

These minutes are subject to approval at the next Estuary Transit District Meeting

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING
17 INDUSTRIAL PARK ROAD
CENTERBROOK, CONNECTICUT
FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Leslie Strauss, Chairman at 9:35 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Leslie Strauss led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with the following board members present: Peter Bierrie, John Forbis, Virginia Zawoy, Joan Gay, Sue Tyler (via speaker phone), Angus MacDonald (arrived at 10:30 a.m.), Charlie Nortz, Noel Bishop, and Leslie Strauss.

Absent: Roland Laine

Also in attendance: Staff: Halyna Famiglietti, Joe Comerford, Jamie Bohli.

Note that Virginia Zawoy will serve as Secretary at today's meeting.

Leslie Strauss commended Board members and staff for advocating for the District riders. The Public Hearings and letters to Legislators were instrumental during the budget process. Funding to the District was restored.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS - None.

Approval of Minutes

John Forbis made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/16/18 Regular Meeting. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/16/18 Finance Meeting. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

John Forbis made a motion to approve the minutes from the 3/28/18 Finance Workshop Meeting. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/9/18 Legislative Committee Meeting. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS – A copy of the Governor's Press Release cancelling the proposed transit fare increase and service reductions was included in the Board packet.

TREASURER'S REPORT - None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – none.

Marketing Committee

The Marketing Report was included in the Board's packet. Highlights of the report include:

- Local print media coverage of proposed service reductions, fare increases and Public Hearings
 - E-mail blasts on same reached over 600 individuals on the e-mail list.
 - Events Magazine articles promoting the District's app
 - High monthly "hits" on the District's website
 - The District's participation in the LEARN Expo – very well attended event at Mohegan Sun

Joe Comerford reported he met with Senators Suzio and Kennedy in Hartford. Both Senators voted in favor of the budget restoring funding to transit districts. Noel Bishop suggested that the District submit information to an advocacy publication regarding the protocol used by 9TT, i.e. public hearings, letters to Legislators. Joe and Leslie will develop same.

At John Forbis' request, Joe will reach out to the Yale Center regarding transportation.

The importance of a "lock box" on the Transportation Fund was briefly discussed. Legislators will discuss/address this matter in the Fall.

Route 81 Committee – After the Fall election, the Committee will seek support from Legislators on Rte 81.

Legislative Committee – Joan Gay reported that the meeting with Senators Kennedy and Suzio was very successful. They are strong advocates for the District.

The Second Annual First Selectmen Breakfast is scheduled on June 5 @ 7:00 a.m. at the District's office.

Transit Advisory Committee – no report.

COG Update – Joe Comerford reported that the COGs also received funding from the State. The STIP allocations will be discussed at the next MPO meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Report was included in the Board packet. Highlights of the report include:

- Considerable time was spent on advocacy efforts to prevent funding reductions
- CTDOT Capital funding has been received. We are currently waiting for approval for 7 body on chassis buses. Once approval is received, 10 vehicles will be ordered.
- CTDOT has funding the joint bus operations study with MAT.
- The Dial A Ride app is now "live".
- Two new bus shelters were installed in Westbrook (Settler's Landing complex

- FTA has issued appropriations for fiscal year 2018. We have submitted a request for over \$4 million in capital projects (2.75 of which is tied to construction of a facility). RiverCOG should receive STIP amendments that will allow us to submit our FTA grant application.
- Two providers are willing to provide taxi service to our customers (including one with wheelchair accessible vehicles).

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

John Forbis made a motion to change the order of the agenda and discuss the "Publication of the FY 19 Budget". Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A copy of the proposed budget was distributed to Board members.

Halyna reported that in order to hire and retain CDL drivers, a salary increase is proposed in the budget. It is recommended that funding from the unrestricted reserve be used for the salary increases. Also, additional funding was budgeted for fuel costs.

John Forbis made a motion to publish the budget as presented. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

The Bank Statements, Cash Flow Forecast, and Budget vs. Actual reports were included in Board packet. These documents have all been reviewed by the Finance Committee.

The Shoreline Shuttle line continues to run in deficit. The line is being monitored since some runs have been cut.

Halyna reported that funds have been received as a result of the Middlesex Hospital program that started in January.

Halyna projects a \$35,000 deficit at year end. There are sufficient funds to cover the deficit and still fund the reserve account. No issues are expected in cash flow.

John Forbis made a motion to accept the Finance Manager's Report as presented. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

The Operations Manager's Report was distributed to Board members.

Jamie has been attending the following training sessions: Drug & Alcohol, Train the Trainer, Defensive Driving and Wheelchair training.

Jamie reported on the continued difficulty in hiring and retaining drivers.

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

Joe Comerford left the meeting at 10:30 a.m. to participate in a conference call with the State.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS

Transit Advertising Concession

Leslie distributed information regarding advertising on the buses. In the past, the District allowed advertising on the buses but when the contract expired with the advertising vendor, it was not renewed and the District's logo (green and blue) was placed on all vehicles. Due to our potential deficit, the option of advertising on buses to generate revenue was explored once again. Joe Comerford recommended that the Board consider advertising on the back of the buses only. Board members were not interested in pursuing advertising on the vehicles at this time. The Board may discuss again further at a future meeting.

Joe Comerford re-joined the meeting and reported that the State "flat funded" transit operations and there is the potential of a 1 to 2% increase. The State does not want the District to increase fares or cut services.

Bus Disposal Resolution

John Forbis made the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Estuary Transit District will receive seven replacement buses; and

WHEREAS, the Estuary Transit District wishes to dispose of bus 1212 (CT plate 5995) and bus 1001 (CT plate 5686) as said vehicles are beyond their useful life as established by the Connecticut DOT;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford, hereby is authorized on behalf of the Estuary Transit District to dispose of said vehicles in accordance with Connecticut Department of Transportation guidelines, which includes auction and/or donation to a municipality.

Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Appointment of Management Contract Committee

The current contract with First Transit expires 11/30/18.

Joan Gay made a motion to appoint Noel Bishop, Chairman, Angus MacDonald, Peter Bierrie and Sue Taylor to the Management Contract Committee. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee will meet to discuss an RFP for management services.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

John Forbis offered to explore fund raising options for the District; i.e. a possible "Friends of 9TT District" fund.

CHAIR COMMENTS – None.

VISITOR COMMENTS – None.

NEXT MEETING – June 15, 2018 – 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Peter Bierrie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 a.m. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk