

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT ETD MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING
17 INDUSTRIAL PARK ROAD
CENTERBROOK, CONNECTICUT
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2020

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, Angus MacDonald, Noel Bishop, John Forbis, Susan Tyler (via telephone), Charlie Norz and Leslie Strauss.

Absent: Virginia Zawoy, Joan Gay

Also in attendance: Staff: Halyna Famiglietti, Joe Comerford, Executive Director, Anne Galbraith, Sam Gold, Rob Haramut, Richard Strauss, Dennis Solinsky, DOT, additional representatives from DOT were also in attendance.

REGIONAL BUS STUDY DISCUSSION

A copy of a LCRV Transit Study – Estimated Operating Costs by Scenario and Proposed Staffing by Scenario – DRAFT – was distributed to Board members.

Dennis Solinsky, DOT, was present to address Board members' concerns relative to the draft Lower Connecticut River Valley Transit Study/Service Delivery Scenarios presented to the Board at the 2/21/20 meeting.

As previously reported the Executive Director in Middletown resigned and for several months Joe Comerford is now the Interim Director. Halyna has also been assisting as the Middletown District as they prepare for the Tri-annual Review. The DOT has been hesitant in hiring a Director for Middletown until Bus Study is complete and a clear direction is determined for the future of the two districts. Board members expressed concern with the extent of the additional duties for Joe and Halyna. Note that the 9TT Board did take official action (vote) on allowing Joe and Halyna to assist in Middletown.

Mr. Solinsky responded to the Board's concerns relative to the Lower Connecticut River Valley Transit Study options and the "what is in it for us" by commenting that from a DOT perspective consolidating the Middletown and 9TT Districts is an opportunity for the 9TT Board and Executive Director to transform the current transportation system in the area. The 9TT Board would be instrumental in developing bylaws, voting weights, and leading the district(s) if a consolidation of districts were to occur.

Dennis reported that there are similar proposals for consolidation in districts throughout the State. Like 9TT, several other districts are in need of substantial funds for facilities and other upgrades. As State funds are limited, it appears that consolidating 9TT and MAT would be a way to ensure operating funds

moving forward. It is doubtful that a new facility for 9TT would be funded by the State if the districts were to remain independent and district will “fight” for available funds.

Mr. Solinsky commented that consolidation would allow 9TT, because of its success, to become stronger and more resilient. Several Board members from Middletown would join the Board and the 9TT Board would remain the leader, facilities could be updated, staff added, including mechanics and funding increased. He continued that merging the districts would allow more opportunities for 9TT to grow services and ridership.

The original 9 towns saw a need for transportation along the shoreline and voluntarily formed a regional transit district. Angus MacDonald reported that unlike Middletown, the town currently involved with 9TT are all similar in size and demographics. Angus MacDonald reported that unlike Middletown, the town currently involved with 9TT are all similar in size and demographics.

Sam Gold reported that the options presented in the Transit Study will be “fleshed out” for further discussion.

First Selectman Bishop left the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

NEXT MEETING – Friday, April 17, 2019 – 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

John Forbis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m. Angus MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk