



REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
GREATER HARTFORD TRANSIT DISTRICT
Hartford Connecticut
September 17, 2020

Stephen F. Mitchell, Chairman
Presiding.....

At 7:07 p.m., a quorum determined to be present; Mr. Mitchell called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Greater Hartford Transit District (the "District") to order remotely by way of a "Go-To-Meeting. The following Directors were present: Marilyn Pet (2.30), East Hartford; Gilbert Hayes (1.00), East Windsor; Stephen F. Mitchell (2.00) and Kevin Mooney (2.00), Enfield; Jennifer Cassidy (2.79) and Kevin R. McKernan (2.79), Hartford; James McCavanagh (2.61); Ferguson R. Jansen, Jr. (2.11), Simsbury; Gary Pitcock (1.15), South Windsor; Brendan T. Flynn (1.19), Wethersfield; David Giordano (2.83) and John W. Lyons (2.83), West Hartford; Ricardo Quintero (1.30) and David Raney (1.30), Windsor. District staff present were Vicki L. Shotland, Executive Director; DJ Gonzalez, Operations Administrator; Nhan Vo-Le, Director of Fiscal and Administrative Service, LaShaunda Drake, Procurement & Contract Coordinator. (*The numbers represented in the parenthesis of this paragraph equate to the weighted vote for each Director in attendance.*)

The Chairman asked if there was any members of the public who wished to address the board. There were none. Mr. Mitchell then moved adoption of the June 25, 2020 regular meeting minutes. Mr. Flynn made a motion to accept the minutes which was seconded by Mr. Hayes and approved without modification by a vote of 28.20 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention.

Mr. Mitchell then asked that Ms. Vo-Le present the financial report. She gave a summary of the District's financial results in comparison to its budget and actuals for the Special Revenue Fund, General Fund, Spruce Street Parking Lot, and the Union Station Transportation Center as of June 30, 2020. The Special Revenue Fund has accumulated approximately a total of \$23.1 million in actual revenues, which is 13.0% or \$3.4 million lower than its budget. This occurred primarily due to a continuation of ridership reduction occurring in the ADA Program, lower claim settlements accounted in the Insurance Consortium, and a delay in the delivery of new buses. Of the \$23.1 million in actual revenues, approximately \$19.6 million and \$3.3 million are funded by CTDOT and FTA; respectively. For expenditures, the District has expended a total of \$23.1 million as follows:

transportation projects: \$20.8 million, program administration: \$1.6 million, and professional services: \$728,557. The General Fund's excess of revenues over expenses is slightly under its budget by \$7,306 primarily due to the impact of certain unpaid member town dues write-off; partially offset by lower administrative costs. Spruce Street Parking Lot yielded a favorable variance of \$12,305 in excess of revenues over expenses mainly due to slightly higher parking fee revenues, which is partially offset by higher parking lot management service than budgeted. Union Station ended with a strong financial result. It generated \$109,770 in excess of revenues over expenses primarily as a result of lower security costs, utilities, and real estate taxes. While the District had anticipated approximately a \$386,465 in excess of revenues over expenses, it yielded a higher excess amount by \$114,769 or 29.70%, which was attributed to the following: the General Fund, Spruce Street Parking Lot, and the Union Station Transportation Center. Mr. Mitchell then asked for acceptance of the financial report as presented. Mr. Lyons made a motion for acceptance of the financial report which was seconded by Mr. Quintero. The motion was passed unanimously 28.20 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention.

Mr. Mitchell provided an introduction to the next agenda item in regard to a request by staff to consolidate the public and private side financial reporting. Ms. Shotland expounded upon the request to consolidate both the Union Station Transportation Center Public and Private Cost Centers. She noted that the benefit in merging the two projects into one is that it will maximize efficiency throughout the accounting process including financial reporting and budget preparations. The 103 general ledger account numbers will be consolidated into approximately 60 accounts. Nearly a 40% reduction in this account category. She stated that Blum Shapiro was in agreement with this modification. Mr. Mitchell then asked for a vote on a resolution approving the consolidation for accounting purposes of the Union Station Transportation Center Public and Private cost centers into a single cost center. Mr. Flynn made a motion for acceptance of the resolution to consolidate the cost centers which was seconded by Mr. Pitcock. The motion was passed unanimously 28.20 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention.

Mr. Mitchell then asked Mr. Gonzalez to present the ADA report. He stated the following:

- (35) new buses were scheduled to arrive in mid-September, but now it appears that it will be in early October. The District staff is also working with the RMV to see how to expedite the registrations for the new vehicles.
- Completed an RFP process by choosing a provider to install real time cameras on each paratransit vehicle.
- An internal facility maintenance person was hired by First Transit to maintain both the inside and outside of 148 Roberts Street. This position will take care of cleaning the inside of the building offices and performing minor repairs when needed. They will also provide lawn service. Hiring this one individual will save substantial costs by eliminating the need for the current 3rd party contractors. Mr. Quintero asked if the person hired can handle all of the duties of the job, and Mr. Gonzalez acknowledged that they could. Mr. Hayes asked what tasks with the individual be responsible for. Mr. Gonzalez stated that it was landscaping and general janitorial. The District has procured equipment to assist with the required duties.

- COVID update: employees continue to be provided with PPE equipment, deep cleaning and sanitizing standards have been elevated to keep the staff, drivers and passengers safe. Passengers are even provided with masks when they board a vehicle without them. Finally, almost all buses have been outfitted with driver barriers. Mr. Quintero asked if there are passengers refusing to wear masks. Mr. Gonzalez said that there are some, but it is usually due to health related issues.
- Passenger trips are slowly rising and the counts are at approximately 50% of what they were before COVID, but significantly higher than what they were from February-July. Mr. Mitchell asked what the plan is to increase the single passenger trips. Mr. Gonzalez stated that this is occurring slowly and will continue as the passenger trips rise.
- The ADA staff currently has Trapeze COM set up in the test environment and are testing the functions of the program. The tentative completion date is in November 2020. This is a customer service program that will help record all types of customer communication, track and resolve feedback in an organized manner, flag concerns based on priority levels, generate reports on customer service data, and show the investigative steps made to resolve complaints.
- The District is anticipating rolling out the new Trapeze EZ Wallet software program to our passengers in the near future which will provide them with an electronic and contactless means to pay their fares.
- A GHTD/First Transit committee was formed to investigate the possibility of procuring electric low floor paratransit buses. Once all of the research is done, we will reach out to CTDOT and provide them with the findings and see if there is opportunity for a pilot program. Mr. Lyons asked what manufacturer(s) will be used for the electric buses. Mr. Gonzalez stated that there are two right now.

Mr. Mitchell asked for Mr. Gonzalez to present the Operations Report.

- Hours of operation in the Transportation Center have increased. The hours are now 5:30am to 10:00pm. As the schedules increase for rail and bus the staff will continue to monitor or modify those hours. The Great Hall and Union Place Transit Center still remain closed until further notice.
- An additional cleaner was added to the janitorial staff for deep cleaning and disinfecting the facility of all the high touch areas and bathrooms.
- Mr. Gonzalez will be the contact and project manager for the District for all operational issues once the expanded public bathroom project begins this month.
- Just selected a new vendor for snow removal this winter and have worked out some of the contract issues.

Mr. Mitchell then called upon Ms. Shotland to provide the report for Grants & Procurement. She stated that there are currently three major solicitations out to bid:

- IFB for the Roof Replacement/Renovation at Union Station (multiple roof sections)
- IFB for Roof Replacement Under the Tracks
- RFP for ADA Accessible Vehicles – New Freedom Program

She then stated that the District continues to work with M7 to roll out its pilot program for FTA's Integrated Mobility Innovation (IMI) Program. The service is expected to start this month and will be a 24/7 transportation

option for older adults and people with disabilities to fill gaps in service in the Greater Hartford region. The program has been named Encompass and is an on-demand transportation program that can be used by individuals anytime without restrictions. This program is perfect for seniors that are ages 60 and older that do not qualify for ADA Paratransit and for persons that live outside of the regular ADA Paratransit service area. This program would provide direct transportation to its passengers. The Encompass Program trips cost \$5 for the first 8 miles traveled. The trips are automatically charged to an account that is set up for the rider, eliminating any exchange of money. Trips past 8 miles are charged at a discounted rate. Mr. Hayes asked if M7 will be able to cover 24/7 service. Ms. Shotland said that they would. She next discussed that the District completed the Post-Project reporting for the TIGER Grant and submitted it to the FTA. She went on to talk about the Town of Enfield which is currently out to bid with an RFQ/P to hire a firm or firms for the environmental remediation and Hazardous Building Materials abatement, in connection with its planned acquisition and redevelopment of properties that will comprise the Thompsonville Multimodal Transit Center. The District is working with Enfield to make sure the proper steps are followed in the event that FTA dollars are used for any part of this project. She ended this part of the presentation by stating that the District's contractor installed a bus shelter on Asylum Avenue (at Asylum Place). A total of four shelters were installed in Hartford this year.

Mr. Mitchell then called upon Ms. Shotland to provide her Administrative report. She stated the following:

- Provided an update on 144 Roberts Street in regard to the PSA, the boundary line agreement, and the next phase which includes environmental testing. Mr. Pitcock wanted to know how large the parking area would be at 144 Roberts Street. Ms. Shotland stated that they anticipate fitting between 26-30 vehicles. Mr. Hayes wanted to know if it was a blighted property, and Ms. Shotland acknowledged that it was and the current structure would have to be removed.
- ADA Paratransit provider was selected and First Transit will continue to provide the service. The previous contract had been extended as the RFP process and selection was delayed due to COVID-19. The new contract is effective October 1, 2020.
- Reminded the Directors who had not signed their disclosure statements to check their emails and to please sign them electronically.
- Many leases with the District's tenants are still in either an abatement and/or a deferment stage. The Cares Act funding is assisting with reimbursing any losses in regard to the leaseholds and the Spruce Street Parking Lot.
- Audit process went smoothly due to the outstanding preparedness of the finance department.
- Experienced a major outage of the Passenger Information Display system at the station for several days.
- Funding for the town dial-a-ride programs was appropriated again this year and the funds will be allocated proportionately once each agreement is signed and returned to the District.

Mr. Mitchell then called upon Ms. Cassidy to provide the CROG Transportation Committee report. Issues on the agenda for August 17th included information pertaining to **CTfastrak** which received a Low or No Emissions grant (Low-No) for the purchase of three new electric buses to support the CTfastrak Bus Rapid Transit Service. The buses will be used for the CTfastrak autonomous vehicle pilot project, which has also received IMI funding related to the testing, precision, automated docking and platooning. The goal of this project is to eliminate

driver errors that result in wide platform gaps and other unsafe situations and also will reduce delays. The September 14th meeting included items related to; the preparation of the (FY 2021- FY 2024) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in conjunction with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). These draft documents will be available for a public comment period from September 11, 2020 to October 12, 2020. Also discussed was the "Community Connectivity Grant Program" (CCGP) which is an infrastructure improvement program that seeks to provide construction funding for local initiatives that will improve the safety and accessibility for bicyclists and pedestrians in urban, suburban and rural community centers. The primary goal of the program is to make conditions safer for people of all ages to walk, bike and take transit, thereby encouraging more people to use these healthy and environmentally sustainable modes of travel. Mr. Mitchell noted that he had worked on this project a while ago and was happy that it was moving forward.

Mr. Mitchell called for new business. He reminded the Directors that the next meeting would be held on November 19, 2020 and will be a "Go To Meeting." There being no further business brought before the Board, Ricardo Quintero moved that the meeting be adjourned. Upon seconding by David Raney the motion passed by a 28.20 yea, 0.00 nay, and 0.00 abstention. The Regular Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Vicki J. Stottland (Executive Director)
for James R. McCavanagh
Secretary