

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING
17 INDUSTRIAL PARK ROAD
CENTERBROOK, CONNECTICUT
FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Leslie Strauss, Chairman at 9:30 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Leslie Strauss led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with the following board members present: John Forbis, Virginia Zawoy, Noel Bishop, Ralph Eno, Peter Bierrie, Lesley Strauss, and Roland Laine (arrived at 9:45).

Also in attendance:

Staff: Halyna Famiglietti, Allison Meshnick, David Lee, Joe Comerford.

Guests: David Lee, Ryan Visci

Absent: Joan Gay, Dick Smith, Durham and E. Haddam representatives

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Approval of Minutes

Virginia Zawoy made a motion to approve the minutes from the 6/20/14 Regular Meeting. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

John Forbis made a motion to accept the minutes from the 6/9/14 Finance Committee Meeting. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

A letter from the State DOT denying funding for the expansion of the Shoreline Shuttle service was included in the Board's packet. Any changes/expansion of the Shoreline Shuttle services would require local funding.

Joe Comerford reported that he will request that deviations to the route not be allowed as they negatively impact scheduling.

TREASURER'S REPORT

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – None.

Marketing Committee

The Marketing Report was included in the Board packet. Highlights include:

Farmer's Market participation - Board members will discuss the possibility of 9TT participation at local Farmer's Markets and report to Joe Comerford.

Emergency Preparedness Committee – No report

Rte 81 Committee

No additional information expected prior to Fall elections.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Report was included in the Board packet.

Joe Comerford reported on the considerable savings as a result of the change in insurance broker. The broker continues to review policies to ensure proper coverage.

FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

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

All town contributions have been received and there are no cash flow issues at the current time.

The Revenues and Expenses report for each route was distributed and reviewed. The Board discussed the Dial a Ride funding vis a vis Madison and E. Haddam's contributions.

As bus advertising contracts expire, the District will see a loss in advertising income.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

The Operations Manager's Report was included in the Board packet.

Allison Meshnick reported that as a result of the staffing recruiter, 3 additional drivers have been hired.

OLD BUSINESS

Fare Increase

A copy of the proposed fare (pre-paid tickets) increase was included in the Board packet.

Joe Comerford reported that a CT Transit fare increase went into effect in January 2014. The District held 3 hearings on the proposed increase and no opposition was expressed. The Committee did suggest a lower fare for monthly passes.

John Forbis made a motion to increase fares as proposed, pending DOT approval. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Office Lease

Board and staff members toured the Essex Motor Works facility and noted several issues including inadequate garage doors and space, landscape/snow removal and maintenance costs.

The current lease expires on August 30, 2014.

Several options were suggested including:

- A 2 year lease with a 6 month option to extend
- A 3 year lease
- A 5 year lease

The previous lease has been reviewed by the District's attorney. If a new lease results in any significant changes, additional attorney review may be required.

John Forbis made a motion to direct Executive Director Joe Comerford to negotiate with the landlord as discussed. Chairman Strauss and Finance Committee Chairman Forbis will review contract/lease prior to signature. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Peter Bierrie suggested that off-site storage space may be necessary.

Procurement Policy

A copy of the revised Procurement Policy was included in the Board packet.

John Forbis made a motion to approve the revised Procurement Policy as presented. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Committee

Leslie Strauss made a motion to add to the agenda a discussion on the formation of a Personnel Committee. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Since board members have received correspondence directly from employees regarding personnel issues; the District's labor attorney recommends a Personnel Committee be established to address personnel concerns.

The duties of a Personnel Committee will be reviewed at the next Board meeting. This Committee will be combined with the Job Description Committee.

John Forbis made a motion to appoint a Personnel Committee comprised of existing Job Description Committee members (Noel Bishop and Virginia Zawoy). Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Leslie Strauss appointed Roland Laine to the Personnel Committee. The Executive Director, Joe Comerford, will be an ex-officio member of the Committee. Virginia Zawoy will chair the committee.

Suggestion Program Policy

A copy of the revised Employee Handbook Suggestion Program was included in the Board packet.

John Forbis made a motion to approve the revised Employee Handbook Suggestion Program as presented. Peter Bierrie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Denise Battistini Complaint

Leslie Strauss reported that Ms. Battistini requested that this agenda item be discussed in open session. Ms. Battistini was not present. Joan Gay was unable to be present but did send her comments on the issue to Chairman Strauss.

This issue has been reviewed by the District's Labor Attorney who developed a response to the complaint:

Dear Ms. Battistini,

The Board of Directors has reviewed your complaint dated July 22, 2014.

We find that you failed to show up for a shift that was assigned to you per ETD policy. We also find that you walked away from a supervisor during a discussion. This behavior is unacceptable, and the disciplinary action taken was appropriate.

Upon examining the facts surrounding your complaint we find no evidence of unlawful harassment or workplace violence.

We find several instances of you attending doctor appointments during your shift, for which you were paid. These visits occurred on June 26th, July 7th and July 21st. We therefore find that your medical appointments have been accommodated and your time has been paid.

We find that ETD acted appropriately to accommodate your work restrictions by reassigning you to a more predictable route. We find no violation of your work restrictions.

As an ETD employee, you are required to follow the instructions of your supervisor and failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. Following instructions of your supervisor is one of your work responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Leslie Strauss
ETD Chairman

Ralph Eno made a motion to send the letter per attorney recommendation. Noel Bishop seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CHAIR COMMENTS – none.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - none

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ralph Eno made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:41 a.m. for a personnel matter and the First Transit Contract. Invited into Executive Session: Joe Comerford, Allison Meshnick, David Lee and Ryan Visci. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Regular session resumed at 10:53 a.m.

No action taken.

Noel Bishop thanked Allison for her professional service to the District. The Board wished her good luck in her new endeavor.

NEXT MEETING – October 17, 2014

ADJOURNMENT

Roland Laine made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk

Virginia Zawoy
Secretary