

Draft Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Southeast Vermont Transit Board of Directors
Via Video
September 19, 2023 10:30 am

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

Members of the Public: None

Staff Present:

Randy Schoonmaker, CEO SEVT
Keith Johnson, Finance Manager, SEVT

Invited Guests:

Ross MacDonald

Amendments to the Agenda: None

Review July 18, 2023 Minutes: Accepted with no changes

Review September 14, 2023 Finance Committee Executive Summary and Ridership.

Ridership Review: Randy C said we are in pretty good shape with prepaids coming in and thanked Ross. Keith stated we are seeing benefits from paying down the long-term debt, although it will be long term positive effects.

Randy S reviewed ridership and explained that Rockingham fixed routes are increased. The seventies routes are picking up, and the Springfield route is very up and down regularly. Demand Response routes are up a little over a year ago, and the volunteers are down, which explains the increase in van rides. We do have fewer volunteers. Randy S clarified some Medicaid procedures for transportation to Randy C. Jason asked if we are denying rides due to being down to volunteers. Randy S explained we very rarely denied rides. Randy C asked if the push for recruiting volunteers generated any volunteers. Randy S said it only brought in two volunteers. There have been more difficult riders in cars which hinders our ability to recruit. Randy C offered help with ways to recruit volunteers, which was welcomed. Jason asked the status of why Wilmington rides are down. Randy S said it is just soft and not sure there is one thing we can point to, but it has been a cool damp summer. Our school-based routes should pick up a little since this is just beginning of September. Overall SEVT is 2% behind a year ago.

Randy S presented the data from the White Line O & D survey showing that Great River Terrace, Hannaford and Brattleboro Bowl are among the highest locations. This shows it is related to the hotel motel program on Putney Rd.

The budget versus actual was presented for the summary of last fiscal year. This includes audit edits thus far. This does not show the final Medicaid income true up and will be several weeks before we see those numbers. Some savings in expenses equated to less grant income as we bill back at the end of the year. The year end at this time is showing a one hundred forty-seven thousand two hundred nineteen surplus, before the VPTA Medicaid adjustment.

Affidavit of Workers Compensation Approval: Keith explained the new company requires this form to be completed to exclude board members from workers compensation coverage, since they are not compensated as employees. The Board does have other coverage, as do volunteer drivers to safeguard the company and board. This consents to exempt the board members from the workers' compensation coverage. **Motion 1: Randy C. motioned to sign and accepted this affidavit as presented, seconded from Sue, motion passed 5-0.** Keith will contact board members to complete signatures.

Board of Director Training and Survey: Randy S. presented a self-assessment survey for the board members. Randy would like to send this to all board members for them to fill out and return as part of some more extensive board training. Board members were supportive of the idea. Randy S will send this out and will put some small amount of board training in each future board meeting until it is completed.

Mount Snow Drop Zone: Randy S presented the Mount Snow Drop Zone Narrative. Dan explained that since he arrived at Mount Snow he was tasked with solutions for parking and the drop zone. The intent is for a faster drop off for the Mount Snow guests. Dan and Randy S continued the discussion of what is going to happen, and paving has begun. The home owner associations were sent this information just recently. This plan is something that was in place about twenty years ago, and knowledge from that has led the us to pursue a gate to keep cars out of the bus lanes. A budget was presented for the cost of the gate and will be included in the revised budget in October. The MOOver wants the gate, and Mount Snow is less excited about the gate. Seth asked if there is an option of people manning the traffic pattern. Randy S explained that there will be signs, and we are not expecting Mount Snow to offer attendants to help with traffic control. Dan explained there will be road paint, and jersey barriers to delineate the areas. Randy C asked about the cost, since it is unbudgeted. Randy C was aware of the previous flow twenty years ago, and feels the gate is very imperative to keep cars out of the bus zone. Randy C offered some concerns to Dan as a customer of Mount Snow that there is now more vehicles to walk thru to access the base. Sue asked why Mount Snow is not paying for these changes since this is coming from Mount Snow. Dan explained that Mount Snow was not planning on some of the things that were requested from the MOOver. Sue asked where cuts are coming from to accommodate the cost. Randy S explained it is to be determined and will be presented at the October meeting.

VTrans August 8th notes: Randy reviewed the letter from Ross from the visit with Sen. Harrison, including the comments and suggestions from SEVT. Ross shared the comments with Wendy and has not heard anything back from Wendy. Ross noted the new signs and information that were apparent. Christine is running the photo shoot for the How to Ride the Bus video which would be one of the last items to accomplish from Wendys suggestions. Jason asked for more information about the NECCA stop. Sue commented that they feel that the stop is a good location for a shelter, and there should be a conversation regarding the ownership of the driveway for the church. Jason asked about the 802 Credit Union shelter removal. Randy S explained we still serve them as request, but we pull out blind. Jason asked about the wording "bus stop" on the MOOver signs, and it was said that no one has brought that feedback to MOOver. Sue clarified that the bus stop language is not from Sen. Harrison but from a new rider. Randy C said we are never going to have a perfect answer for everything. Ross really raved about the new signs and schedules along the routes. Ross has been asked to look at all the By Laws of all the transit providers and bring back to Michelle Boomhower for review on whose in compliance. The big issue with Sen Harrison is the towns can appoint a member, but SEVT does not seat the candidate until approved by SEVT's board. Ross is very aware of this board and how active and responsive the board is. Ross is thankful for that. Seth explained the challenges of trying to find board members. There were several months spent on board members. Seth is concerned that in the long run this law is not going to produce the boards that it is intended to. Ross agreed with Seth, that it takes a long time that is willing able and with a good skill set to serve on a board. Randy S said that VPTA was concerned with the language in the

presented legislation and are going to work on language to challenge the proposed language. That law is older when the transit providers served a handful of towns each. Randy S said now there are providers with thirty-four or more towns, which causes a challenge for seating board members from each town. Jason said he would be okay with opening the by-laws and revisiting this. Randy C expressed concern about revisiting the bylaws again as he was part of that recently. Randy C asked Ross if Wendy asked any questions regarding Route 30 funding, as that is also part of Windham County. Ross explained it did come up with Sen. Harrison, and we discussed the most recent feasibility study not showing how it is worth a try on Route 30. Ross explained the gaps were discussed and how to approach all these gaps. Seth explained that Sen Harrison offered to help with funding and offered to come to the October board meeting. Ross also felt if Sen Harrison saw the work SEVT board is doing she would appreciate it.

Letter from Brattleboro Select Board: Randy S presented the letter we received from the Town of Brattleboro. The letter requests service directly to the Chalet instead of riders meeting the Red line for fixed routes service, and have door to door service for any Medicaid rides. Randy S made a handout specifically for these riders with explanations on how to travel to and from Walmart and other main destinations. Randy S felt we had answered the questions, but then received this letter which seems to show they were not happy with the information provided. Randy S has not been able to meet with them as the director is out of town and will meet once available. Randy S explained that there is very light ridership based on the surveys and data we have. The concern is the Brattleboro fixed route is very tight and nested together. The Red line is so tight there is no wiggle room, and that line does run late already. Randy S presented the handout that was reviewed with the Brattleboro Town Manager, and Sue attended that meeting as well. The cost of Brattleboro service is two million dollars and twenty-one thousand hours of service. This constitutes twenty five percent of SEVT's full budget and contributes the same fifty thousand dollars as it has for many years. Sue explained the Chalet is a housing unit and there may be more development on that parcel in the future. Sue said if Brattleboro is served this much, then yes ask for more of a contribution. Randy S thanked Sue for her input and help with Brattleboro. Randy C commented that we are going to embark on, hopefully, a facility in Brattleboro.

Executive Session if Necessary: None

Motion to adjourn by Randy C motioned seconded Jason by adjourned at 11:54.

Submitted by: Christine Howe, General Manager