

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

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

June 19, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Estuary Transit District was called to order by Chair Richard Cabral at 9:04 a.m. at the Old Saybrook Town Hall in Old Saybrook, Connecticut.

ROLL CALL

Those in attendance included: Virginia Zawoy, Jack Spangler, John Forbis, Noel Bishop, Richard Cabral, Ralph Eno, Mike Pace, Dick Smith (arrived at 9:37) and Leslie Strauss.

Absent: Mike Pace

Staff: Halyna Famiglietti and Joe Comerford

Visitors: Health Insurance Representatives – Darlene Thompson, Ted Casey

PLEDGE

Richard Cabral led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Joe Comerford reported on a letter received from the DOT regarding the Municipal Grant Program and 2010 funding. The budget does not currently include funding for the State Matching Grant Program for Demand-Response Transportation for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities. He continued that state Representatives are working to add this funding and encouraged Selectmen to discuss with their representatives. There is a rally scheduled for June 23, 2009 and Joe will forward information regarding same to Board members.

Minutes

Ralph Eno made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 15, 2009 Regular Meeting, as presented. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

None.

CORRESPONDANCE

Joe Comerford reported on a letter from Mike Sanders, DOT regarding stimulus capital projects. The District has been awarded stimulus funds which are to be used for two 20 passenger busses (\$150,000), bus stop improvements (\$50,000 signs, benches, shelters); scheduling software (\$75,000) and website redesign (\$50,000).

The money will be awarded in September and Joe will begin the procurement process.

Noel Bishop reported on a recent meeting regarding Regional Energy Conservation Grants.

Richard Cabral continued that the town of Killingworth is willing to accept the Grant, if the District monitors the paperwork. Joe Comerford will investigate with the DOT.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Directors Report was included in the Board's packet.

Purchasing Policy

Joe Comerford reported that he and John Forbis have been reviewing the policy to ensure that it will provide the level of control desired without creating an undue burden. Much of the policy is derived from Federal Transit Administration and Connecticut Department of Transportation requirements and must be contained in any policy we develop.

The policy lays out a clear level of approvals required for each purchase. Purchases will require an Authority for Expenditure (AFE) form to be approved by the appropriate persons. An analysis sheet will also be required for any purchase requiring quotes. A Purchase Order number will then be issued from the P.O. book. The policy also sets dollar amount thresholds for the type of procurement required for a purchase. The PO Log will start on July 1, 2009.

A copy of the following forms was distributed: Authority for Expenditure, Purchase Approval Thresholds, and Procurement Methods.

Noel Bishop made a motion to approve the Authority for Expenditure Form as presented. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

John Forbis made a motion to approve the Purchase Approval Thresholds Form as presented. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jack Spangler made a motion to approve the Procurement Methods Form as presented. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Middletown Route

Joe Comerford reported that publicity for the Middletown Route included newspapers as well as television coverage. The call volume has been overwhelming and the website received over 300 hits on the first day.

Leslie Strauss complimented Joe on the publicity and added that he was “as cute as a button” on television.

Monthly Pass

DOT has approved our request for a monthly pass. The plan is to begin selling the passes on June 15, 2009.

Maintenance Report

Joe Comerford reported that Bill Harned, First Transit, reviewed the District’s Maintenance program. Mr. Harned felt that the District does a good job with maintenance but recommends more detail be added to the Preventative Maintenance report.

Operations Policy

Joe Comerford reported that the Operations Policy is being reviewed by First Transit’s human resources department and labor attorney. The policy is also being reviewed by one of First Transit’s Operations Managers for any suggestions or comments. This is being done at no cost to ETD; however the policy will not be completed until the next board meeting.

Noel Bishop suggested having the final document sent to Board members in advance of the next meeting for their review. Richard Cabral added that only the changes should be sent. Joe will send the final draft with changes highlighted.

Noel Bishop made a motion to accept the Executive Director’s Report, Marketing Report, and Maintenance Audit as presented. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

Bank Statements, the Cash Flow Report and the Budget vs. Actual reports were included in the Board's packet.

Halyna Famiglietti will follow up with the DOT regarding payments that are due the District. She thanked the towns for the prompt payments.

Ralph Eno made a motion to accept the Finance Manager's Report as presented. Dick Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

The Operations Manager's Report was included in the Board's packet. Joe Comerford reported that Paul Tyrrell was unable to attend today's meeting due to absent drivers (Paul is out driving today). Joe continued that absenteeism is an increasing problem. Joe is trying to get funding for one more full time driver. Dick Smith was concerned about costs associated with full time employees (benefits, workers comp. etc.) Joe responded that he would only hire additional employees if funded by the DOT.

Noel Bishop made a motion to accept the Operations Manager's Report as presented. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Operations Policy

John Forbis made a motion to table the Operations Policy until more information is available. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Health Insurance

Joe Comerford reported that in order to get our health insurance plan year to run with our fiscal year, the new insurance plans will begin July 1. Our new agent, Darlene Kish-Thomson with eBenefits Group presented the new plan. The new plan will provide improved benefits to our employees at a significant cost savings. The plan will also require all employees to pay a premium co-pay for the first time.

Noel Bishop made a motion that the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford, is hereby is authorized to purchase medical insurance for the Estuary Transit District from the eBenefits Group. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Fleet Maintenance Agreement

The Fleet Maintenance Agreement information was included in the Board's packet. Joe Comerford reported that a formal RFP was done and 3 bidders responded (current carrier included). The only response was from our current carrier.

John Forbis made a motion that the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford, hereby is authorized on behalf of the Estuary Transit District to negotiate and execute an agreement by and between the Estuary Transit District and Saybrook Auto Sales for Fleet Maintenance Services. Dick Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Town of Haddam Inquiry into ETD Membership

Since the 9TT buses now run through Haddam, Joe Comerford reported that Haddam has expressed interest in joining the District. A contributing factor is the possibility of a fixed route stop in Haddam for the Middletown bus and/or Dial a Ride service, which is expensive. Without Grant money, Haddam could not afford Dial A Ride service however; Haddam is eligible for approximately \$27,000 per year. This money is currently with Middletown Transit.

John Forbis added that adding Haddam to the District has been discussed in the past.

Joe continued that he has sent Haddam some preliminary information to be presented to their BOS and a fact sheet will be developed as information is received.

The possible addition of Haddam will be an agenda item next month.

Accounting Policy

A copy of the ETD Accounting Policies and Procedures was included in the Board's packet.

Dick Smith made a motion to accept the Account Policies and Procedures as presented and recommended by the Auditors. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Bus Shelters and Signage

Leslie Strauss and Joe Comerford have been researching bus shelters and signs. The District has received \$50,000 in Stimulus funds for same. A tasteful shelter has been selected and details on same will follow. Leslie continued that each town would receive one shelter and the town will be required to install and maintain the unit.

John Forbis invited Joe Comerford to the Historic Society's next meeting scheduled for July 6, 2009.

Office Space Search

Leslie Strauss and Joe Comerford reported on office space available at 139 Mill Rock Road, East Old Saybrook. The cost is \$13 per square foot and includes fit out costs. Pictures of the space as well as a floor plan were distributed and discussed. Please note that the location can accommodate parking for the buses. The District currently pays \$6,000 per year to KIA for bus parking.

Dick Smith made a motion to authorize the Chair and Executive Director permission to negotiate a contract for the space as described. John Forbis seconded the motion discussion followed:

Leslie Strauss suggested that a fixed 5 year lease and a non-penalty clause be added to the motion.

Noel Bishop suggested that the lease be subject to legal review.

The above discussion items were added to the motion. Ralph Eno seconded the motion. Leslie Strauss recused herself from voting. The motion passed.

CHAIR CONCERNS

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dick Smith expressed concern that the Middletown bus does not stop in Deep River. Joe Comerford responded that the bus does not stop in Deep River due to the Riverside Service. He continued that, if the route should be changed however, if it is changed, it would be difficult to fit into Middletown's connections schedule.

The District will receive input from users and revisit the route.

Retreat Date

Joe Comerford will e-mail Retreat dates to Board members. The goal of the Retreat is to establish a long term plan for the District.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Noel Bishop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:22 p.m. Dick Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting – The next meeting is scheduled for July 17, 2009. Leslie Strauss will record the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Recording Clerk

Leslie Strauss
Secretary