

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT TRANSIT MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING  
17 Industrial Park Rd., Centerbrook, CT  
Conference Room  
December 16, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Estuary Transit District was called to order by Leslie Strauss, Vice Chair at 10:00 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Leslie Strauss led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with the following Board members present: Noel Bishop, John Forbis, Roland Laine, Virginia Zawoy, Leslie Strauss, Jack Spangler, Dick Smith (arrived at 11:02 a.m.), Ralph Eno and Richard Cabral (via conference call).

Staff members present included: Joe Comerford, Halyna Famiglietti, Paul Tyrrell

Norm Needleman, Essex First Selectman arrived at 10:20 a.m., Carl Fortuna, Old Saybrook First Selectman arrived at 11:12 a.m.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes

October 21, 2011

**Richard Cabral made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the October 21, 2011 meeting. Ralph Eno seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Finance Committee Minutes

December 1, 2011

**John Forbis made a motion to approve the minutes from the Finance Committee meeting dated 12/1/11. Roland Laine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

COMMUNICATIONS

Correspondence – None

TREASURER'S REPORT - None

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Finance Committee – None

### Marketing Report

A copy of the Marketing Report was included in the Board packet and included a Press Release related to the new Saturday bus service along the Shoreline. The BOS in Westbrook also recognized the District's utilization of Vista clients to clean the buses and the office space.

John Forbis congratulated the District on the growth of the website. Joe Comerford reported that the number of "hits" on the website has decreased the amount of phone calls into the office.

### Nominating Committee – No report at this time.

### Ferry Committee –

Ralph Eno reported that the Committee is awaiting financial figures from the state, including accurate cost estimates for new ferries. Personnel issues within the Ferry organization were discussed briefly. Ralph Eno will investigate the facilitation of the grant application process to include legislator involvement.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Joe Comerford reported that the DOT has approved the purchase of a low-floor bus for the Shoreline Shuttle. Delivery is expected in June 2012.

On Tuesday, December 13, 2011, the DOT approved the expansion of the Saturday Shoreline Shuttle beginning tomorrow, December 17, 2011. Joe Comerford reported that the transition may be difficult due to the shore notice of approval and notification to riders.

### Bus Cleaning

The car wash facility used to wash the buses has been shut down by the DEEP. Two proposals have been received for bus cleaning and are currently under review.

## FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

A copy of the Finance Manager's Report, including Bank Statements and a Cash Flow Forecast, was included in the Board packet.

Halyna Famiglietti reported that all bank accounts at Essex Savings Bank have been transferred to Liberty Bank.

**Jack Spangler made a motion to accept the Finance Manager's Report as presented. John Forbis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

## OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

A copy of the Operations Manager's Report was included in the Board packet and indicates that ridership continues to increase. Paul Tyrrell reported that the hours for several bus routes have increased including Middletown. Extended hours on the Middletown route should be beneficial to students attending Middletown College.

Noel Bishop asked if the District currently has the capacity to serve the needs of the Middlesex College students. Paul Tyrrell responded that the Shuttles do overload several times per week but the additional service added should ease the situation. Also there is the potential for a bigger bus on that route.

The District is awaiting DOT approval and funding for an early (6:25 a.m.) Shuttle route to Madison.

Paul Tyrrell reported on a recent meeting regarding the construction of a bus shelter at the Old Saybrook Train Station. They are committed to providing a waiting area. They are also in negotiations to rent parking spaces from the owner.

Roland Laine updated the Board on the new parking fees established at the train station as well as the potential for an Affordable Housing project in the area.

**Roland Laine made a motion to accept the Operations Manager's Report as submitted. Virginia Zawoy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### OLD BUSINESS

Roland Laine will speak to the Old Saybrook Public Works Department regarding the installation of the bus shelter.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Audit Report

A copy of the 2011 Audit was distributed to Board members.

Pat Trotta, Seward & Monde, provided an overview of the reports developed as a result of the audit and briefly reviewed the financial statements. The audit has been reviewed in detail with Board members Roland Laine, Jack Spangler, John Forbis and Richard Cabral. A "Clean Opinion" has been rendered by the auditor and the District was commended on its sound financial management. Mr. Trotta thanked the District for their business.

While no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses were noted, a recommendation to improve the fare collection system was made. The Board will review the recommendation to determine the cost benefits, etc.

The Undesignated Fund Balance was discussed. Mr. Trotta commented that it is good practice to build reserves as much as possible to accommodate the unknown (state reimbursements, unfunded initiatives). Ralph Eno reported that the current balance is adequate at this time.

**John Forbis made a motion to accept the FY 2010/2011 Audit as presented. Richard Cabral seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

##### Advertising Contract

Joe Comerford reported that one proposal for advertising was received from Trans Ad (current contractor). The Committee developed a plan to maintain the revenue but decrease the obtrusiveness

of the ads and restrict curbside advertising. Advertisements will only be allowed on the street side and rear of vehicle. All contract language will give the District the right to reduce ads.

Noel Bishop reported that the contract should include a clear length of contract, ad location and termination options.

Leslie Strauss commented that the District's telephone number should be clearly posted on the back of the bus.

**Noel Bishop made a motion to allow the Advertising Committee to move forward with contract negotiations. Jack Spangler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### Bus Shelter Plaque

The District received a request from Hope Partnership to place a plaque to be located at the Ferry Crossing bus shelter in honor of Michael and Joanne Pace.

**Richard Cabral made a motion to give Hope Partnership permission to place the plaque as requested. Roland Laine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### Sick Leave Policy

A copy of the amended Sick Leave Policy 307 was included in the Board packet. Wording was added to the policy to allow an employee sick leave to care for an ailing family member.

**Dick Smith made a motion to approve the revised policy, dated 12/16/11, as presented. Jack Spangler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### 2012 Meeting Schedule

**Dick Smith made a motion to approve the 2012 Estuary Transit District meeting schedule as presented. Roland Laine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Dates are as follows: 2/17/12, 4/20/12, 6/15/12, 8/20/12, 10/19/12 and 12/21/12 – note this meeting will begin @ 10 a.m.

#### Town Contribution

A copy of the Town Contribution break down was included in the Board packet and discussed.

**Noel Bishop made a motion to approve the Town Contribution schedule's 15% increase for FY 2012/2013 as presented. Dick Smith seconded the motion. Discussion followed:**

John Forbis reported that the Finance Committee is recommending the 15% increase to meet the needs of the District.

Several Selectmen requested that the District be as detailed as possible when presenting their request to the various Boards of Selectmen.

**Vote on the motion as follows: Richard Cabral – Nay, Virginia Zawoy – Abstained, Noel Bishop - Aye, John Forbis - Aye, Roland Laine - Aye, Leslie Strauss - Aye, Jack Spangler - Aye, Dick Smith - Aye, Ralph Eno – Aye. The motion passed.**

Google Grant Resolution

A copy of the CCRPA Grant Resolution to fund placement of ETD on Google Connecticut was included in the Board packet. There is no financial impact to the District as a result of the Grant.

Virginia Zawoy read the following:

“Resolved, that the Legislative Body of the ETD, with a vote of 9 to 0, endorses the Regional Performance Incentive Program proposal referenced in Section 5 of Public Act 11-61 (An Act Concerning Responsible Growth). Such proposal is attached to and made part of this record.”

**John Forbis made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Roland Laine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

CHAIR COMMENTS – Richard Cabral wished everyone Happy Holidays.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Noel Bishop welcomed the newly elected Selectmen present and solicited their comments.

Carl Fortuna, Old Saybrook First Selectman, reported that his interaction with Joe Comerford and the District has been great. Joe Comerford extended an open invitation to all of the new Selectmen to tour the District facilities and discussion operations.

ADJOURNMENT

**Dick Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:33 a.m. Jack Spangler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Next meeting 2/17/12 – 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Clerk