



REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
GREATER HARTFORD TRANSIT DISTRICT  
Hartford Connecticut  
November 19, 2020

Stephen F. Mitchell, Chairman  
Presiding.....

At 7:06 p.m., 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 remotely by way of a "Go-To-Meeting." The following Directors were present: Marilyn Pet (2.30), East Hartford; Gilbert Hayes (1.0), East Windsor; Stephen F. Mitchell (2.00) and Kevin Mooney (2.00), Enfield; Laurel Grow, (1.14), Farmington; Mark Lockwood (1.01), Granby; Jennifer Cassidy (2.79) and Kevin R. McKernan (2.79), Hartford; James McCavanagh (2.61), Manchester; Ken Goldberg (1.77), Rocky Hill; Ferguson R. Jansen, Jr. (2.11), Simsbury; Gary Pitcock (1.15), South Windsor; Mary A. Oliver (1.31), Vernon; Brendan T. Flynn (1.19), Wethersfield; David Giordano (2.83), West Hartford; Ricardo Quintero (1.30) and David Raney (1.30), Windsor. District staff present were Vicki L. Shotland, Executive Director; DJ Gonzalez, Operations Administrator; Nhan Vo-Le, Director of Fiscal and Administrative Service, LaShaunda Drake, Procurement and Contract Coordinator. Attendees also included; Leslie Zoll and Grace Musitwa representing BlumShapiro, the District's auditors. *(The numbers represented in the parenthesis of this paragraph equate to the weighted vote for each Director in attendance.)*

Mr. Mitchell asked if there were any members of the public who wished to address the Board. There were none. Mr. Quintero then moved adoption of the September 17, 2020 meeting minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Mooney and approved without modification by a vote of 30.60 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention. Mr. Mitchell next presented the proposed Calendar Year 2021 meeting dates, noting in particular the Annual Meeting that is scheduled for May 20, 2021 and the next Regular Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Thursday, December 17, 2020, and again the meeting will be held virtually.

Mr. Hayes then moved adoption of the 2021 Calendar, which was seconded by Ms. Pet. Mr. Mitchell called for any further discussion and it was pointed out that the year was incorrectly stated on the calendar. Mr. Mitchell amended the motion for acceptance by the board noting again that the year is 2021 vs. 2020. Mr. Hayes moved acceptance of the amended motion with a second by Ms. Pet. The amended motion was then passed unanimously by a vote of 36.30 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention.

Mr. Mitchell next asked Ms. Shotland to discuss changes to the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). She reminded the Directors that in October 2019, the FTA established a new requirement that all transit agencies must develop and have a Board approved PTASP by July 19, 2020, subsequently this deadline was extended to 12/31/20. The District's Board did approve the initial plan at the 2020 Annual Board meeting, however a small number of subsequent revisions have been made. The plan now includes more specificity with regard to the handling and storage of safety reports and oversight. On an annual basis the Board will be asked to approve the PTASP whether there are changes or not to the plan. Ms. Oliver moved acceptance of the revisions to the PTASP which was seconded by Mr. Flynn and approved unanimously by a vote of 36.30 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention.

The Chairman then yielded the floor to Ms. Zoll to provide a presentation on the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, the State Single Audit Report, and the Federal Single Audit Report. She stated that the audit is complete and awaiting final approval from the Board of Directors at this Regular Meeting, thereafter, Blum Shapiro will be able to issue the financial statements. She said that they will be issuing an unmodified and clean opinion on the financial reports, and there were no material weaknesses in the internal control over financial reporting. The unmodified (clean) opinion also applied to the Federal Single Audit on compliance with regard to federal grant requirements and to the State Single Audit in regard to state grant requirements. The Chairman asked if there were any other questions or comments from the Board regarding the presentation. There were none and Ms. Oliver moved that the FY 2020 audit reports prepared by BlumShapiro are hereby accepted, subject to revisions necessary to reflect changes made by the Board, if any, to the revised FY 2020 annual budget presented to this meeting in connection with the revised budget's adoption, such action is scheduled to occur at the Board's December meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Quintero and accepted unanimously by a vote of 36.30 yea, 0.00 nay, and 0.00 abstention.

Mr. Mitchell then asked that Ms. Vo-Le provide the financial report. Ms. Vo-Le provided a summary of the District's budget and actual results as of August 31, 2020. The Special Revenue Fund has accumulated approximately \$3.7 million in actual revenues, which is \$319,984 lower than initially budgeted. This occurred primarily due to lower activities during the first two months of this new fiscal year (FY 2021) in association with the following capital projects: vehicle purchase, land acquisition, and fuel tank conversion. The General Fund's excess of revenues over expenses is slightly under its budget by \$8,632 largely due to lower STIF interest income than expected. However, the Spruce Street Parking Lot yielded a favorable variance of \$19,478 in excess of revenues over expenses. This favorable variance is chiefly due to a result of lower management parking services and project administration. Union Station Transportation Center has also shown a positive result, yielding a favorable variance of \$50,086 in excess of revenues over expenditures due to lower overhead and project administration. Overall, while the District had anticipated approximately a \$144,150 in excess of revenues over expenditures, it has yielded a higher excess amount by \$78,196, which is attributed to the General Fund, Enterprise Fund, Parking Lot and Union Station. Mr. Mitchell then asked for acceptance of the financial report as presented. Ms. Oliver made a motion for acceptance of the financial report which was seconded by Mr. Hayes. The motion was passed unanimously 36.30 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention. Mr. Mitchell noted that

the parking lot expenditures were favorable and that the revenues were higher. Ms. Vo-Le stated that the federal Cares Act funding that the District received helped to stabilize any losses that we could have incurred. Mr. Quintero asked how long will the funding continue to run. Ms. Shotland stated that she just submitted a second request for additional Cares Act funding to sustain the District through FY 2021. Ms. Oliver wanted to make sure that the District's documentation supports the use of COVID related funds, and Ms. Shotland acknowledged that we are.

The Chairman then called to order the Public Hearing related to the proposed FY 2020 & FY 2021 budget revisions at 7:37 p.m. Ms. Vo-Le provided an overview of the FY 2020 proposed final budget, which is based on the District's actual financial result. She stated that the Special Revenue Fund's actual revenue totaling \$23.1 million is lower than the adopted budget by \$3.4 million or 13%. This occurred primarily due to a reduction in ridership occurring in the ADA Program due to the COVID19 pandemic, lower claim settlements accounted for in the Insurance Consortium, and a delay in the delivery of new buses. Of this \$23.1 million, nearly \$20.0 million was funded by CTDOT grants, \$3.3 million by FTA grants, local match: \$116,829, and passenger fares: \$96,315. The Special Revenue Fund has incurred approximately \$20.8 million in transportation projects plus \$1.6 million and \$729,000 in program administration and professional services; respectively. This fund is made up by three programs: Operating, Administrative, and Capital. The ADA Paratransit is a major operating program that has generated a total of \$16.9 million in actual revenues. The Administrative and Capital programs account a total of \$3.5 million and \$2.6 million in actual revenues; respectively. General Fund is the District's operating fund. Its primary funding sources consist of member town dues, investment income, and proceeds from sale of disposed vehicles. The General Fund's actual excess of revenues over expenses is \$151,043 or \$27,132 lower than anticipated. During FY 2020, the District sold 14 disposed vehicles for a total of \$32,170 (an average of \$2,200 for each vehicle). The District has recently sold another 14 disposed vehicles for a total of \$51,300. In light of significant decline in travel, the District has been funded \$107,684 through the Federal Cares Act Grant for loss of revenues associated with parking fees that has occurred since late March 2020. The Spruce Street Parking Lot has ended with a strong financial result, yielding \$282,005 in actual excess of revenues over expenditures, which is \$12,305 or 5% higher than budgeted. Union Station has also ended with a robust result. Comparing to the budget, its actual excess of revenues over expenditures is almost \$110,000 higher than expected. This increase reflects lower actual expenses than budgeted in various line items such as legal fees, real estate tax, security, and utilities. Overall, while the District had anticipated approximately \$438,464 in excess of revenues over expenditures for its three funds, the actual excess amount is \$533,408 or \$94,944 higher than budgeted. This excess is attributed by: General Fund \$151,043 and Enterprise Fund \$382,365. She next went onto discuss the FY 2021 Proposed Budget Revisions. She began by stating that the Special Revenue Fund's revised budget, totaling nearly \$24.4 million, is approximately \$4.6 million or 14% lower than its original budget which had been adopted by the Board in June 2020. This occurred due to the budgets for certain projects within this fund that have subsequently been approved by CTDOT with a lesser amount than requested: ADA (\$4.3 million), Drug & Alcohol Testing Consortium, (\$3,801), and Insurance Consortium (\$246,855). This decrease primarily reflects the impact of the decline in ADA ridership due to the pandemic. The budgets for the General Fund and the Enterprise Fund remain unchanged. Mr. Mitchell asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none. He then asked for comments from the Board. Hearing none, the Chairman reconvened the Regular Meeting at 7:52 p.m. Mr. Mitchell asked for a motion from the Board for approval of a

public notice to be placed in the Hartford Courant for the FY 2020 & FY 2021 Proposed Budget Revisions. Mr. Flynn moved acceptance which was seconded by Mr. Raney and approved unanimously by a vote of 36.30 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Gonzalez to give his ADA report. Mr. Gonzalez stated the following:

- Received thirty-five (35) new replacement paratransit vehicles. The buses will be on the road once the radios, cameras, and MDTs are installed.
- Paratransit Vehicle Cameras Installations began this month for camera upgrades and expansion of the existing vehicle camera system for the purpose of capturing real time incidents as they occur (inside and outside of the vehicles). A key outcome of this project is to enhance and improve driver and passenger safety for individuals who utilize the District's ADA Paratransit system. System upgrades and expansion consist of a 6-channel HD Video Surveillance System with a total of five cameras, four (4) Interior and one (1) Exterior. Installations will be conducted in 100 existing fleet vehicles.
- The ADA operation is still distributing masks to those passengers who are not wearing them when they board the bus.
- Trapeze software programs are still in a pre-implementation stage, but moving along.
- The passengers started to pay fares again in early October when CTDOT made the determination to do so.
- The Encompass program (serviced by M7) has been rolled out. The number of passengers is still minimal, but we anticipate that number to grow on a more consistent basis due to aggressive marketing and public outreach activities. COVID has hindered the riding public so it is hoped that when the senior centers open there will be more interest from both the disabled and senior community.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Gonzalez to continue with his Operations Report.

- The bathroom renovation project is moving along. There were several significant issues with the upscale portable bathrooms that were brought in to be used to replace the temporary out of service Transportation Center restrooms. To alleviate all the problems that were being encountered with travelers, passengers, and the homeless. The upscale mobile bathrooms had to be replaced with portable toilets.
- The number of homeless hanging around the Union Station has increased dramatically. Security is being vigilant in trying to move them along as best as possible. We are working closely with the Business Improvement District to help get some of these individuals into homeless shelters.
- Passenger travel through the station is still way down in number.
- Dunkin Donuts and Peter Pan have not reopened as of this date. However, Peter Pan is still serving the station for bus travel. Subway and Greyhound have remained open throughout the pandemic. The Great Hall remains closed until further notice.
- The Transportation Center hours have increased; opening at 5:30am and closing at 12:30am. This is due to later train service scheduling.

- Additional cleaning crews at Union Station are being hired effective December 1, 2020. This is in addition to the hours that have been added over the past several months due to COVID and it is critical to maintain a stringent disinfecting protocol.

Mr. Mitchell then called upon Ms. Shotland to provide an update for the Grants & Procurement Department. She stated the following:

- The Public Restroom Expansion and Renovation Project is currently underway in the Transportation Center at Union Station. The project consists of renovation and expansion of the public bathrooms located in the transportation center, the Amtrak office staff restroom, and the Amtrak locker spaces. The timeline for project completion is scheduled for March of 2021, however, the contractor on site anticipates having the project wrapped up earlier if possible.
- Procurement staff recently wrapped up the bid phase for Roofing Repairs and Replacement Union Station Transportation Center. The scope of this project will focus on necessary roofing repairs and replacements to the occupied spaces of Union Station. Work under this project is expected to be completed over two phases, phase I is expected to commence early spring of 2021. District staff and the architectural firm, (SGH), responsible for providing project oversight reviewed the responsiveness of the bid submitted by the lowest ranking contractor. However, this bidder was determined to be non-responsive and the District is now moving onto awarding the contract to the second lowest ranking bidder once a review on them is complete.
- Converted Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles – the District only received one bid for this procurement. The successful contractor is highly qualified in the provision of wheelchair conversion vehicles. As a result, the District entered into a sole source agreement with that contractor.

Mr. Mitchell then asked Ms. Shotland to provide her Administrative report. She provided the Directors with the following update:

- Submitted a request for an additional \$943,335 in federal Cares Act funding for FY 2021. There is currently \$550,000 left in FY 2020 funding. However; anticipating the possibility of lingering COVID hardships the District has calculated for additional tenant abatements, COVID PPE needs, additional janitorial staff hours for both Union Station and 148 Roberts Street which includes the requisite for daily disinfection of the ADA Paratransit vehicles, and the continued loss of daily revenue in the Spruce Street Parking Lot.
- Following up with towns/cities in regard to their past due member town dues.
- A site plan application for 148 Roberts Street was previously approved by the Town of East Hartford. However, this project now requires a minor modification regarding conversion of the existing above ground storage tank (AST) from diesel to gasoline. The tank location will be unchanged, and the existing 10,000-gallon tank will either remain in place or be replaced by a larger 15,000-gallon AST depending on the construction bid price.
- Final negotiation was completed for the Purchase & Sale Agreement in regard to 144 Roberts Street. Also the environmental consultants (Burns & McDonnell) performed inspections at the site (including sampling of the lead paint and asbestos building materials).

- Completed and returned a significant amount of additional information in regard to the District's response to the next step of the Triennial Review. The actual FTA review is tentatively going to occur in the first quarter of 2021.
- The State of CT Department of Public Health is developing plans for early and ongoing vaccination of the health sector, other critical workforce members, at risk populations and the general public. There are likely to be (3) phases to population mass vaccination and transit will be part of Phase 1b. In this phase, vaccine will be targeted to people who play key role in keeping essential functions of society running and cannot socially distance in the workplace, and people at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness, including people 65 years of age or older.

The Chairman then asked Ms. Cassidy to present the CRCOG Transportation Committee reports from October 26<sup>th</sup> and November 16<sup>th</sup>. She stated the following:

- CRCOG staff shared the FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and they had only received comments from the Greater Hartford Transit District during the public comment period on the draft TIP (DPH).
- There was a year-end review on the FY 2020 Local Transportation Capital Improvement Plan. This program was established to provide State funds to municipal governments through Regional Planning Organizations for transportation projects of regional significance, including reconstruction, pavement, rehabilitation, sidewalk, bridge and multi-use trail projects.
- A 3<sup>rd</sup> annual transportation summit facilitated by the Latino Center for Progress will be held on Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> beginning at 11am until 7:30 p.m. This all day event will bring together local leaders, state legislators, transportation professionals, planners, engineers, construction firms, developers, students, and others to discuss the current statewide challenges and the future of transportation systems and sustainable development. <https://www.ctprf.org/2020summit>

At 8:26 pm the Chairman closed the Regular Meeting to move into Executive Session to discuss the Performance Review and Compensation of the Executive Director. No votes were taken in Executive Session. Mr. Mitchell then declared the Regular Meeting back in session at 9:05 p.m. Mr. Flynn made a motion not to accept the recommendation in regard to the discussion on the Executive Directors compensation made by the Personnel Committee. The motion was then seconded by Ms. Oliver and the Board voted to adopt the motion by a vote of 24.28 yea, 7.95 nay and 0.00 abstention. There being no further business brought before the Board, Mr. Quintero moved that the meeting be adjourned. Upon seconding by Ms. Oliver, the motion passed by a vote of 32.23 yea, 0.00 nay, and 0.00 abstention. The Regular Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
for Vicki K. Stottland (Executive Director)  
James McCavanagh/Secretary