

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

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

August 20, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Estuary Transit District was called to order by Richard Cabral 9:13 a.m. at the Estuary Transit Offices, Centerbrook, Connecticut.

ROLL CALL

A Quorum was established. Those in attendance included: Leslie Strauss, Virginia Zawoy, Jack Spangler, Richard Cabral and Ralph Eno.

Absent: Noel Bishop, Mike Pace, Dick Smith, John Forbis

Staff: Joe Comerford, Halyna Famiglietti, Paul Tyrrell

PLEDGE

Richard Cabral led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes

Jack Spangler made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 20, 2010 meeting. Leslie Strauss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Virginia Zawoy reported on a letter received from Mike Guerrero, DOT. The DOT will be preparing supplemental budget addenda including the final full year funding levels. At this time each proposed 2011 operating budget, including the final FY2010

expense/revenue reports are being reviewed to determine appropriate funding. A meeting may be necessary to address and pending budgetary issues.

TREASURER'S REPORT

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Joe Comerford reported that a meeting will be scheduled for early November to review the draft audit.

Joe Comerford reported that the 2010 Budget Amendment is needed, by statute, to add the appropriate funding to the Riverside bus.

Marketing Committee

The Marketing Report was included in the Board packet. There have been 4 recent Press Releases. New media being used includes Twitter, Facebook and 4 Square.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Report was included in the packet.

Joe Comerford reported that funding for the Riverside expansion has been approved. Although we are still finalizing the schedule, our new hours will be about 6:15 AM – 7:00 PM Monday through Friday, an increase of about 5 hours daily. It will provide much needed morning and evening service to Deep River and Chester. The plan is to begin the new hours to coincide with the anticipated changes to the DOT's S route in Madison which is scheduled to begin in November.

The DOT approved the three outstanding ARRA projects including the bus phones, computer equipment, and the supervisor vehicle. We are still awaiting approval of the hybrid buses due to changes in federal reporting requirements. The approved items have been ordered.

A representative from Shop Rite expressed an interest in a bus stop sign as well as sales of bus passes in Shop Rite.

The scheduled holders, installed via a u-channel post, will be installed at the shelters in the near future.

FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

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

Halyna Famiglietti reported on a potential Cash Flow issue in October due to non-payment from the DOT. While the DOT payments were being made promptly, when the new fiscal year began, the payments slowed.

There was significant discussion regarding the possibility of purchasing storage fuel tanks. The use of such tanks would allow the District to lock in fuel prices. Ralph Eno was familiar with a pre-cast, above ground, concrete tank, Con Vault. The Board also discussed the possibility of storing fuel at the Essex Dump facility. The financing of any fuel cost was discussed.

Ralph Eno made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report and the Finance Manager's Report. Jack Spangler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

The Operations Manager's report was included in the board's packet. Paul Tyrrell reported that ridership continues to increase. When the DOT's schedule is adjusted and finalized, the District plans to run on the ½ hour.

A Driver's Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 17, 2010 to discuss issues, including the reporting on the computer system.

Joe Comerford reported that some customer surveys have been completed and returned. These surveys indicate that many of our regular riders are from various towns, including New Britain, New Haven, Groton, and Uncasville.

Joe Comerford reported that he is interested in placing a bus shelter at the train station. He would also like Shoreline East to promote 9TT routes as we do accept the Shoreline East monthly pass.

Riverside Shuttle ridership has declined due to less off-routes. Many of these riders are now appropriately using the Dial A Ride service. Also, the Riverside's hours of operation (10 a.m. until 4 p.m.) are not convenient for working individuals. The Midshore ridership has increased due to the start of school.

Virginia Zawoy made a motion to accept the Operations Manager's Report. Ralph Eno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Indigent Definition – The Indigent Definition was included in the Board's packet and discussed at the last meeting.

Leslie Strauss made a motion that the Estuary Transit District hereby adopts the Black's Law Dictionary definition of "indigent", which describes it as "the state or condition of a person who lacks the means of subsistence; extreme hardship or neediness, poverty for the purposes of charging fees under the Freedom of Information Act."

This definition will be used to judge any request made for exemption of payment of fees under Section 1-212 of the General Statutes of Connecticut. In making the determination of whether or not the requestor meets this definition, the District may request information from the individual.

Individuals who are found by the District to meet the definition of "indigent" shall not be exempt from any fees not associated with Section 1-212 of the General Statutes of Connecticut. Ralph Eno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Staff Hours

Joe Comerford reported that an increase in hours, from 35 to 40 hours per week, is warranted due to the work load of the Administration (Halyna Famiglietti, Paul Tyrrell). Halyna briefly outlined the process for administering the many grants received by the District. The cost to increase these hours is \$10,000 and can be accommodated in the budget.

Ralph Eno made a motion to increase the hours for the Operations Manager and the Finance Manager from 35 to 40 hours per week at the current rate of compensation. Leslie Strauss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Essex Trolley

The Essex Board of Trade is still interested in having the District run the Essex Trolley. However, they were unable to make today's meeting. This will be placed on a future agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

Borrowing Policy

Ralph Eno made a motion that the following policy shall be in effect concerning the borrowing of funds from the Estuary Transit District's (ETD) revolving credit line:

1. The necessary funds shall initially be secured from the undesignated reserve account of the ETD.
2. If such account becomes depleted, the Executive Director of ETD shall send a memo to the officers of the ETD Board of Directors with a carbon copy to the entire Board of Directors informing them of the need to deploy action contained in the Borrowing Authorization Resolution.

3. If needed, a conference call with the Board of Directors may be initiated for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Additional information is sought by any Director
 - b. Need to exceed amount stated in the Borrowing Authorization Resolution
4. Two of the three officers of the Board of Directors, designated in the Borrowing Authorization Resolution, will sign any documents required for the release of such funds from the revolving credit line.

Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Item #2, remove the word “carbon”, #4, change “will” to “shall”.

The motion passed unanimously as amended.

Lost & Found Policy

The Estuary Transit District (ETD) recognizes that items are left on buses, bus stops, and other ETD property from time to time. While ETD is not responsible for any personal items left on ETD property, this policy describes the procedure for handling lost items to facilitate the return to their owner.

Any employee finding a lost item shall notify dispatch immediately. The item must be turned in to Dispatch upon completion of the shift.

Dispatch will log all items into a binder and place the item(s) in the designated lost and found box. The lost and found box will be maintained in the dispatch area. Higher value items, wallets, or identifiable information will be locked in the dispatch cabinet.

Dispatch will make a reasonable attempt to contact customers only when important documents or identifiable information is found (legal papers; immigration cards; money; etc.)

Dirty clothes, food, garbage and hazardous items will be properly disposed of immediately. Other items, if unclaimed, will be disposed of after ninety (90) days. Any items with identifiable information will be destroyed. Other items will may be kept for use by ETD or donated to a charity serving the Estuary region to be selected by the Executive Director.

Ralph Eno made a motion to adopt the Lost & Found Policy as presented. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FY 2011 Salary Increase

Joe Comerford reported that the District is to receive a 3% increase from the state. He does not expect the same increase for future years; therefore, any salary increases given now would be the last for the foreseeable future. Richard Cabral commented that the

Town of Killingworth has not given any increases in the past 2 years. He suggested the possibility of work incentive bonuses. Joe Comerford replied that bonuses are not allowed, by law.

Joe Comerford proposed a 2% base increase with the possibility of a 1% merit raise. The cost for these proposed increases would be approximately \$15,000.00.

Ralph Eno commented that this would be a one-time decision by the Board which could be potentially rolled back depending on the fiscal situation in the coming year and does not guarantee a new base pay.

Joe Comerford will compose a memo to all employees and board members explaining the increases. Board members were encouraged to respond with any comments.

Jack Spangler made a motion to increase salaries of employees, not to exceed 3% for the balance of FY2011. Ralph Eno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Long Term Planning

An Ad Hoc Long Term Planning Committee was established and included Richard Cabral, John Forbis and Mike Pace. Dave Smith, First Transit, will Chair the Committee.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Richard Cabral thanked the Board for their continued support.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Leslie Strauss commended Joe Comerford on being named one of the “40 Under 40”.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2010. The Board discussed the details of a Holiday Party for employees this date.

ADJOURNMENT

Jack Spangler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:42 a.m. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Recording Clerk

Virginia Zawoy
Secretary