

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
March 11, 2022
via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. A quorum was established and in attendance included: Leslie Strauss, Chairman, Peter Bierrie, Angus MacDonald, Tim Griswold, Charlie Norz, David Lahm, John Hall, Karl Kilduff and Joan Gay.

Also in attendance: Joe Comerford, Maria Creel, Chris Denison, Lisa Gibson, Sheri Coti, E. Mutez, Joe Samolis, Laura Francis, Beverly Lawrence and Sam Gold

VISITOR COMMENTS – None.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

Charlie Norz made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/11/22 Board Meeting as presented. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/22/22 Expansion Transition Committee as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

Written Testimony developed by ETD relative to Bill 5256 (consolidation of transit districts) was included in the Board’s packet. The District opposes this bill and feels that consolidation of districts should not be a foregone conclusion as it may not be the “right fit” for all. Joe reported that the District’s comments were acknowledged and the Bill will be re-written to reflect same.

TREASURER’S REPORT – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Expansion Transition Committee

Joan Gay reported that representatives from the DOT attended their last meeting. Maureen Lawrence, DOT, is working with the rail side regarding Shoreline facility space and land acquisition. Graham Curtis was recently hired by the DOT relative to Capital Projects. He will be invited to future meetings.

Legislative Committee – No report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Joe reported that Graham Curtis, DOT, is in charge of facilities. The State is currently negotiating fees for the Middletown Terminal. The goal is to have all vehicles fit into the facility.

The District will be at the “top of the list” for the Electric Study as we will be receiving electric busses. Joe has discussed with Eversource the need for adequate power in order to charge the vehicles. Mr.

Curtis will assist with this project. Subsidies for charging stations will be pursued. Note that all mechanicals are elevated as the facility is in a flood zone.

Shoreline Property – the State is actively discussing private property with an owner. No additional details are available as potential negotiations are on-going.

Bids for the Fare Study and HR Study have been received. The Evaluating Committee will meet on Monday, 3/14 to review these bids.

All questions received relative to the Marketing Study RFP have been responded to; note that the deadline for bids has been extended an additional two weeks.

An RFP will go out next week relative to an Automated Vehicle Locating proposal.

Joe met with Motorola on Radios. No timeframe for delivery is available.

The Study of Micro-transit zones in Middletown (Wesleyan) will begin in a few weeks. As previously reported, Wesleyan is interested in partnering with the District on an Extra Mile program.

Service improvements, especially in Middletown are somewhat difficult to implement due to a lack of staff. Joe is working with Sam Gold, Executive Director, RiverCOG on the possibility of “sharing” a Transportation Planner with the COG.

There has been a recommendation to use designated bus stops. This is a huge undertaking and Transportation Planner would be instrumental in implementing this project.

Sam Gold outlined the COG’s need for a Transit Planner. The COG currently has no funding in place for this position but has requested that the DOT amend their budget to include funding for a Transportation Planner. All comments from today’s meeting will be taken to the Executive Board of RiverCOG for further review/discussion. If the Executive Board is in favor of the position, the position will be advertised and an agreement between the District and RiverCOG can be negotiated.

Peter Bierrie made a motion to accept the Executive Director’s Report as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Charlie Norz made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:40 a.m. for a discussion on the First Transit Proposal. Only Board members were invited into the Executive Session. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regular session resumed at: 10:11 a.m. No action taken.

NEW BUSINESS

Vehicle Transfer Resolution – a copy of the Resolution and description of the vehicles was included in the Board’s packet.

Tim Griswold made the following motion:

WHEREAS, on July 23, 2021, ETD entered into an MOA with Middletown Transit District (MTD) pursuant to which MTD and ETD committed to prepare for and effect the equivalent of a merger of MTD and ETD by the MTD member towns withdrawing from MTD, the joining of MTD's member towns into ETD, and the transfer of MTD's assets and transit operations into the existing ETD structure;

WHEREAS, on October 24, 2021, the Common Council of the City of Middletown approved and authorized the City of Middletown to become a member of ETD and further approved and authorized the transfer of MTD assets and transit operation into the existing ETD structure and the eventual withdrawal of Middletown from MTD;

WHEREAS, on December 13, 2021, the Town of Durham approved and authorized the Town of Durham to become a member of ETD, subject to the ETD accepting the Town of Durham as a member and the CDOT providing assurances satisfactory to the MTD and the Town of Durham concerning CDOT's commitment to providing certain support, services, and funding and thereupon withdraw as a member of the MTD;

WHEREAS, on January 24, 2022, the Town of Middlefield approved and authorized the Town of Middlefield to become a member of ETD;

WHEREAS, on December 17, 2021, the ETD Board of Directors accepted each of the City of Middletown, Town of Durham and Town of Middlefield, respectively, as members of the ETD upon receipt of notice that the legislative bodies of such municipalities voted affirmatively to join the ETD in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. 7-273b;

WHEREAS, the Federal Transit Administration allows for transfer of rolling stock from grantee to grantee prior to the end of useful life upon Federal Administration approval (FTA Circular 5010:1E); and;

WHEREAS, the MTD no longer requires the excess vehicles for public transportation; and

WHEREAS, the MTD, in accordance with FTA Circular 5010.1E desires to transfer 18 revenue vehicles for public transportation, along with the remaining federal interest to ETD; and

WHEREAS, the ETD agrees to maintain the vehicles in accordance and compliance with FTA requirements and will include the vehicles in ETD's inventory records; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford, is authorized to execute agreements or any other document required by the transfer; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford, is authorized to provide additional information as the Federal Transit Administration may require in connection with the transfer;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Director, Joseph Comerford, hereby is authorized on behalf of the ETD to accept the transfer of vehicles from MTD to ETD pursuant to the Federal Transit Act (FTA Circular 1010.1E).

Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Leslie reported that the First Transit Proposal for a Unified District is a work in progress.

CHAIR COMMENTS – None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – None.

Next meeting 4/8/22 – 9 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Laura Francis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk