

Draft Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Southeast Vermont Transit Board of Directors
Via Video
April 18, 2023

Seth Boyd, called the meeting to order at 10:31 am. Those in attendance and constituting a quorum were as follows:

Board Members:

Seth Boyd
Jason Rasmussen
Randy Capitani
Sue Fillion
Dan Thoemke
Chris Company

Members of the Public: None

Staff Present:

Randy Schoonmaker, CEO SEVT
Keith Johnson, Finance Manager, SEVT
Christine Howe, General Manager, SEVT

Invited Guests:

Ross MacDonald, VTrans

Public Input: None

Amendments to the Agenda: None

Review March 21, 2023, Minutes: Amend to note that Randy C was in attendance where board members are listed.

Review April 13, 2023, Finance Committee Executive Summary and Ridership: Seth noted that the finance meeting was a little lengthy as there was some good discussion on budgets for the upcoming grant. Randy S reviewed the town contributions that were brought up at the finance meeting per Sue's request. It was explained how these can be time consuming, however that there should be an effort to increase these requests, perhaps a few towns each year. Seth asked about the amount received from WSSU. It was explained how that amount is broken out to credit Whitingham and Wilmington towns. Jason asked how the level of contributions were set. Randy S. explained most of these contributions were inherited from when these were Connecticut River Transit. Seth asked when they were visited for increases. Randy S explained it has not because it is so different for all the towns processes. Chris asked what the general procedure statewide for these forms of funding requests. Ross explained the policy at VTrans is to have the providers come up with twenty percent of local match for their budgets. That is a policy, it is not required, but a goal that is often not met. Ross noted many of the providers will take a section of towns to right size the contribution levels. Christine explained that all the towns do get a letter that explains the number of rides provided and the cost when we request the contribution. Randy C suggested to work on the towns that are the lowest contribution based on what SEVT provides. Sue thanks us for showing this, and understands Brattleboro needs to increase as well, but it is nice to see other towns be approached as well.

Review, edit, and approve FY24 Grant Operating and Capital Budgets: Randy S. presented the Grant Budget. He explained this is a grant budget to work through the grant process. The grant awards come through then we rework the budget and generally represent in August or September

for final budget approval from the board. Again, this is an “ask” budget, it includes two new routes, Route 30 service and Brattleboro Microtransit evening route, as well as a new Okemo route and a new Stratton route. Randy C commended VTTrans for always doing all they can, and there is mid year adjustments. We are showing the budget for this fiscal year, 2023, compared to the grant budget for fiscal year 24 side by side. Resorts are increased income by ten percent, and the projected Stratton and Okemo routes. Medicaid is budgeted as expenses covered by the income, so essentially a wash. The CMAQ line includes the current running CMAQ routes as well as new route asks. We are looking to increase fundraising income, however with the start up costs not much net income the first year.

In budgeting in expenses, the wage increase is reflected here from the May adjustment. There will be no cost-of-living adjustment for July for the staff. Big expenses are bus parts and bus repairs, due to the aging fleet with sixty-three vehicles. Fuel is budgeted at five dollars a gallon for diesel, and close to four dollars a gallon for gasoline. Randy S mentioned we will try to go out for a fuel future and try to stabilize the costs. Health insurance costs are budgeted at a seven percent increase in January. The mortgage principal and interest is down to sixty nine thousand versus one hundred sixteen thousand due to paying down a large amount of debt.

The capital match cost is very high in this budget because we have five vehicles that will probably not be delivered this year so they will carry over into next fiscal year and thus the additional match.

This is the same budget that was presented at the finance meeting. **Motion 1:** Randy C motion to accept the grant budget as it has been presented, Chris Campany second. **Motion Passed 6-0**

The capital budget, both vehicle and non vehicle, will also need approval. Randy S. presented the vehicle capital. It was explained we are seeking some used bus capital since new buses are so far out for delivery. All the same paperwork is required for the used vehicle purchases as far as federal guidelines is concerned. Ross appreciates SEVT looking into this as an option. Local portion of the vehicle capital match for fiscal year twenty four will be approximately eighty five thousand.

Non vehicle capital request was presented. Included in the non vehicle requests are a sign project for virtually every stop we have to be fit with post, MOOver sign, and schedule. There is also funds for bike racks to accommodate fat tire and electric bikes, some permit requirements for Wilmington Stormwater permit. The second phase of the Brattleboro site study and a possible study on hydrogen fuel as an alternative to electric is also listed. Discussion ensued surrounding the hydrogen study benefiting the whole state transit providers. **Motion 2: Randy C motioned** to approve the non vehicle capital grant budget as presented. Jason seconded the motion. **Motion passed 6-0**

SEVT Financial Plan: Randy S. presented the internal financial review that has been reviewed by VTTrans. Seth suggested the board should read through and review the internal financial review. Seth gave some background on why we did an internal review, after trying twice going out for a third party contractor. Randy C agreed that with the detail of the plan, it should be reviewed prior to the May meeting to discuss it then.

Christine let the board members know that since the wage increases were announced the drivers made sure to pass the appreciation along and wanted us to let the board know how much they recognize the effort.

Executive Session if Necessary: None

Motion to adjourn by Sue motioned seconded by Chris, adjourned 11:32am.

Submitted by: Christine Howe, General Manager