

Minutes of the June 10, 2020
Southeast Vermont Transit Board of Directors Meeting
Via Video Meeting Only

President Chip Stearns called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Those in attendance and constituting a quorum were as follows:

Board Members: Chip Stearns, Joel Bluming, Scott Tucker, Randy Capitani, Seth Boyd, Wendy Harrison, Jamie Storrs, and Matt Mann who arrived late

Invited Guest: None

Members of the Public: None

Staff Present: Randy Schoonmaker, Rebecca Gagnon, Christine Howe and Keith Johnson

Public Input: None

Review of Minutes: Reviewed with no comments.

Amend Agenda: None

Old Business

Coronavirus Update: staff is working on their cleaning plan, and reviewing new updates that come out on a regular basis. Rebecca indicated that ridership has held steady on the In-Town Springfield Route #1. We decided to open that route to its original service levels which was to restore afternoon service which will help allow for social distancing. Ridership on this route has been high, and adding hours will allow riders to spread their rides over a longer period thus minimizing cramped busses.

Ridership: Randy indicated that ridership has declined a bit this past week but is still fairly flat. There was a small spike in E&D last week, but we cannot be sure if this is an upward trend or not. Ridership is off 60% across the state, and some demand response service is off by 90%.

Financial Overview: The executive summary was reviewed by the Board. Randy C asked if we would truly realize a profit this year. Chip indicated that we will still have a loss this year and that the CARES money shown is only a pass through which is distorting the surplus amount. Keith said that the liability has not yet been booked and is not shown on the balance sheet. Randy C asked what would happen if ridership does not come back if we in jeopardy. Randy S. said the state is pressuring no one for ridership during this time and that there is no relationship between rides and funding, as there typically is. It is expected that funding will continue as usual this year.

Partner Updates: None

Fundraising update: None

Re-Branding: Randy said we are opening bids on Tuesday for the spotting on eight of our large busses. John is finalizing spotting our new busses for this year's capital grant and should be finished by July 1st. Randy is putting an RFP out to ad agencies for our media package and launch. Rebecca is working on MOOver uniforms for Current staff. Wendy wanted to make sure Swiftly was part of that media plan as well.

NEMT: DVHA bids are due June 19th. VPTA is ready and will submit their bid next week. VPTA has done well in preparing the bid. The House and Senate has updated a bill saying the contract has to go through the Joint Fiscal Committee for approval and that DVHA has to ensure whomever wins the award must make sure there is coordinated service between Medicaid and E&D; that the state's existing transit providers are not adversely impacted financially; and that there is no degradation to service of eligible individuals. These requirements may help VPTA maintain the contract. The revised bill is on the Governor's desk. If VPTA wins the Medicaid bid, SEVT's only remaining hurdle to re-establish Medicaid service will be an agreement among the VPTA members on how to share income equally.

Route 30 Study Update: At the next meeting Randy and Tim will have updates.

Garage addition: Randy reviewed the new addition plans. Some new items will be a waste oil furnace, a commercial washer and dryer, and pavement and landscaping on the east end. Since we will not be able to draw down all of the remaining earmark, Tim has allowed us to use the left over funds for possibly admin office renovations, upgraded lighting, a parts room upgrade, and other items. There is no deadline for this funding which allows us time to research the additional items. Our engineer has been in touch with the town's planning and zoning office, Act 250, and ANR and there are no additional changes needed to any existing permits. Chip suggested that staff visit the select board updating them on the project. Wendy said especially if there is new sign going up.

New Business: None

Company Updates: Christine said that school routes are still a go for the fall, and she is working on new COVID requirements especially on the Brattleboro route which serves many students. Rebecca stated that most of her staff is off FMLA, and that dispatch is back full-time next week. The accounting clerk will be back in the office four days a week for the next few weeks then full time in the office just in time for the audit prep. The volunteer pool is still a bit low due to doctor suggestions. Keith said we have MOOver two staff still out on FMLA. If there is another wave of COVID these staff will not be able to utilize FMLA until a year from their return date.

Board Member Comments: Randy C. said school districts are working on transportation and recommended we keep it on our radar. Christine said she is very much aware and is preparing on how to deal with social distancing on the busses and school requirements. Public transit and school transportation have different requirements. Matt wanted to know if we have a system set up for any denied rides due to social distancing issues, and Randy said we will have several busses on these routes if needed initially to prevent any crowding issues. Matt asked about school contracts on as a future agenda item. Randy explained that we have no school contracts that their annual donation is requested and put into the school budget as a line item. Randy C said we may have opportunities this year to increase usage.

Joel reminded everyone that we should be aware and cautions about being prepared for alternative plans in response to the Governor's plans to re-open.

Seth asked what the board can do to help the staff. Randy said we are doing well, coming back or mostly all back, and that policies have been in place for months now. We have all supplies needed to clean. We have reached a level of status quo for the last two months. Seth agreed with Joel that we need to remain diligent. Scott echoed both Joel and Seth's statements, and praised the staff's high energy level. He also said we need to watch the state funds, as they are asking the towns to pay on time but are implying there will be a deficit.

Future Agenda Items: No new items

Adjourn: 6:00 pm