

Minutes of the October 14, 2020 Southeast Vermont Transit Board of Directors
Via Video

President Chip Stearns called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm. Those in attendance and constituting a quorum were as follows:

Board Members: Chip Stearns, Joel Bluming, Seth Boyd arrived 5:14, Wendy Harrison, Randy Capitani, and Matt Mann

Invited Guest: Tim Bradshaw

Members of the Public: None

Staff Present: Randy Schoonmaker, Christine Howe and Keith Johnson

Public Input: None

Review of Minutes: Review of October 14th meeting, no comments

Amend Agenda: Add Working Communities Project under new Business

Executive Session: None

Old Business:

Coronavirus update: We have been asking for guidance on using heat in the buses this winter from the VDH. They recommend fresh air circulation, but the heat systems use recirculated air. Heather has researched air purification systems to add to the buses for cleaning the recirculated air. Randy discussed the technology. Matt asked Tim what other transit companies in the nation are using, since it seems costly to put these in all buses. Tim explained this would be secondary to regular cleaning and disinfection. There are other options the state is looking into, as this technology is new and there is limited information on them. Wendy commented that this would be good for the long term, as another component for health and safety to the buses.

Ridership: Ridership remains flat on fixed route. We will see a spike in E & D this week, but time will tell if it is a one-day spike or if it begins to trend upwards. The executive summary covers more on ridership numbers and values. Wendy asked if the rest of the state is running fare free. Tim explained that it is not a state mandate, but collectively that is what is happening with all the transit operators as a way to stay safe for riders and drivers.

Financial Overview: The executive summary of the financials was reported. Discussion ensued surrounding fare free and remaining fare free. Tim reported that MTA (New York) stated they may have to cut service to 50% if they did not receive more money from the Federal Government.

Partner Updates:

Mount Snow: Continuing to work on winter operations. There has been no negative public response for our service cuts this winter. Seth asked if condos found third party companies to cover shuttle service. Randy said we are in touch and if they do find third party shuttles we would work with them to allow space in the drop zone.

Stratton: Continue to speak with Seth and if/when Stratton is ready, we are ready.

Okemo: Heard back from Okemo for the annual winter season contract.

Fundraising: Planet Fitness in Brattleboro will renew their message on the rear of the Brattleboro buses, and the rear and one side of the Wilmington buses have been sold. Sponsorships have fallen short due to COVID.

Re-Branding: Randy reviewed the rebranding grant and budget information. We are very deep into the program with the ad agency, with the web site, brochure etc. We did a photo shoot in Rockingham last week; we will do a winter photo shoot in Wilmington. FourNine is a good agency to work with. We feel we will come in on budget, even though there are variances within the original budget.

NEMT: The Medicaid Re-entry plan was discussed. Randy showed an updated version from last meeting, and explained it is updated weekly within the company. We have met with GMCN and are meeting with Marble Valley next week. We are reviewing their financials and then we will draft a Medicaid budget. We need to update the phone service and procure a new phone system in Rockingham to meet the Medicaid guidelines. We are going to revamp the office space in Rockingham to accommodate dispatch. Matt asked how the transition would happen. When the time comes, we would pick a hard date, on Sunday you would be a Medicaid client of GMCN and on Monday you would be a Medicaid client of SEVT. We will work closely with riders, vehicles, drivers, and volunteers from the other providers.

Rockingham Addition: We had one change order, and the updated budget is right on target. We may not spend the whole contingency amount which will free up funds for the bus wash. We signed the bus wash contract for a January install. We did not free up enough money for the bus drying system, so it will have to wait until another capital year. Pictures of the progress of the addition were shown. Tim asked if we wanted to have the bus dryer considered for the midyear capital, but that we would have to have the 20% match. Randy will let Tim know if we want to consider it.

Route 30 Study: There is no update

Nominating Committee Update: Wendy explained that we had a meeting and discussed how to proceed with the new guidelines. We are going to send the guidelines to Tim for his information. We expect the nominee to attend the next meeting, and then either be approved at the meeting or at least be aware of what the expectations are. We discussed the diversity or what we would like to see on the board. There was a discussion about having specific riders or community members invited to the board meetings for input. Matt and Wendy were to talk to the potential candidate and then invite him/her to the next board meeting.

New Business:

Working Community Challenge: Randy gave an overview of the WCC grant he was asked to be a part of, regarding the mission of the group to attract diverse community members.

Company Updates: Randy showed pictures and discussed the projects that happened in summer and fall. The bus wash bay concrete in Wilmington was cut to accommodate the bigger buses without any tire concerns. The bus shelters were all cleaned, painted, and given some attention. Christine did not have any updates. Keith explained that unemployment charges are starting to hit a little, but that it will not be a 100% reimbursement since COVID funding will pick up 50%. The LOC is still at zero. The diesel fuel reimbursement was updated and still ongoing due to the IRS back log. There is about \$27,000 outstanding due to SEVT.

Board Member Comments Wendy commented we are doing a great job, and things are going well.

Future Agenda Items: The Nominating Committee may have a candidate at the next meeting. Chip asked Randy if there would be a more updated budget for the current year, maybe or maybe not showing Medicaid. Randy would like to show a standalone Medicaid budget first, which is amendable to the board. Matt asked if we were still waiting on the other transit providers to sign the agreement. Randy explained that has been completed. DVHA has not issued a contract yet, and hopefully it will be negotiated in November.

Adjourn: Motion 3: Randy C motioned to adjourn, Wendy seconded; adjourned at 6:23 pm.