

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT ETD MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT
REGULAR MEETING
Friday, October 13, 2023
91 N. Main Street, Middletown CT and
Via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A quorum was established. In attendance included Leslie Strauss, John Hall, Tim Griswold, Karl Kilduff, Joan Gay, DG Fitton, Charlie Norz, Beverly Lawrence, Angus McDonald, Christine Marks and Jim Irish.

Staff in attendance: Chris Denison, Joe Comerford, Brendan Geraghty, Halyna Famiglietti

The Board observed a moment of silence in response to the attack on Israel.

VISITORS' COMMENTS – None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

A motion was made and duly seconded to accept the meeting minutes of the 9/8/23 Board meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made and duly seconded to accept the meeting minutes of the 9/11/23 Transit Advisory meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made and duly seconded to accept the meeting minutes of the 9/26/23 Facilities Committee meeting as presented. The motion passed with Joan Gay abstaining from the vote.

Joan Gay motion to accept the meeting minutes of the 10/5/23 Legislative meeting as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion was made and duly seconded to accept the meeting minutes of the 10/11/23 Finance Committee meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

TREASURER'S REPORT – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities – The Facilities meeting minutes were included in the Board's packet. Of note:

- New Maintenance Facility – The project is moving forward, and the preliminary design of space has been completed.
- The state-owned Old Saybrook property is in an aquifer protection zone and vehicle maintenance is prohibited on the site. CT Water will verify that this is an active field.
- The feasibility study for the Westbrook property is being finalized.

- The Electrification project at the existing facility is moving forward. HVAC and Fire Engineers are reviewing fire protection at the location. The goal is to have the ability to charge the entire fleet at this location.
- A committee has been formed to discuss with the Mayor of Middletown a DOT funded study of an alternate site in Middletown. This study will add up to 3 years to the project.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Facilities Committee report as presented. Karl Kilduff seconded the motion. The motion passed with Joan Gay abstaining from the vote.

Finance

- The Finance Committee reviewed the financial reports in depth. Cash flow is “healthy” and operating figures are in order. The receipt of grants is anticipated in the near future.
- More detailed information on the status of grants and grant management will be forwarded to board members and included in Halyna’s monthly report. This document is titled RVT Funds by Grant.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Finance Committee report as presented. Jim Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Marketing

Copies of marketing initiatives were distributed to Board members. Of note:

- Communications sent relative to route changes (emails, social media, apps)
 - New routes go into effect Monday, October 16, 2023.

A motion was made and duly seconded to accept the Marketing Committee report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative – Joan reported:

- The Legislative Breakfast will be held in January at the Middletown office. Newly elected officials will be invited to attend the breakfast and RVT meetings.

Jim Irish made a motion to accept the Legislative Committee report as presented. Karl Kilduff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Transit Advisory– minutes from the recent Transit Advisory meeting were included in the Board’s packet. The next meeting is scheduled for December.

Karl Kilfuff made a motion to accept the Transit Advisory Committee report as presented. Beverly Lawrence seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Service Study - None.

Personnel – None.

COG Update – Brendan reported:

- The THRIVE grant scope/application is being finalized. This is a Federal Grant focusing on train stations including the Middletown Terminal.

- The District was represented at the Southern New England Conference and did a presentation on the recent merger. This presentation was well received.

Karl Kilduff made a motion to accept the COG Update as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joe reported:

- The new buses have arrived and are being fitted with equipment including fare boxes, radios, etc. The manufacturer will inspect the vehicles and they should be in use in the near future.
- The new trolley is going to the outfitter today to have "trolley embellishments" and the new logo installed. This vehicle will replace the existing Clinton trolley and may be used in other areas during the holidays.
- The phone project is complete.
- The new customer management software allows for feedback online, via email and telephone. The software tracks the issue until it is resolved.
- The District attended an Expo Event and discovered new features offered by our current vendors.
- Joe attended the pre-production meeting on the electric buses. The buses are scheduled for production in June 2024 and delivery in August 2024.
- Joe is working with the DOT to charge the buses, temporarily across the street. The buses will be able to maneuver on this site.
- If approved, adding Sunday service on Rte. 641 will have to go to a Public Hearing.
- The State received funding for on demand programs (The District had 3 proposals for expanding service with this money).
- The "kinks" are being worked out relative to the switch to the new Extra Mile software program.
- Shoreline East service cuts/changes – The District may be asked to operate bus service if/when service cuts are implemented vis a vis Shoreline East trains. The DOT may fund a study to look at bus transportation on the shoreline.
- The State received a Smart Grant to design an app to be used throughout the State. The District has been asked to "pilot" this program.

Karl Kilduff made a motion to accept the Executive Director's report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TRANSIT PLANNER'S REPORT

RVT Ride Guide – A copy of the RVT Ride guide, including updated routes, was included in the Board's packet and screenshared. This information is on the District's website and is offered in Spanish. As previously discussed, the new routes go into effect on Monday, October 16th. Brendan was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members. In addition, the Passio upgrades are being installed.

Karl Kilduff made a motion to accept the Transit Planner's report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Budget vs. Actual, Cash Flow reports were included in the Board packet, screen shared and reviewed by Finance Committee. Halyna was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members.

The auditors will begin work within the next week or two.

Karl Kilduff made a motion to accept the Finance Manager's report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Ridership has declined since fares were reinstated (overall, down approx. 18% from pre Covid). XMile has seen a 12 to 13% decrease since the fare was initiated and ADA, as the most expensive trip, is down 40%.
- The Token Transit app is well used. Approximately 28% of riders used Token Transit on the fixed routes.

A motion was made and duly seconded to accept the Operations Manager's report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Contacts were made for parts, etc. at the Expo.
- Triennial findings – Pat is working with contractors to meet maintenance deadlines and to “close out” the findings from the Triennial review.

Karl Kilduff made a motion to accept the Maintenance Director's report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Borrowing Resolution – Tim Griswold read the following:

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT BORROWING RESOLUTION ESSEX SAVINGS BANK

CERTIFICATION:

I, Timothy C. Griswold, Secretary of the Estuary Transit District, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted on October 13th, 2023, in which a quorum was present and acting throughout and that the resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked and is at present in full force and effect.

RESOLVED, that any two (2) of the following the Chairman, Leslie B. Strauss, or in her absence or inability to act, the Vice Chairman, Joan Gay or Treasurer, Charles Norz, be and hereby are, authorized on behalf of the Estuary Transit District:

1. To borrow money and obtain credit, at any time and from time to time, in any form on behalf of the Estuary Transit District from ESSEX SAVINGS BANK.

2. To pledge, mortgage, grant a security interest in, endorse, assign and deliver, any property held by or belonging to the Estuary Transit District, as security for money borrowed or credit obtained and as a condition of the right to receive such money, or to obtain such credit, with full authority to execute,

endorse, guarantee, assign and deliver any document or instrument on behalf of the Estuary Transit District, as the bank October also require in connection therewith.

3. To discount any bill receivable, instrument or paper held in the name of or by the Estuary Transit District, with full authority to endorse the same in the name of the Estuary Transit District.

I/we further certify that said officers of the Estuary Transit District so authorized are: Leslie B. Strauss Chairman and Joan Gay Vice Chairman, and Charles Norz Treasurer. This authority shall remain in full force and effect until revocation in writing is received by the bank and the bank shall be entitled to presume that the above-named signatories remain authorized until receipt of written notice to the contrary.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that such indebtedness as has been heretofore contracted, any security interest granted the bank (including without limitation, any mortgages) and any contracts or agreements heretofore made with the bank on behalf of the District in connection with the loan documents or said contracts or agreements, are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed.

Karl Kilduff made a motion to accept the above resolution as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Leslie reported that Ralph Eno, former Lyme First Selectman and former Board member passed away suddenly. The District sent a gift basket to his wife expressing condolences.

Leslie reported:

- Merger documents were signed with the DOT 2 years ago. To date, many commitments made by the DOT remain unfulfilled.
- As previously discussed, Joe Comerford has accepted the position of Executive Director of RVT, effective 12/1/23. First Transit will no longer manage the District.
- Triennial Review Report – The Triennial Report was received and as discussed above; maintenance findings are being addressed. The new facility, when completed, will allow space to perform bus maintenance entirely in house.
- Durham and Middlefield must pass resolutions withdrawing from the Middletown district.
- Tim Griswold will Chair an Expansion Committee to reach out to surrounding towns relative to membership in RVT. DG Fitton will serve on this committee. One more board member is needed to serve on the committee and interested parties should reach out to Joe, Leslie, or Tim.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Joan Gay thanked Brendan for participating in a Committee on Aging meeting last month. His presentation was helpful and well received by participants.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and duly seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting – November 17, 2023

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk