

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT ESTUARY
TRANSIT DISTRICT MEETING

April 16, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Estuary Transit District was called to order by Richard Cabral 9:05 a.m. at the Estuary Transit Offices, Centerbrook, Connecticut.

ROLL CALL

A Quorum was established. Those in attendance included: Jack Spangler, Virginia Zawoy, Richard Cabral, John Forbis, Dick Smith, Leslie Strauss, Noel Bishop

Absent: Ralph Eno, Mike Pace

Staff: Joe Comerford, Paul Tyrrell, Halyna Famiglietti

PLEDGE

Richard Cabral led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

The Board discussed the necessity of monthly meetings. By statute, the Board must meet annually in February and quarterly. Joe Comerford reported on the amount of preparation work required for the meetings.

Jack Spangler made a motion to add to the agenda, under New Business, ETD meeting schedule. Leslie Strauss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dick Smith made a motion to suspend the order of business and discuss the Operations Manager's Report. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

A copy of the Operations Manager's Report was included in the Board's packet.

Paul Tyrrell reported on the steps being taken to mitigate instances of buses running ahead of schedule. He added that the new software, which includes GPS capabilities, will assist with the scheduling.

Paul Tyrrell distributed a copy of the Evaluation Form for operator performance as well as operating statistics for the various routes. The Evaluation results were shared with the drivers. A minimum 2% increase was given to drivers. Joe Comerford added that both favorable customer comments and complaints are used during the evaluation process.

Paul Tyrrell continued that there has been an increase in riders on the Dial a Ride route on Saturday. The bus is 22 passengers; many from adult day care centers. There have also been more students riding to the Middletown campus. He added that connections are being better accommodated, enabling individuals to continue on to Hartford and Middletown.

John Forbis made a motion to accept the Operations Manager's Report. Dick Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dick Smith made a motion to resume the normal order of business. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes

Dick Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2010 meeting, with several grammatical corrections. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion.

Page 6 – note that no motions were executed during Executive Session.

The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Joe Comerford reported that the District has received approval from the DOT to change the Old Saybrook – Niantic Transit Service. This approval will allow the bus to go to New London and meet the SEAT buses at the Transportation Center. This change will also cut down on the trip time, increase the visibility of the District and make it easier for passengers to get from Old Saybrook to New London.

The Public Hearing for this change is scheduled for April 28, 2010 in Old Saybrook (3:00 o'clock) and Old Lyme (2:00 o'clock).

Virginia Zawoy reported that a letter was received from the DOT accepting the audit and finding that the audit was in compliance.

TREASURER'S REPORT

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – No report at this time.

MARKETING REPORT

The Marketing Reported was included in the Board's packet.

Leslie Strauss made a motion to accept the Marketing Report. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Leslie Strauss commented that Joe Comerford has done a tremendous job marketing the District. This marketing is reflected in the increase in ridership. She urged Board members to inform Joe of any marketing/promotional opportunities in their respective towns.

Dick Smith reported that the bus shelter in Deep River should be completed within the next two weeks. Richard Cabral thanked Dick for his assistance in storing and constructing the shelters.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A copy of the Executive Director's Report was included in the Board's packet.

Joe Comerford reported the Municipal Grant Application has been submitted and was approved at the April MPO meeting. It will be forwarded to the DOT.

Joe Comerford reported that fy 2009 was the final year of the current audit services contract with Seward and Monde. He plans to have an RFP out in early May and hopes to have a new contract in place by July 1, 2010. The Board will need to nominate an Audit Selection Committee to evaluate proposals and make recommendations to the Board.

The second round of stimulus funding is expected in 4 to 6 weeks. These funds will be used for additional buses, furniture, computes, and the support vehicle. Joe continued that he has applied for a Grant which would be used for a hybrid bus.

Joe Comerford distributed a survey compiled by David Lee showing the discrepancies in driver pay throughout the state. This survey shows that the ETD drivers are compensated at a much lower rate than their counterparts throughout the state. Joe continued that this contributes to the difficulty in recruiting drivers.

Dick Smith commented that the Board needs to discuss/investigate this issue and possibly restructure to use more full time drivers.

Joe Comerford briefly reported on the budgetary impact full time drivers would have on the District. He reported that the District typically returns money to the state thus prompting the state to cut funds the following year. Joe added that all of the routes are funded through different Grants. These Grants were written reflecting our low salary rates. He suggested beginning the process which would adjust the wages.

Dick Smith made a motion to go to the State for adjustment due to the low salary rate in the District and the difficulty in finding and retaining drivers. John Forbis seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Richard Cabral commented that there are benefit packages to consider if full time drivers are hired. He added that Mike Pace had expressed concern over this issue in the past. Leslie Strauss responded that Mike may have been unaware of the level of difficulty in finding and keeping drivers.

Joe Comerford will pursue and submit a written request to the State.

The motion passed unanimously.

Dick Smith made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report. Jack Spangler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

The Finance Manager's Report, Bank Statements and Cash Flow Report were included in the Board's packet.

Leslie Strauss made a motion to accept the Finance Managers Report. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Memorial Plaque – Stan Greimann

Virginia Zawoy and Leslie Strauss reported on the prices, choices and parameters of a plaque in honor of Stan Greimann.

Jack Spangler made a motion to purchase a 10 x 2 aluminum plaque in honor of ETD founder Stan Greimann. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Meeting Schedule

The Board discussed the possibility of scheduling ETD Board meetings every other month, as opposed to monthly. Dick Smith cautioned that bi-monthly meetings may be lengthy. Richard Cabral responded that receiving the Board packet ahead of time and review of same by Board members, will allow for timely meetings.

Noel Bishop made a motion to hold board meeting in the months of February, April, June, August, October and December. Jack Spangler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board directed Joe Comerford to cancel the meetings (with the town clerks and the Secretary of State) in the “off” months.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Contingency Plan

Noel Bishop made a motion to table, at the Finance Committee’s request, the discussion on the Budget Contingency Plan. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Auditor Selection Committee

Auditor Selection Committee: John Forbis, Joe Comerford, Richard Cabral and Mike Pace.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Richard Cabral suggested that a letter be sent to Mike Pace regarding his attendance at meeting and the possibility of a replacement.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

John Forbis commended Joe Comerford and the ETD Staff for the growth of the District over the past 5 years.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Noel Bishop made a motion to go into Executive Session to adopt the 2011 Budget at 10:38 p.m. Halyna Famiglietti, Joe Comerford and Suzanne Helchowski were invited into the Executive Session. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe Comerford reported that the budget was advertised as required.

Regular session resumed at 10:39 a.m.

No motions were executed in Executive Session.

Richard Cabral opened the Public Hearing at 10:39 p.m. The Public Hearing was closed at 10:40 p.m.

John Forbis made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2010.

Dick Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 a.m. Jack Spangler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Recording Clerk

Virginia Zawoy
Secretary