

Windham Region Transit District

Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 03, 2015 - 1:00 p.m.

Windham Region Transit District Board Room

115 Ash Street, Willimantic, CT

REGULAR MEETING MOTIONS and MINUTES

Voting Members Present: M. Roach, Chair (Coventry), T. Currier (Columbia), T. McNally, Secretary (Windham), T. Coonradt (Windham), A. Marcellino (Mansfield), Matt Hart (Mansfield)

Voting Members Excused: None.

Guests Present: Joe Comerford (Estuary Transit District), Dave Lee (First Transit)

Staff Present: Kurcinik, Noll

Public Present: None.

1. Administration

Chair Roach called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.M. Hart MOVED to APPROVE the minutes of the November 25, 2014 regular meeting and the December 11, 2014 and January 14, 2015 special meetings of the WRTD Board of Directors as presented. T. Coonradt SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

2. Public Participation

None.

3. Correspondence

Staff presented: results of the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission, noting a need for transportation between Storrs and Manchester; an announcement from ConnDOT of their upcoming internal audit on WRTD; a letter from the Connecticut Labor Board informing WRTD of the employees' movement toward considering unionizing; the letter from WRTD to the Dial-A-Ride ridership (sent on January 6) and operators describing the changes to service and updates to WRTD's rules and regulations. Chair Roach presented: a vehicle inventory list from ConnDOT; communication with Savings Institute indicating their ability to meet all of WRTD's banking needs; communication with State Representative Susan Johnson about proposed Bill 6334 regarding improved public transportation coordination in Eastern Connecticut.

4. Old Business

a. Financial Update

Comerford presented an overall budget for WRTD, including expenses for each program, noting that the budgets are continually being refined. To stay within the current budget, the fixed route service would need a 35% service cut, not including the unfunded Storrs-Willimantic Express. Recommendations included soliciting support from State Representatives and setting a public hearing date for the end of February to solicit feedback on Fixed Route service cuts. M. Hart MOVED to add "Public Hearing" to New Business. T. Coonradt SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED unanimously. Comerford advised the Board that a proposal for the ridership study that ConnDOT recommended has been submitted to ConnDOT for approval. This study would help with any future cuts we might need to make. He also advised that

UCONN is open to helping fund service to campus, in particular the Route 195 Express service, through a student fee, and that this is a 2-year process to put in place.

b. Service Report

Staff reported steady ridership.

c. Facility Update

Comerford reported February 23, 2015 as the substantial completion date and predicted a March, 2015 move-in. Kurcinik noted a few safety issues with the new facility, including the lack of a sidewalk between bus storage and the administrative offices, the non-automated front gate, and the potential for ice buildup in bus storage. These will be addressed through the capital improvement process.

5. Chairman's Report

Chair Roach thanked R. Kurcinik for her work as Acting Director under current circumstances and M. Hart for his guidance and support. Auditor Costello has delayed presenting his draft until 2/6.

6. Reports of Officers & Staff

Staff reported that it is challenging to get service going during heavy snow with the vehicles stored outside. Six employees responded to the call to help clear the buses and the lot.

7. New Business

a. WRTD Board of Directors Vacancies: Vice Chairperson and Treasurer

Chair Roach called for nominations for Vice Chairperson. T. McNally NOMINATED M. Hart. T. Currier SECONDED. NOMINATION PASSED with M. Hart abstaining. Chair Roach called for nominations for Treasurer. T. McNally NOMINATED T. Coonradt. M. Hart SECONDED. Coonradt would accept only after a forensic audit. T. Coonradt's nomination tabled.

b. Disposal of Vehicles

Staff reported that 5 vehicles have met the end of their useful life. All five were replaced 1-2 years ago. We will ask permission from ConnDOT to dispose of them by auction. M. Hart MOVED to dispose of the five vehicles as recommended by the Acting Director pending ConnDOT approval. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

c. Purchase of Capital Equipment

Comerford presented a vehicle replacement schedule and capital projects in the amount of \$87,503. He recommended WRTD put in place a ten-year Capital Plan that includes an automated scheduling system. Other items, like installing GPS in all of our buses, would also go in this plan. M. Hart MOVED to authorize the Acting Director to make capital project purchases pending ConnDOT approval. T. Currier SECONDED. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

d. \$.50 Transfers to Southeast Area Transit

The SEAT Director is interested in putting this into place and is bringing the issue to the SEAT Board of Directors. Transfer from SEAT to WRTD will be \$.50 and there will be no additional charge from WRTD to SEAT buses for one zone of travel. There would be no exchange of money between the two districts. M. Hart MOVED to approve the proposed transfer agreement with SEAT. T. McNally SECONDED. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

- e. Fare Discussion
Discussion about raising fares and possibly streamlining the entire fare structure. A public hearing would be needed for these changes. M. Hart MOVED to refer the fare fee schedule to the Finance Committee. T. McNally SECONDED. MOTION PASSED unanimously.
- f. Report from Mr. Joseph Comerford, First Transit
Discussion about report, including the need to revise, update and add policies and procedures; flagged action items; and contracting out management services vs. bolstering managerial assets in-house.
- g. Presentation by David Lee, General Manager of First Transit in Hartford/New Haven/Stamford
First Transit is a national company that contracts with public transit agencies for managerial services, including the State of Connecticut. Proposal to WRTD for interim management over 3-6 months, assuming ConnDOT will reimburse the cost. This position would be filled quickly and impermanently, but full time, and the manager would use the report generated by Comerford as a starting point for moving the agency forward. All action items could be completed within a year. Comerford's continued support as WRTD works through options is at the discretion of Estuary's Board of Directors. Discussion about ongoing employee union organizing. T. McNally MOVED that M. Hart and M. Roach approach ConnDOT about their willingness to fund this scenario. A. Marcellino SECONDED. MOTION PASSED unanimously.
- h. Public Hearing/Service Reduction
M. Hart MOVED to schedule a public hearing to consider adjustments to service levels for 2:00PM, February 24, 2015. T. Currier SECONDED. T. Coonradt suggested a friendly amendment to add a 7:00PM session for the public hearing. SECONDED by T. McNally. Hart and Currier accepted the friendly amendment. MOTION, as amended, PASSED unanimously.

8. Executive Session: Discussion and possible action concerning attorney client privileged communication concerning personnel matter, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes§1-200(6)(E)

The Board entered Executive Session at 3:39PM with the Board in attendance. Executive Session ended at 3:55.

9. Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 24, 2015

10. Adjournment

Chair Roach adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by D. Noll for Secretary McNally.