



REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
GREATER HARTFORD TRANSIT DISTRICT
Hartford, Connecticut
March 6, 2025

Stephen Mitchell, Chairman
Presiding.....

At 7:03 p.m., with 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 in the Conference Room of the District at One Union Place, Hartford, Connecticut. A remote option for attendance was also available.

The following Directors were present:

Veronica Rosario, East Hartford
Stephen Mitchell, Enfield
Kevin G. Mooney, Enfield
Nanci Fitzgerald, Farmington
James McCavanagh, Manchester
Paul McNamara, Manchester
Autumn Siegel, Hartford
Gary Pitcock, South Windsor
Alan Lubin, Vernon
John Lyons, West Hartford
David Giordano, West Hartford
Cindy Jacobs, Wethersfield
Ricardo Quintero, Windsor

The following staff were present:

Nhan Vo-Le, Chief Financial Officer
Mary Bujeaud, Deputy Executive Director
Margaret Banker, Director of ADA Paratransit Services
Miguel Lefebre, Manager of Fleets and Facilities
Douglas C. Holcomb, Executive Director

Members of the public present:

There were no members of the public present.

1. Public Forum

Chairman Mitchell asked if there were any comments or questions from the public.

There were no comments from the public or area organizations.

2. Consideration of Acceptance of the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2024

Chairman Mitchell asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the December 12, 2024 meeting which were transmitted to the Board in advance.

Director Quintero Moved to Accept the December 12, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes, which was seconded by Director Rosario and was unanimously approved without modification by a vote of 26.78 yea, 0.00 nay, and 0.00 abstention.

3. Financial Matters

The Chairman requested that Ms. Vo-Le provide the financial report.

A summary of the District's budgeted and actual results for the first seven months of fiscal year 2025 (July 2024 – January 2025) was presented. Ms. Vo-Le stated that at the end of January 2025, the District's Special Revenue Fund reported a total of nearly \$27.5ML in actual revenues, which is used for the spending of the District's Operating, Capital, and Administrative programs, that equates to the same amount (\$27.5 ML).

Approximately \$20.5ML or 75% of that total was funded by CTDOT grants, \$6.8ML by Federal Transit Administrative (FTA) grants, and others equated to \$157K. Comparing to the budget, actual revenues are higher than the adopted budget by approximately \$5.6ML or 25%. This increase is primarily a result of more vehicles delivered and accepted during the first seven months of the current fiscal year and insurance premiums that were paid in full at the beginning of each July.

The Special Revenue Fund is used to account for the proceeds of federal and state grants that are legally restricted to expenditures for specific purposes. At the close of January 2025, this fund reported no excess of actual revenues over expenses, showing no change from the adopted budget.

The General Fund is the chief operating fund of the District. At the end of January 2025, the General Fund ended with a strong financial performance. It has yielded an excess of actual revenues over expenses of \$365K which was \$78K higher than anticipated. This favorable outcome is primarily a result of an increase in investment income driven by higher interest rates than budgeted.

The District's Enterprise Fund includes Hartford Union Station Transportation Center and Spruce Street Parking Lot. For the first seven months of fiscal year 2025, the Enterprise Fund reported a total of \$860K in actual operating revenues, a slight increase of 3% compared to the budget. Rents are the major

component of this fund's operating revenues, accounting for 74% of actual operating revenues at the end of this period.

Parking Fees revenue makes up another 21% of actual operating revenues. On the expense side, the Enterprise Fund incurred \$777K in actual operating expenses, an increase of 8% or \$60K as compared to the adopted budget, and yielded \$82K in excess of actual revenues over expenses. Comparing to the budget, the Enterprise Fund's excess of revenue over expenses is lower than the adopted budget by \$84K. This occurs due to higher utilities, insurance, and real estate taxes; partially offset by increased parking fees revenue than anticipated.

At the end of January 31, 2025, the District spent a total of \$389K in capital improvements including roof replacement / repairs; underground piping relocation; Passenger Information Display System support and upgrade, administrative costs, and various other improvements and repairs. Comparing to the budget, the Enterprise Fund's Capital Improvement budget exceeded its actual by \$4.1ML or 91%. This outcome was primarily due to timing associated with two major capital projects: HVAC Replacement Equipment & Installation and Bus Bay Concrete Repairs/Replacement.

Overall, the District's actuals for all three funds equate to \$29.1ML in revenues and \$28.6ML in expenditures; yielding \$447K in excess of revenues over expenses or a decrease of \$6K over the adopted budget. The \$447K excess amount is attributed by the General Fund's positive result of \$365K and the increase to the Enterprise Fund of \$82K.

Director Quintero commended Ms. Vo-Le and her presentation and for her diligent work on financial matters. There was a brief discussion regarding federal grant funding and the impact of project delays.

The Chairman asked for a motion to accept the financial report as presented by Ms. Vo-Le.

Director Mooney Moved to Accept the Financial Report as Presented, which was seconded by Director Lyons and was unanimously approved without modification by a vote of 26.78 yea, 0.00 nay, and 0.00 abstention.

4. Committee/Staff Reports

The Chairman invited Margaret Banker, Director of ADA Paratransit Services to present the following items.

GHTD Link (microtransit) - The GHTD Link microtransit pilot service continues to increase ridership each month. In January GHTD Link transported 1,826 passengers. In February, ridership grew to serving over 100 people on two dates during the month with total ridership at 1,993.

Staff sponsored and tabled at the *East Windsor Panther Plunge* event which benefits the East Windsor Fuel Bank. The event took place on March 1st. GHTD Link is also having a booth at the North Central CT Chamber of Commerce Home and Product Show on April 5th and 6th at Enfield Square Mall. Mr. Holcomb noted that much of the growth in this service can be attributed to the work of Ms. Banker and her staff and all of the in-person events aimed at growing ridership.

Encompass – Ms. Banker explained that there is strong demand for Encompass service and ridership currently hovers around 3,500 trips monthly. The Encompass program continues to have daily trips

capped in order to preserve funding through June 2025. Proposed Bill 5479 *AAC Funding for the Encompass Transportation Program Serving the Elderly and Disabled Population* has been submitted for consideration and staff is working with Encompass partners to have Encompass funding included in the State's transportation budget. In support of this effort, staff sent out an email to all active (and pending) Encompass riders on February 18, 2025, providing an update about funding and the proposed bill. Information on how to reach out to legislators about supporting this bill was attached. M7 also sent out another email about this the following week. Staff have been hearing back from Encompass riders about the outreach efforts they have been making to keep the program running. District staff had a meeting with the *Community of Practice for Bridging Disability and Aging Networks* on March 4th regarding the program and funding.

Mr. Holcomb provided additional details on the agency's efforts to secure funding to continue this program including advocacy for the incorporation of the funding in the State's budget and the pursuit of Federal Section 5310 funding.

ADA Paratransit – GHTD's ADA Paratransit staff had a training on the new recorder used to listen to dispatch and call center calls in February. Our contractor, Transdev, will hold an Employee Appreciation Day event on 3/7/2025 in which District staff will attend and help serve food.

An ADA Paratransit Rider Survey has been created and will be distributed on the vehicles and online in March. District staff have been organizing a Transit Day Event in April as well as planning a 35th anniversary of the ADA in the Union Station Great Hall in July. Staff have also been busy attending various site visits and school transition fairs in order to educate the public about the various transportation programs available through the District. Ridership in the ADA program continues to hover around 40,000 door-to-door trips each month.

At this point in the meeting the Chairman asked Mr. Holcomb to provide an overview of Staff's recommendation to extend the District's contract with Transdev for an additional nine months. Holcomb noted that staff is seeking authorization to extend the contract for ADA paratransit operations and maintenance for an additional nine months ending June 30, 2026. He noted that a sound cost proposal had been provided to the District by the contractor. Additionally, Holcomb detailed the rationale for the extension including the current superb quality of the operations, the opportunity to consider recent proposals for additional staffing, the provision of additional time to thoughtfully consider proposals, and the opportunity to consider the incorporation of other services into the contract.

The proposed increases in cost include a 7.5% increase in the monthly (management) fee, a 5.3 percent increase on the hourly cost of operations, and a 5.0% increase in the hourly cost of non-preventative maintenance. Director Jacobs asked why staff considered this to be a reasonable proposal. Holcomb noted that the price proposal incorporates additional cost associated with several amendments to the original contract which were driven by the District's COVID response. He also noted that in discussion with Transdev, there had been substantial increases in the cost associated with employee benefits such as healthcare. Ms. Banker also noted that there were additional staff added in association with 2024 expansions of CTTransit service and the District's efforts to expand ADA service accordingly.

The Chairman asked for a motion to To Authorize Staff to Negotiate an Extension to the Current ADA Paratransit Contract from October 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 as presented and subject to review by CTDOT.

Director Mooney Moved To Authorize Staff to Negotiate an Extension to the Current ADA Paratransit Contract from October 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 as presented and subject to review by CTDOT, which was seconded by Director Fitzgerald.

Discussion – A brief discussion followed during which members of the Board recommended adding to the proposed contract extension, the ability to extend the agreement for an additional one (1) year through June 2027. Accordingly, A friendly amendment was offered by Director Mooney to Authorize Staff to Negotiate an Extension to the Current ADA Paratransit Contract from October 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 with one (1) additional option year, subject to review by CTDOT.

The Chairman asked for a second which was provided by Director Fitzgerald. The amended motion was unanimously approved of 26.78 yea, 0.00 nay, and 0.00 abstention.

The Chairman then invited Mary Bujeaud to present the Administrative and Operations Report.

Ms. Bujeaud began with an overview of the many projects in various stages of planning, design, bidding and construction now underway at the District.

Planning and Compliance - Staff recently updated the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program Plan, the Spill Control and Countermeasure Plan (SPCC) for Roberts Street, and the CTDOT Asset Inventory Database for rolling stock and support vehicles. Work is underway to update the Transit Asset Management Plan (TAM), Enhanced Documentation required by FTA, the Title VI Plan, and the 3-year DBE Goal and Methodology.

Procurement - The District is preparing to go out to bid in March for the Union Station Roof Drain Project. Historical approvals have been obtained and the staff is working with the Architectural and Engineering firm to finalize bid documents.

Roberts Street Construction Mediation Status - Ms. Bujeaud noted the following: Mediation is complete, a settlement Agreement was reached and the terms of settlement has been executed, the reimbursement to GHTD will be \$837,500, FTA Concurrence was received on February 10th. A full agreement prepared by GHTD counsel is under review by all parties. Staff is working with FTA Region 1 regarding disposition of funding.

The Roberts Street Parking Lot Expansion Project IFB will go out in March with bids due in April. The award should be made in April with construction commencing in Spring 2025.

Staff continues to work on procurements for Architectural and Engineering Services (Task Based Contract) and other smaller projects at both Union Station and Roberts Street.

Staff is working on a contract for a firm for Marketing and Community Engagement Services and reviewing proposals for a Signage Plan for Union Station.

Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) – Ms. Bujeaud briefly discussed the District's work overseeing the State's Rural Transit Assistance Program noting that the program is Funded through CTDOT (Section

5311 Grant Funding) and offers ongoing training, a spring transit training conference and planning for the statewide Transit Rodeo.

Capitol Region Council of Governments – Technical Advisory Committee Update

The Chairman then offered the floor to Director McNamara for a report on the activities of the CRCOG Transportation Technical Advisory Committee.

January 21, 2025:

Transportation Safety Plan Survey—the Capitol Region Transportation Safety Action Plan Vision Zero Survey was launched, which will help to identify safety issues in the region. Responses were accepted through mid-February.

February 24, 2025:

CTDOT Active Transportation Plan: CTDOT is developing a statewide Active Transportation Plan to guide future improvements on state routes. The survey is out and CTDOT would like to hear from municipalities about their priorities at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HPWFDWB>

Community Connectivity Grant Program— Applications are now being accepted for the Community Connectivity Grant Program. These funds can be used for construction only for bicycle and pedestrian projects. \$12 million is available for projects ranging from \$100,000 to \$800,000. Applications are due by May 21.

5. Report from the Executive Director

The Chairman then asked for an update from the Executive Director.

Tree Project – Mr. Holcomb briefly explained progress on the project to replace fifteen trees on the Union Station campus along with tree surrounds. He noted that bids had been received, a vendor had been selected, that the project of approximately \$47,000 to be funded through the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and is expected to complete by the end of April 2025.

Signage and Wayfinding – Mr. Holcomb also noted that the project for the signage and wayfinding at Union Station is underway with two bids received and proposal evaluations underway. He noted that the District expects this project to complete in calendar year 2025.

Marketing and Communications – A brief overview of the District’s upcoming marketing and communication project was provided noting the overall goals of the effort and the initial phase of preparing a refresh and unification of the District’s brand and brand treatments. It was noted that the District is currently entering into a contract with the firm Cashmankatz to partner on this work and that the funding will be derived from a number of sources at the agency depending on the tasks associated with the work.

Union Station – Mr. Holcomb noted that the Union Station tenant space is now one hundred percent occupied with most leases running through 2026.

6. Report from the Chairman

The Chairman took this opportunity to inform the Board of his intention to step down from the Chairman position, which he has held for many years. He noted that he would remain on the Board for an

undetermined time to ensure a proper and smooth transition and assist in the identification of a replacement for his position from Enfield. Since the Chairman's departure will be in officer election mid-term, there was a brief discussion of the appointment of officers to take place at the May annual meeting. Many members of the Board noted their deep appreciation for Mr. Mitchell's important contributions to the Board's work over many years.

The Chairman then asked Mr. Holcomb to provide an overview of the impact of current changes to federal funding and regulations. Mr. Holcomb provided details on the District's sources of funding noting the distinctions between programs operated with state funding and federal funding. He also provided an explanation regarding which of the District's program were funded with federal formula funding vs. discretionary funds. He noted that while there does not appear to be an eminent threat to the District's programs, there is great uncertainty regarding the future of federal funding and a deep level of concern regarding the difficulty in the interpretation of the impact of the rapid release of Executive Orders.

Mr. Holcomb also noted that there appears to be an effort to review any programs associated with DEI, gender identity, the Green New Deal, and sanctuary cities. There was a brief discussion regarding the impact on the community of persons with disabilities with several members expressing concern that the changes at the federal level could have an impact on the District's riders. Mr. Holcomb noted that the staff would watch carefully for any indication of this.

7. Any Other Business Properly Brought Before the Board

The Chairman asked if there was any other business to be brought before the Board. There was none.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made for adjournment by Director McNamara, seconded by Director Jacobs and was unanimously approved. The time was 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul McNamara", is written over a horizontal line.

Paul McNamara

Secretary

May 15, 2025

Accepted May 15, 2025