

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT ETD MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING  
January 13, 2023  
Middletown Offices and via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Leslie Strauss, Chairman at 9:06 a.m.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with the following board members present, Tim Griswold, John Hall, Jim Irish, Karl Kilduff, David Lahm (left at 9:56 a.m.), Beverly Lawrence, Angus McDonald, Charlie Norz, and Leslie Strauss

Also in attendance: Joe Comerford, Chris Denison, Brendan Geraghty, Ennab Mutez

Absent: DG Fitton, Joan Gay, and Bobbye Knoll Peterson

Visitor(s): Robert Haramut, Senior Transportation Planner, Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

VISITOR COMMENTS – None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Lahm made a motion to accept the minutes from the Board meeting dated December 9, 2022, as amended. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Note: The legal name of the District is Estuary Transit District d.b.a. River Valley Transit.

McDonald made a motion to accept the minutes from the Facilities Committee meeting dated December 27, 2022, as presented. Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed with Kilduff abstaining.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

TREASURER'S REPORT – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities

McDonald reported:

- The Committee met with DOT representatives to discuss a variety of projects including:
  - Scoping of the Master Plan in Westbrook and the two sites in Middletown has been completed. A septic system evaluation has been added to the scope. Negotiations will begin soon.

- Electrification – A consultant visited the Middletown facility in December and determined that upgrades are necessary to fully charge the buses.
- Shoreline Facility – CTDOT and Town of Westbrook officials have reviewed the wetlands matter; wetlands re-identification has been added to the scope. A walkthrough of the property is still pending. Westbrook First Selectman, John Hall, has provided CTDOT with the owner’s contact information.
- Middletown Terminal – CTDOT has requested an evaluation of the property adjacent to the terminal to present to the newly appointed Bureau Chief of Public Transit.
- Phase II of the study which includes additional testing on the N. Main Street property in Middletown, has been funded and his underway.

Comerford added that an environmental review of the properties at 110-120 N. Main Street, Middletown is scheduled for next week.

Griswold made a motion to accept the Executive Director’s Report as presented. Lahm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee – None.

Marketing Committee

Strauss reported:

- The committee is meeting with the design team next week to review the brand guide
- A working session to discuss bus design will follow

Griswold questioned the use of the District’s legal name, Estuary Transit District, instead of River Valley Transit. Comerford will seek legal counsel regarding the process of changing the District’s name.

Hall made a motion to accept the Marketing Committee report as presented. McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Nominating Committee – McDonald requested nominations from the floor. The Committee will also reach out to Board members for nominations for officers.

Hall made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee report as presented. Lahm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Joe Comerford reported:

- The District is preparing for its Triennial Review with FTA.
- The audits for both ETD and MTD are close to be finished.
- The auditor’s contract is expiring and the District will need to go out to bid.

Hall made a motion to accept the Executive Director’s Report as presented. Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## TRANSIT PLANNER'S REPORT

### Fare Study

Geraghty reported on the four main policy changes ETD is proposing:

- Simplifying the fare structure;
- Offering a low-income and student discount;
- Introducing fare capping; and
- Introducing free fares for ADA eligible riders on fixed routes

Extensive public outreach was conducted and overall takeaways from survey data include:

- Almost everyone supports a low-income/student discount
- The elimination of the student monthly pass would not impact most people
- Most people agree that a \$1.75 is a reasonable fare for XtraMile

### XtraMile Middletown

Geraghty reported on the challenges and successes of the program in Middletown. Feedback from riders was mostly positive. The District is looking for funding to continue the service and talks are in progress with Wesleyan University.

Hall made a motion to accept the Transit Planner's Report as presented. Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Appointment of Management Contract Committee –

Strauss reported the District will be issuing a RFP for Management Services soon and asked for three (3) volunteers to serve on a Management Contract Committee.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

## CHAIR COMMENTS

Strauss noted that several committees are short members and asked everyone to consider what committees they would like to serve on and to contact her or Comerford.

Strauss requested Comerford to contact the Town of Durham regarding the appointment of a Board member.

Strauss asked Comerford for an update on solar lighting at the bus shelters. Comerford will get a quote.

## BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS –

Lawrence paid tribute to recently deceased Rep. "Q" Williams, who represented the 100<sup>th</sup> District.

Strauss remembered former Board member, Peter Bierrie, Essex, who recently passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

## ADJOURNMENT

Norz made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 a.m. Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting – February 10, 2023 – 9:00 a.m. with remote options.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina Denison  
Clerk

Timothy Griswold  
Secretary