



**ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MAT Offices, 91 N. Main St, Middletown CT with
Remote Option
March 11, 2022 at 9:00 AM**

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order — L. Strauss, Chair
- II. Roll Call — T. Griswold, Secretary
- III. Visitors' Comments
- IV. Secretary's Report — T. Griswold
 - [1.](#) Acceptance of Board Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2022
 - [2.](#) Acceptance of Expansion Transition Committee Minutes of February 22, 2022
- V. Communications — T. Griswold
- VI. Treasurer's Report — C. Norz
- VII. Committee Reports
 - 1. Expansion Transition Committee — J. Gay, Co-Chair; L. Francis, Co-Chair
 - [2.](#) Legislative committee- J Gay, Chair
- VIII. Executive Director's Report — J. Comerford
- IX. Executive Session
- X. New Business
 - [1.](#) Vehicle Transfer Resolution
 - [2.](#) Attachment A to resolution
- XI. Old Business
- XII. Chair Comments
- XIII. Board Members Comments
- XIV. Next Meeting — April 08, 2022 at 9:00 AM with Remote Options
- XV. Adjournment

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84493888060?pwd=c21xUERkYnEzN2pXMytHVVhGN0N6QT09>

Meeting ID: 844 9388 8060

Passcode: 267369

One tap mobile

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Language Assistance is available. If you need assistance, please call Lisa at 860-510-0429 ext. 104 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
February 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, Laura Francis, Charlie Norz, David Lahm and Joan Gay.

Absent: John Hall, Karl Kilduff

Also in attendance: Joe Comerford, Chris Denison, Lisa Gibson, Halyna Famiglietti, Nick Promponas, Sheri Cote, Maria Creel, Beverly Lawrence (left at 9:55 a.m.), Tom Partalas, Seward and Monde and Sam Gold

VISITOR COMMENTS – None.

PRESENTATION OF AUDIT – Seward and Monde

Tom Partalas, Seward and Monde, provided an overview of the Estuary Transit District Audit. Audit documents were screen shared. A “clean opinion” was issued. A detailed report of the Audit was shared with the Finance Committee on Wednesday, 2/9/22. The Finance Committee voted to recommend acceptance of the Audit.

Tom was available to address questions/comments from Board members.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the minutes from the 1/7/22 Board meeting. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Laura abstained

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the ETC Committee Minutes of 1/25/22. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Finance Committee minutes of 2/9/22. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Charlie Norz reported that the Finance Committee reviewed the audit in detail and recommends Board approval of same. He also confirmed that the Town Fees for 2022/23 were increased by 2%.

Joan Gay made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed. Laura Francis abstained from the vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ETD/MAT Expansion Committee

Joan reported that DOT representatives attended the last Expansion Committee meeting. The following are highlights of the meeting:

- Negotiations are on-going with the State relative to the transfer of ownership of the Middletown property. We continue to work with the DOT relative to the Shoreline land acquisition.
- The Town of Middlefield voted to join the Estuary Transit District. The First Selectman will be their representative on the Board. The Town of Middletown has not yet appointed members to the Board.
- Joe and Halyna have met with the DOT regarding grants.
- The Fare Study RFP has closed. The RFPs will be evaluated in late February.
- David Lee has written the scope for the branding and marketing project.
- Work has ceased on an interim logo.

Tim Griswold made a motion to accept the ETD/MAT Expansion Committee Report as presented. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee – No report

Personnel Committee - No report

Marketing Committee

Joe reported:

- The Marketing RFP will be released next week. The 3 members of the Marketing Committee will review responses.
- Joe has been assisting the DOT with the Client Experience Action Plan. This is a statewide project to improve customer experiences on public transit. Information will be sent out on social media, the app, e-mail blast, etc.

Legislative Committee

Joan reported that a session with Legislatures will be scheduled later in the year to update them on MAT and ETD. The local Legislators have been very supportive of the District’s efforts. Also, a Planning orientation meeting will be scheduled for new First Selectmen.

Transit Advisory Committee – No report.

Service Study Committee – No report.

Nominating Committee

Angus reported that the Committee is recommending that the current officers (Leslie, Chairman, Joan Vice Chair, Tim, Secretary and Charlie, Treasurer) remain in place as continuity is important during the merger.

Personnel Committee – No report.

COG Update

Sam Gold reported:

- The COG has been discussing the Infrastructure Bill and potential projects that may be funded by same. To date, no funds have been received as the Appropriation Bill has not yet been authorized.
- The COG's Executive Committee is interested in hiring a Transportation Planner. Joe has provided a list of the District's needs relative to same.
- On-going COG projects: Regional Housing Plan, the Affordable Housing and Transportation Plan.
- Consultants are currently being interviewed for the Economic Development Plan as recommended by the Federal Government. These plans are necessary in order to be eligible for potential sources of funding.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- Dial a Ride and ADA are now on the same software system
- DOT has made the determination of a shoreline facility location a top priority
- DOT has engaged VHB to look at improving bus parking at the Middletown terminal.
- The keys to the N. Main St. property were received and will be used for overflow storage and training. The utilities have been transferred and the remaining tenant will be paying rent to ETD.
- Joe will meet with DOT next week to present the 2022 Capital request.
- New positions have been filled.
- A PO has been issued for radios, delivery date TBD
- All AVL specs have been prepared and the project will go out to bid this month.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Bank Statements, Cash Flow Forecast, and Budget vs. Actual reports, including Middletown, were included in Board packet.

These documents have all been reviewed by the Finance Committee and no issues were reported. Halyna was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members. In addition, Halyna reported the following:

- She will be working on a combined budget with the Finance Committee and the auditors.
- All banking will be combined.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report as presented. Laura Francis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joe reported:

Ridership

- Ridership on all routes has started to come back since the start of the Pandemic

- The Shoreline shuttle is at 5% below pre-Pandemic numbers. This is better than the rest of the state.
- Ridership on the Old Saybrook to Middletown and New London routes is returning at a slower rate.
- The XMile program continues to grow – year to year we are up over 40%.
- Dial a Ride, including ADA, is up to 2019 levels. We’ve talked with DOT about additional funding for this program.
- The year was closed out up 31% over 2020 but still down 20% over 2019.
- The weather may have affected Middletown’s fixed routes. They are down significantly from 2020.
- ADA ridership is up significantly in Middletown.
- It is anticipated that when service changes are implemented in Middletown, ridership will increase.

Staffing – This District has experienced Covid-19 cases in recent weeks. In addition, some staff has had surgeries and other illnesses. We have received more applications for drivers; however, the stricter CDL requirements make it difficult to hire.

A Professional Dispatch and Scheduler Program was hosted by the District this week

Peter Bierrie made a motion to accept the Operations Director’s Report. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Joe reported:

- Middletown – Preventative Maintenance goals have been met and as a result, there have been less breakdowns and road calls.
- A 35 ft. bus was transferred from CT Transit and will be used by the District until we receive our new electric buses.
- Due to issues with our snow removal contractor, snow removal equipment was moved to Centerbrook. We plan to do all snow removal in house next year and will order appropriate equipment to facilitate same.

Peter Bierrie made a motion to accept the Maintenance Director’s Report as presented. Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

Election of Officers

As recommended by the Nominating Committee:

Angus MacDonald made a motion to appoint Leslie Strauss, Chairman, Joan Gay, Vice Chairman, Tim Griswold, Secretary and Charlie Norz, Treasurer. Laura Francis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AAA Authorizing Resolution

Charlie Norz made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Executive Director Joseph Comerford and/or in his absence or inability to act, the Chairperson, Leslie B. Strauss, are hereby, authorized on behalf of the Estuary Transit District to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents required to obtain funds from the Senior Resources Agency on Aging.

Tim Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DOT Authorizing Resolution

Joan Gay made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Chairperson, Leslie B. Strauss, and/or in her absence or inability to act, the Vice Chairperson, Joan Gay, having been since February 11, 2022, are, hereby, authorized on behalf of the Estuary Transit District to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents required to obtain funds from the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Appointment of Committees

A copy of the ETD Board of Directors and Committee was included in the Board’s packet. All standing committees, with the exception of the Transit Advisory Committee, have full representation.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept appointments as presented. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Audit Report

Peter Bierrie made a motion to approve the Audit Report as presented. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Leslie reported that she will be meeting with Nick, Laura and Joan to discuss the First Transit contract and fee arrangements. All fees will be negotiated prior to merger completion. All Board members were invited to attend and a notice will go out when the date/time of the meeting is confirmed.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – None.

Next Meeting – March 11, 2022 – 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Charlie Norz made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski, Clerk

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT
ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT and MIDDLETOWN TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
MIDDLETOWN TRANSIT DISTRICT
SPECIAL EXPANSION TRANSITION COMMITTEE MEETING
MTD GARAGE, 91 N. Main Street, Middletown, CT with Remote Options
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2022, AT 1:00 PM.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Joan Gay, Co-Chair, at 1:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with the following committee members present: Joan Gay, Karl Kilduff, Beverly Lawrence, and Angus McDonald

Also in attendance: Christina Denison, Halyna Famiglietti, Dave Lee, and Leslie Strauss.

Guests: Charles Norz, ETD Board Member, Old Saybrook; Joanna Juskowiak, Transportation Planner 2, CT DOT, Bureau of Public Transportation, Office of Transit and Ridersharing; Maureen Lawrence, CT DOT, Office of Transit and Ridersharing; and Piotr Milczek, Transportation Planner 1, CT DOT, Bureau of Transportation

Absent: Laura Francis

CT DOT PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT

No report.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The plan was reviewed and will be revised.

Maureen Lawrence, CTDOT, is working with the rail side regarding the shoreline facility space program and land acquisition. DOT recently hired Graham Curtis for Capital Projects. He is working through all the details for ETD capital projects.

Curtis will be invited to attend all future committee meetings.

M. Lawrence will follow-up on design services and the on-call consultant for the Facility Master Plan and report at the next meeting.

She and Graham Curtis will report on which ETD projects have been funded.

Famiglietti and Comerford met with DOT to discuss which operating grants could be combined.

The City of Middletown will appoint members to the Estuary Board at its March 7th Common Council meeting.

Denison reported that the HR RFP was re-issued on February 15 and the Rebranding/Marketing RFP was issued on February 17. Both RFP's close in mid-March and studies will begin in late April/early May.

The Fare Study RFP has closed, and the evaluation committee will meet later in the week. M. Lawrence will provide Denison with contact information for the CTDOT staff member chosen to serve on the fare study selection committee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

NEXT STEPS

1. The Implementation Plan will continue to be revised and updated as needed.
2. CTDOT or CT Transit will appoint a member to the selection committee for the Fare Study.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at the MTD Garage, 91 N. Main Street, Middletown at 1:00 p.m. with remote options.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Denison
Clerk

Written Testimony Bill 5256

The Estuary Transit District (ETD) is one of the transit districts in Connecticut created by Chapter 103 (a) of the Connecticut General Statutes. Since 1981, ETD has served the lower Connecticut River Valley with fixed-route, demand-response and on-demand public transportation services.

The Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) began a study in 2018, paid for by CTDOT, to determine the best governance structure for providing public transit in our region. The nearly two year study concluded that combining the Middletown and Estuary Transit Districts into one larger ETD would improve public transportation for the region.

Throughout the study and in the time since then, there has been a tremendous amount of local involvement in the consolidation process. This has included RiverCOG, the boards of directors of both districts, our member town First Selectmen and district staff. In addition, there are three major studies in progress needed to complete the merger process, also funded by CTDOT.

We are concerned that Raised Bill No. 5256 makes consolidation of transit districts a foregone conclusion. We would argue, as a district in the final stages of consolidation, that consolidation may not be the right fit for all. It is only through significant local participation in the process and extensive study that a beneficial consolidation can occur that best serves the transit needs of communities throughout our state.

We also believe the bill as written narrows the options that can be considered for improved public transportation. Tasking a committee with only considering consolidation, rather than a broader goal of improving statewide transit coordination, eliminates other improvement options.

We are also confused by the scope of the bill. CTTransit, the state owned system not created under Chapter 103(a), accounts for approximately 70% of state bus transit funding. This committee would only consider transit districts, which compromise a small part of the statewide bus network. If the goal of this bill is to improve coordination of transit services, we suggest it should include state, town and non-profit services funded by the state as well.

Given the fact that we are in the final stages of consolidating with MAT after four long years of meticulous planning and hard work, we believe that ETD should be held harmless from any future consolidation. Making any change now would jeopardize the future success of our district and imperil the public transit service so many in our region depend on daily.

We all share the goal of better coordinated and more efficient transit services, but we believe that any improvements must consider travel patterns and needs of the communities served. From our experience, this is best determined at the local level, not by committee, in Hartford, drawing arbitrary lines on a map.

For these reasons, ETD opposes Raised Bill No. 5256. We are happy to work with the legislature and administration to share our experience as the only district in Connecticut and one of few in the nation that have first hand experience on this topic. We would be pleased to help find ways to improve coordination of transit service and improve public transit in our state.

Joseph Comerford, Executive Director
Estuary Transit District

Resolution No. 22-001

STATE OF CONNECTICUT)
)
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX)

SS: Estuary Transit District
March 11, 2022

**AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION
ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT**

CERTIFICATION:

I, Timothy Griswold, Secretary of the Estuary Transit District, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at its meeting on March 11, 2022, 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.

WHEREAS, on July 23, 2021, Estuary Transit District (“ETD”) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (the “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 Connecticut Department of Transportation (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 (Attachment A) for public transportation; and

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

WHEREAS, 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 Estuary Transit District to accept the transfer of vehicles from MTD to ETD pursuant to the Federal Transit Act (**FTA Circular 5010.1E**).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned has affixed his signature, the 11th day of March in the year 2022.

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
SECRETARY

Timothy Griswold, Secretary

I, Timothy Griswold, Secretary of Estuary Transit District, Certify that the resolution noted above is still in force and effect as of the 11th day of March 2022.

Timothy Griswold, Secretary

Request To Transfer Fleet from Middletown Transit District To Estuary Transit District

NOTE: All vehicles remain in revenue service until the date of transfer*

ATTACHMENT A

Descriptive information on Vehicles to be Transferred

Year	Make	Unit	VIN	Date Entered Revenue Service	Date Exited Revenue Service*	Grant #	Mileage (3/7/22)	Remaining Useful Life	Remaining Federal Interest
2018	Ford E-450	1811	1FDFE4FS7HDC67437	05/22/18		100% State Bond Funds	49,000	0	0
2017	Ford E-450	1711	1FDFE4FS1HDC66204	05/22/18		CT-18-X031, X033, X035	69,913	1 year	\$11,498
2016	Gillig/Low Floor	2222	15GGB2714G1187100	10/12/16		CT-90-X530	278,002	6 years, 6 mos.	\$186,472
2016	Gillig/Low Floor	2221	15GGB2711G1187099	10/07/16		CT-90-X530	214,446	6 years, 6 mos.	\$186,472
2016	Gillig/Low Floor	2220	15GGB271XG1187098	10/06/16		CT-90-X530	191,005	6 years, 6 mos.	\$186,472
2015	Gillig/Low Floor	2216	15GGE2715F1092776	07/11/15		CT-90-X468	308,457	3 years, 4 mos.	\$186,472
2015	Gillig/Low Floor	2217	15GGE2717F1092777	07/13/15		CT-90-X468	229,029	3 years, 4 mos.	\$104,000
2015	Gillig/Low Floor	2218	15GGE2719F1092778	07/13/15		CT-90-X468	333,003	3 years, 4 mos.	\$104,000
2015	Gillig/Low Floor	2219	15GGE2710F1092779	07/15/15		CT-90-X468	320,920	3 years, 4 mos.	\$104,000
2015	Goshen Coach 350	6010	1FDDE3FS5FDA30531	05/04/15		CT-90-X468	214,218	0	0

Request To Transfer Fleet from Middletown Transit District To Estuary Transit District (continued)**NOTE: All vehicles remain in revenue service until the date of transfer*****ATTACHMENT A (continued)**

Descriptive information on Vehicles to be Transferred

Year	Make	Unit	VIN	Date Entered Revenue Service	Date Exited Revenue Service	Grant #	Mileage (3/7/22)	Remaining Useful Life	Remaining Federal Interest
2015	Goshen Coash 350	6009	1FDEE3FS3FDA30530	05/04/15		CT-90-X468	107,289	0	0
2015	Goshen Coach 350	6007	1FDEE3FS5FDA30528	05/04/15		CT-90-X468	129,417	0	0
2015	Goshen Coach 350	6004	1FDEE3FS4FDA16300	02/18/15		CT-90-X462	141,968	0	0
2015	Goshen Coach 350	6003	1FDEE3FS1FDA16299	02/18/15		CT-90-X462	131,363	0	0
2015	Goshen Coach 350	6001	1FDEE3FS8FDA16297	02/18/15		CT-90-X462	112,296	0	0
2012	Gillig/Low Floor	JA104	15GGE2714C1092263	06/12/12		CT-86-X001	543,771	0	0
2012	Gillig/Low Floor	3008	A5GGE2718C1092265	06/16/12		CT-86-X001	430,388	3 mos.	\$10,758
2012	Gillig/Low Floor	3007	15GGE2716C1092264	06/14/12		CT-86-X001	251,820	3 mos.	\$10,758