

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

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

July 17, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Estuary Transit District was called to order by Chair Richard Cabral at 9:03 a.m. at the Old Saybrook Town Hall in Old Saybrook, Connecticut.

ROLL CALL

A Quorum was established. Those in attendance included: Virginia Zawoy, Jack Spangler, John Forbis, Noel Bishop, Richard Cabral, Ralph Eno, Mike Pace, and Leslie Strauss.

Absent: Dick Smith

Staff: Halyna Famiglietti and Joe Comerford

PLEDGE

Richard Cabral led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes

Ralph Eno made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 19, 2009 Regular Meeting, with revisions. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Revisions:

Page 4 – under New Business – strike the word “is” after the word “hereby”

Page 5 – second paragraph – add the word “is” after Comerford

Page 5 – under Bus Shelters and Signage – remove “3”

Page 6 – just above Chair Concerns: paragraph should read: The above discussion items were added to the motion with the acceptance of Dick Smith and John Forbis.

Jack Spangler commented that he was unaware that the Middletown bus did not stop in Deep River.

TREASURER'S REPORT

None.

CORRESPONDANCE

A letter from Joan Wessell, Executive Director, was received and indicated that the District has been awarded \$15,000 from Senior Resources. This money is for the continuation of the Senior Ticket Program.

Joe Comerford reported that this amount is half of the \$30,000 the District received last year however; he did not expect a large impact and this does not affect our "bottom line".

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's report was included in the Board's packet.

Monthly Passes - Joe Comerford reported that the monthly passes will go on sale July 20th for the month of August. The cost is \$45 and they are good for unlimited on-route rides in one calendar month.

Municipal Grant Program – Joe Comerford reported that with no state budget, the Municipal Grant Program remains in limbo. He urged members to discuss same with their representatives.

Bus Fare Increase – Joe Comerford reported that the DOT has begun the process of implementing 40% increases on all CT Transit systems beginning January 1, 2010. He continued that in the past, the DOT has cancelled the fare increases after the public hearing process.

MARKETING REPORT

Joe Comerford reported that a Press Release ran in both The Day and the Hartford Courant as well as Killingworth Today. He distributed magnets and pens with the 9TT logo and encouraged Board members to distribute same. A draft of the Bus Book was distributed and the Information Post, which will be posted at bus stops, was displayed.

Ralph Eno made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

John Forbis made a motion to accept the Marketing Report. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

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

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

Cash Flow – Halyna Famiglietti reported that funds have not yet been received from the DOT. Joe Comerford added that generally, the DOT does not send payments in the month of July. Joe continued that a Preemptive Borrowing Resolution item was added to the agenda.

Halyna reported that she expects to receive the remaining contributions from the towns this month.

Ralph Eno made a motion to accept the Cash Flow Report. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget vs. Actual – Ralph Eno commented that the projections were accurate.

Advertising Revenue – Joe Comerford reported that Gladeview switched all of their advertising to the buses. He continued that both Essex Savings Bank and Gladeview are our biggest advertisers.

John Forbis suggested a year to year comparison on the Budget vs. Actuals for the next ETD Board meeting.

Jack Spangler made a motion to accept the Budget vs. Actual Report. Mike Pace 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 the Niantic figures are improving and that most of the riders are transfers to SEAT. He continued that the Riverside run has grown which has resulted in overloads on the buses. The Middletown bus had 157 trips for the first month and the office continues to receive phone calls regarding the Middletown bus.

John Forbis made a motion to accept the Operations Manager's Report as presented. Leslie Strauss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

A copy of the bus shelter design sketch was included in the Board's packet. Joe Comerford reported that the money for the shelters should be received in September. The budgeted amount for the shelters is \$50,000.00 which should be enough to provide one shelter per town. Once the money is received, the shelters can be ordered. The plan is to have the shelters delivered to 9TT (Mike Pace offered to store the shelters at the transfer station). The town crews will pick the shelters up for installation. A copy of the specs for the shelters will be distributed to the town crews as soon as the specs are available.

NEW BUSINESS

Audit Fee Request – Joe Comerford reported that the District added two new programs (Niantic and Middletown) since the auditor's contract were written. Due to this additional work, the auditors have requested an increase in their compensation. We currently pay \$14,400 per year and the contract is now in its last year.

Mike Pace commented that the current contract should remain as it is written and Ralph Eno agreed.

No action was taken regarding the auditor's contract.

Borrowing Resolution – A copy of the Borrowing Resolution was included in the Board's packet.

Ralph Eno made a motion to adopt the Borrowing Resolution as presented. John Forbis seconded the motion. Discussion followed:

Discussion – Mike Pace clarified that the resolution is for this fiscal year only.

The motion passed unanimously.

Bus Shelter Posting Policy – A copy of the Policy for Postings was included in the Board's packet.

The Estuary Transit District (ETD) prohibits the posting of any materials of any nature on ETD property. This prohibition includes advertisements, promotional material, notices, and any other posting. ETD property shall include any buildings, structures, land, shelters, street furniture, signage, posts, or other property owned or leased by ETD. ETD shall reserve the right to remove all said unauthorized signage.

The ETD discussed the definition of "authorized" in the policy. The applicant must have written approval from the Board or Executive Directors before anything can be posted.

The Board agreed that the area around the shelters would be free and unobstructed.

Mike Pace made a motion to accept the Policy for Postings and Advertisements on ETD Property. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Purchasing Policy – A copy of the Purchasing Policy was sent to members via e-mail. This policy outlines spending limits and procedures. Joe Comerford reported that the staff has been adhering to these procedures. The policy will assure that the procedures are used consistently.

Mike Pace commented that in a small organization, approval for purchases should be necessary from both the Chairman and the Treasurer.

Virginia Zawoy made a motion to accept the Purchasing Policy. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion regarding Haddam's addition to the District was added to the agenda.

Richard Cabral reported that Haddam has expressed interest in becoming part of 9TT.

Joe Comerford reported that while they have expressed interest, Haddam is unsure as to how they were currently spending their Municipal Grant money. Joe added that if Haddam becomes a member of the District, they would be entitled to the Dial a Ride service which is very expensive; especially since Haddam Neck is on the other side of the river. He continued that Haddam is not currently part of any transit district and approval from the state would be required to stop in Haddam. Haddam is currently investigating how their grant money is used and Joe is awaiting a response from Haddam.

The ETD briefly discussed the contribution formula as well as any potential "joining fee".

Leslie Strauss made a motion to table the discussion regarding the addition of Haddam was tabled until a response from Haddam is received. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Lease

Leslie Strauss reported that the site walk at the potential new office for ETD went well. A copy of the final version of the lease was available. Our current lease expires on 10/1/09. The present location is 1060 sq. ft. at \$13.86 per sq. ft. This does not include the \$6,000 for bus storage.

The space is 2542 sq. ft. and the landlord will honor the \$13.00 sq. ft. figure presented previously. The lease includes maintenance, insurance and utilities. Leslie stated that the

ETD would be responsible for a percentage of the common areas (hall, bathrooms, lobby). The gross sq. ft. would be 3,090 sq. ft.

Joe Comerford reported that he has placed a request with the DOT for this expenditure and is awaiting a reply.

Mike Pace reported that the current space is unacceptable and he'd like to see the organization reach new heights.

Ralph Eno reported that the common area amount should be fixed. Leslie replied that she intends to negotiate and discuss the common area issue further with the landlord.

Mike Pace made a motion to authorize the Chairman and Finance Chairman to solidify a lease for said space to be occupied on or before 9/1/09. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed. Leslie Strauss abstained from voting.

Mike Pace introduced Becky Coffee, a reporter for the Harbor News.

Joe Comerford briefly commented on recent initiatives of the District including the monthly passes, stimulus dollars, increased ridership and regionalization.

Ralph Eno expressed concern about the potential fare increase suggested by the state. He continued that riders will be unable to afford a 40% fare increase and this is disappointing as we continue to work toward increasing ridership.

Richard Cabral reported that the ETD is an important service. The ETD Board consists of 9 member board members; 5 of these members are First Selectmen.

Strategic Planning Retreat - Joe Comerford reported that there will be an outside facilitator at the retreat. The facilitator, Joe and Richard will meet prior to the retreat.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

John Forbis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:46 a.m. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 21, 2009.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Recording Clerk

Leslie Strauss
Secretary