

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 14, 2022
MAT Offices, 91 N. Main Street, Middletown, CT
With Remote Options

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A quorum was established with the following members in attendance: Leslie Strauss, Chairman; DG Fitton; Tim Griswold; John Hall; Jim Irish; Karl Kilduff; Beverly Lawrence (left at 10:29 a.m.); Angus McDonald (left at 10:50 a.m.); and Charles Norz

Absent: Joan Gay, Bobbye Knoll-Peterson, and David Lahm

Also in attendance: Joe Comerford, Chris Denison, Halyna Famiglietti, Lisa Gibson, Sheri Cote, and Brendan Geraghty

Guests: Anne Galbraith, consultant, ASG Planning; Rick Halvorsen, consultant, HATCH LTK; Carly Havyer, consultant, HATCH LTK; Alicia Leite, CTDOT; Pat Marron, consultant, HATCH LTK; Emma Petersen, CTDOT; and Samantha Savvidou, CTDOT

VISITOR COMMENTS –

Fare Study Presentation -

A copy of the Fare Study was included in the Board's packet.

Halvorsen, reported his firm has been engaged to support the merger of the Middletown and Shoreline operations by making recommendations for a common fare structure and fare collection technology.

The study was reviewed and discussed. Halvorsen was available to address questions from Board members.

Based on the outcome of the study, recommendations were made to:

- a. Simplify current fare structure
- b. Introduce reduced fares for low income and student riders
- c. Offer "Best Fare"; and
- d. Eliminate fixed route fares for ADA riders

ETD will work closely with CTDOT to establish a uniform fare structure on a statewide level. Next steps include public outreach and a Title VI analysis.

Comerford recommended the Board accept the proposal set forth by Hatch LTK and seek public opinion.

Kilduff made a motion to recommend the District seek public opinion on the proposal. Hall the seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Fitton made a motion to accept the minutes from the 9/9/22 Board meeting. McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

McDonald made a motion to accept the Facilities Committee Minutes of 9/27/22. Kilduff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Kilduff made a motion to accept the Finance Committee minutes of 10/12/22. Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

TREASURER'S REPORT – No report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Committee -

McDonald reported:

- The tenant in N. Main Street building has requested an extension and an expansion of their lease
- Mike Sanders, Interim Public Transit Administrator, CTDOT, attended the Facilities Meeting during which Sanders stated that the Middletown project has become a second-tier priority to DOT because of its first-tier priority of the electrification of buses within the state on Connecticut
- Per Sanders, the Master Plan cannot be started until the shoreline facility plans are completed
- It was determined that the District could do its own Master Plan, but additional funding is required from the State
- Plans to acquire a shoreline facility have stalled and remain idle
- The Facilities Committee agreed on the following course of action:
 - a. Comerford will forward a copy of the commitment letter signed by the DOT Commissioner to Sanders;
 - b. Comerford will write a letter to DOT requesting the release of funds so the District could implement its own Master Plan
 - c. Gay will forward a copy of the progress report to DOT for updating

Comerford reported that CTDOT has since responded, indicating that DOT:

- Will move forward with the Master Plan
- Will not be moving forward with the Old Saybrook site
- Will engage an “on-call” consultant
- Will contact the owners of the Westbrook property, which was the preferred site in the regional study as well as the initial pre-merger study
- Would like to walk the Westbrook property to better understand the wetlands situation

Strauss recognized Sanders for acting and getting the CTDOT Deputy Commissioner involved. She stated that DOT has assured the District that a representative from DOT will be attendance at all future Facilities Committee meetings.

Norz made a motion to accept the Facilities Committee Report as presented. Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee –

Norz reported the Finance Committee met earlier in the week. There are no concerns with the budget vs. actuals or cash flow.

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

Marketing Committee

Strauss reported:

- The 8 initial logo designs have been narrowed down to 3
- Stakeholders and employees were surveyed on the final 3 logos
- A meeting is scheduled for next week with the marketing firm to review the feedback of the survey and select a final logo
- NBC CT ran a story on XtraMile expansion and the merger
- The Middletown Press and Wesleyan Argus also reported on XtraMile expansions
- Website usage is up 40% from last year

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

Legislative Committee – No report.

Transit Advisory Committee – No report.

Service Study Committee – No report.

Nominating Committee No report.

Personnel Committee – No report.

COG Update – B. Geraghty

Geraghty reported that the COG is in the process of developing an Economic Development Plan for the region and is sponsoring a series of public engagement activities as well as pop events in the region. He also reported that the Metro Transportation Plan is currently being updated.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – J. Comerford

A copy of the Executive Director's Report was included in the Board's packet. Comerford reported:

- Electric bus orders remain on hold; the District has received permission to order 4 diesel buses
- The signed supplemental agreement has been received from CTDOT, which makes all MTD debts to CTDOT forgiven
- The District has received initial TOD's for FY 22 based on FY21 final TOD's; CTDOT is still determining increases for FY 22
- A PO for AVL software has been issued; install should begin in 120 days

- The radio vendor has reviewed buses for installation
- The District is awaiting the reopening of TrAMS to close MTD grants and reopen as ETD grants

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

TRANSIT PLANNER’S REPORT – B. Geraghty

Geraghty reported:

- Middletown XtraMile has exceeded expectations with over 1,620 riders since August
- Press has been received from NBC CT and several publications, including MASS Transit magazine.
- Funding requests for several service improvements have been submitted to DOT for FY24.
- A photographer has been engaged to take photos for the new website.
- Geraghty has been working with an intern from Wesleyan and will be conducting public outreach for the fare study.
- Ridership numbers have recovered to or slightly above 2019 numbers along the shoreline and in Middletown. XtraMile ridership continues to increase. ADA ridership has declined slightly.

Griswold made a motion to accept the Transit Planner’s Report. McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – H. Famiglietti

The Cash Flow Forecast and Budget vs. Actual reports were included in Board packet.

These documents have all been reviewed by the Finance Committee and no issues were reported.

Due to a loss of quorum, voting on the acceptance of the Finance Director’s report is deferred.

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR’S REPORT –J. Whitcomb

None

MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – J. Comerford

Comerford reported that the District continues to struggle with hiring mechanics and drivers.

NEW BUSINESS –

Bus Purchase Resolutions -

Due to the loss of quorum, voting on the acceptance of the bus purchase resolutions is deferred to a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

CHAIR COMMENTS

Strauss expressed dismay at the lack of attendance at meetings.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION- None.

Next Meeting November 18, 2022 – 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Hall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:02 a.m. Irish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina Denison, Clerk

Timothy Griswold, Secretary