern relative to electric buses and the power grid.

Joe reported that buses have been on order since 2021 and March 2022. Funds are in place for the purchases; however, the chassis have not yet been delivered to the manufacturer and there is no estimate on when the vehicles will be delivered; the order may be cancelled. If the order is cancelled, there may not be ample funds to purchase new buses have costs have increased substantially since the buses were originally ordered. The current vehicles have high mileage. The District may be able to take advantage of the DOT's contacts for other bus manufacturers.

David Lahm made a motion to accept the Maintenance Director's Report as presented. Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Committees and Committee Appointments

David Lahm made a motion to disband the Expansion Transit Committee. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

David Lahm made a motion to form a 3-member Facilities Committee. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

David Lahm made a motion to nominate the following Committee members: Joan Gay, Chairman, Angus McDonald, and Karl Kilduff. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

John Hall made a motion to appoint Joan Gay, Chairman, Angus McDonald, and Karl Kilduff to the Facilities Committee. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Fare Collection Survey

Work is on-going with regard to the Fare Survey. Surveys have been developed and are due 8/19. All board members and staff were encouraged to respond to the survey. A meeting invitation will be forwarded to all board members to update them on the survey.

Brendan has been working with Wesleyan University regarding their request for services. To date 17 stops have been identified and marketing on the service is being developed. There is an opportunity for Wesleyan to provide interns to the District.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Fare Collection Study report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Selection of New DBA

The consultant conducted stakeholder interviews and two suggested DBA (Doing Business As) "finalists" are:

- #1 River Valley Transit – RVT
- #2 Valley and Shore Transit – VAST

The Board discussed the pros/cons of each DBA.

John Hall made a motion to adopt River Valley Transit, RVT, as the District's DBA (Doing Business As). Angus McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Note that non-voting members in attendance agreed with RVT as the DBA.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

CHAIR COMMENTS - None.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS -

Ryan Curley, First Selectman, Portland was welcomed. Portland will join the District now that the merger has been completed. The Board thanked Portland for hosting the recent picnic.

Robert Yamartino, First Selectman, Middlefield, was welcomed. Jim Irish is Middlefield's representative to the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Angus McDonald made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:22 a.m. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting – September 9, 2022 – 9:00

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Clerk