



REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
GREATER HARTFORD TRANSIT DISTRICT  
Hartford Connecticut  
December 17, 2020

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

At 7:15 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 (1.00), East Windsor; Stephen F. Mitchell (2.00), Enfield; Mark Lockwood (1.01), Granby; James R. McCavanagh, Manchester (2.61), Hartford; Dimple Desai (1.77), Rocky Hill; Ferguson R. Jansen, Jr. (2.11), Simsbury; Gary Pitcock (1.15); John W. Lyons (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. *(The numbers represented in the parenthesis of this paragraph equate to the weighted vote for each Director in attendance.)*

The Chairman asked if there was any members of the public who wished to address the board. There were none. Mr. Lockwood then moved adoption of the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Lyons and approved without modification by a vote of 18.08 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention. Mr. Mitchell welcomed and introduced Mr. Dimple Desai, the new Board Member from Rocky Hill. The Chairman next called for the acceptance of the District's Final FY2020 Budget and Revised FY2021 Budget, each as presented at the public hearing held November 19, 2020, published in The Hartford Courant on November 23, 2020, and presented to this meeting. The Chairman noted that the FY2020 audit report was accepted at the Board's November meeting subject to revisions necessary to reflect changes made by the Board, if any, to the revised FY2020 annual budget presented at that meeting.

He requested two separate motions. Mr. Quintero made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Pet: "Resolved, that the District's Final FY2020 Budget as presented to this meeting be adopted." The motion was passed with 17.61 yea, 0.00 nay and 1.77 abstention. There being no revisions made to the revised budget as adopted this evening, there will be no revisions to the audit report necessary. Mr. Pitcock then made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Jansen: "Resolved, that the District's Revised FY2021 Budget as presented to this meeting be adopted." The motion was passed with 17.61 yea, 0.00 nay and 1.77 abstention.

The Chairman requested that Ms. Vo-Le present the financial report. She provided a summary of the District's budgets and actual results as of October 31, 2020 which were as follows: The District's total actual excess of revenues over expenditures for all three funds totaling \$219,195, which is \$62,990 higher than the budget (\$193,125). This favorable excess is made up by the following: General Fund \$18,460 and Enterprise Fund \$44,530. During the first four months of FY2021 (July – October), the Special Revenue Fund has accumulated approximately a total of \$10.2 million in actual revenues to cover for its various program costs. Of the \$10.2 million, the ADA Paratransit, Vehicle Procurement, and Insurance programs are accounted for: \$5.8 million, \$2.6 million, and nearly \$1.1 million; respectively. The General Fund's excess of revenues over expenses is lower than its budget by \$18,460 primarily due to a steady decline in STIF interest rates. Spruce Street Parking Lot has yielded a favorable variance of \$29,983 in excess of revenues over expenses. This favorable variance is mainly a combination of higher revenues plus lower charges in management parking services and project administration. Union Station Transportation Center has also shown a favorable result; yielding a favorable variance of \$14,547 in excess of revenues over expenditures. This reflects lower actual expenses in certain line items such as professional services, building repairs and maintenance, and utilities. Overall; for the four months ended on October 31, 2020, the District has yield approximately 13.5% higher than anticipated in excess of revenues over expenditures. Mr. Mitchell inquired about the general revenue stream and remarked that the financial report indicates that federal funding seems to be filling any possible losses in specific areas due to COVID. Ms. Vo-Le noted that his remark is correct, and that the CARES Act funding has provided the District with relief. Mr. Quintero asked how long will the District be kept whole, and Ms. Shotland told him that funding for this purpose is set through FY'21. Mr. Mitchell then asked for acceptance of the financial report as presented. Mr. Hayes made a motion for acceptance of the financial report which was seconded by Mr. Quintero. The motion was passed unanimously 19.38 yea, 0.00 nay and 0.00 abstention.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Gonzalez to provide his ADA Report. He stated the following:

- To date 130 buses out of the fleet of 165 have been equipped with (5) SEON cameras on each vehicle. As mentioned at the last board meeting, we are waiting to have the vendor complete the installation of the wireless download equipment for recording purposes. The new camera recording system with be extremely beneficial in capturing real time incidents.
- Trapeze software programs are still in a pre-implementation stage, but moving along. This includes both the COMM program and EZ PASS. Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Gonzalez to summarize EZ wallet. Mr. Gonzalez reported that this application is designed to allow passengers to add funds to their existing pre-paid fare account, print usage reports, and view transactions. This can be accessed through a smartphone and or desktop/laptop. This will help passengers who are unable to independently hand our drivers their payment because of their disability. It can also be used by the CT Department of Developmental Disabilities, which currently issues program ticket booklets to their clients, and will provide them with the ability to apply funds directly into passenger accounts.
- An internal committee was formed to investigate and gather information in regard to electric bus technology. The District and our contractor, First Transit have had internal committee meetings to look into electric (paratransit) bus options. We found that there are limited manufacturers that are making this specific option available. There are both cutaways and the one that we are most interested in, that

being the Ford Transit vehicle. After the preliminary discussion with CTDOT, we are requesting that they consider the District for a pilot program. They stated that they would like to place at least (5) Ford Transits (all electric) in a fleet and put them out in the operation to service the ADA passengers. If the state is willing to fund this project for us we would like to lead the way in ADA paratransit vehicle electrification thus helping to reduce our carbon footprint. Mr. Quintero inquired about average mileage from a fully charged electric vehicle. Mr. Gonzalez responded that it would run on one charge for approximately 125 miles. He stated that there are variables and it will depend on the vehicle that is selected. Mr. Desai asked if there are currently charging stations along the routes or will the vehicle be charged at the facility. Mr. Gonzalez noted that at this stage in time it is anticipated that the vehicles will be charged at the ADA Paratransit site. Mr. Hayes asked about the length of time that it will take to charge a vehicle. Mr. Gonzalez responded that one of the vehicles that is being investigated will take approximately four hours. Once again it will be dependent on the final selection of vehicle before all the details can be reported with more accuracy. On a separate matter Mr. Jansen inquired about trips being performed since COVID. Mr. Gonzalez stated that before the pandemic we were averaging over 2000 daily trips, during the first wave of the virus that dropped to approximately 35%, and now we are back to approximately 50%.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Gonzalez to continue with his Operations Report. He stated the following:

- The Public Restroom Expansion and Renovation project had been halted for approximately four weeks due to unforeseen circumstances after demolition. It was discovered that there was an issue with the concrete haunch located directly where the men's wet wall was to be located thereby causing a need for either major modifications and/or a new layout. Several scenarios and prices were reviewed over the last few weeks between the District, the Contractor, and the architectural firm. An excavator was brought in to remove excess dirt. Upon completion of the re-trenching work, the plumbing subcontractor will come in and perform underground work. Upon the plumber's completion, the City of Hartford will be contacted to get the inspection done in order to backfill and be ready to pour concrete.
- Continuing to experience issues with the portable toilets that are being used at Union Station while the bathroom renovation project takes place.
- Just added additional cleaning crews at Union Station. This is above and beyond those that we hired when COVID began, the additional cleaning staff is to maintain the stringent disinfecting protocol that the District put in place over the past several months.
- In early December, District staff and the General Contractor performing the work at the old restaurant met with the City of Hartford Building Department in regard to the capital improvements that the District is making for Propark's eventual move in. However, there are a few things that still need to be corrected; including installation of two exit signs, add two horn strobes, installation of signage on the Men's Room and Women's room. The Fire Marshall will provide final approval once the punch list items are completed. Propark will begin to use the space on a limited basis since their full staff will not be back until possibly late spring early summer.

Mr. Mitchell then called upon Ms. Shotland to update the Directors in regard to the Grant/Contract/ & Procurement Department's report. She stated that after careful consideration and performing our due diligence; multiple addendums and deadline extensions, and the need to ascertain additional pertinent rail specific information required for potential bidders to bid effectively, the District has made the decision to cancel the bid opportunity for the Roofing Repairs and Replacement Project (Below the Tracks) Union Station Transportation Center. This project will be re-bid at a future date. The District's decision to postpone the bid opportunity will allow more time to respond to all unanswered questions and allow for a procurement process that is equitable to all interested in bidding the services once it is re-released.

Additionally some additional procurements for the first half of next year will include:

- Waste Management
- Spruce Street Parking Lot Management
- Elevator Maintenance (Union Station)
- Fire Alarm Service (Roberts Street & Union Station)
- Sprinkler & Fire Extinguisher Safety Testing (Union Station & Roberts Street)

Mr. Mitchell then called upon Ms. Shotland to provide her Administrative report.

- Requested and was just awarded another round of CARES ACT funding. The District will receive \$950,000 in addition to the \$2ml received in FY'20. This funding will take the District through FY'21 if the current economic conditions caused by the pandemic continue.
- 144 Roberts Street Phase I found no environmental conditions indicative of the presence or likely presence of hazardous substances or petroleum products on the property including the presence of underground storage tanks. As a result, the Phase I concluded that no additional environmental investigations were warranted. The report did note that there were piles of vegetation debris, paint buckets and several tires on the northeast side of the property that we will ask the owner to remove prior to closing. The Survey identified asbestos containing materials and lead containing paint that will need to be addressed prior to any demolition, and the asbestos identified during the Survey will be removed by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor. The Survey also identified various household hazardous wastes which will need to be properly disposed of as well. In this regard, the Survey identified fluorescent bulbs, mercury thermostats, paint and solvent cans. In regard to the District it will be cost-effective to have all of the tasks identified above performed by one contractor. Mr. Pitcock asked if it is the property just east of 144 where the Town of East Hartford is planning to build a parking lot. Ms. Shotland was unaware of the town's plans. Ms. Pet wanted to know if it be beneficial to speak to the Town of East Hartford to inquire if they would want to share parking. Ms. Shotland stated that the property selected benefits the ADA Paratransit operation as it is land that borders our current property and is beneficial to our future needs and we have made a significant investment to procure the site.
- Attended the latest American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Meeting virtually. Updates of note include: recommendation to enact a long-term Surface Transportation Authorization act funded by dedicated sustainable revenues. APTA is urging Congress and the new administration to dramatically increase federal infrastructure investment levels in public transportation and passenger rail. The request will be for \$145 billion over six (6) years. Also to create a new Mobility Innovation and

Technology Initiative to introduce cutting-edge technologies and integrate new service-delivery approaches and mobility options in the transit marketplace.

- In regard to the last APTA Operations communication that we received, several participating agencies have asked if they can require employees to be vaccinated. APTA has checked with other associations and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to confirm that employers may require employees to take the vaccine once it is available. Employers will have to make reasonable accommodations for employees who have religious or medical issues that prevent them from being vaccinated. APTA has been advocating for public transit workers to be prioritized in federal and state vaccine distribution plans.
- Also transit CEOs in conjunction with APTA senior staff received overwhelming support for recommending mandatory use of face coverings while on transit or at transit facilities. Verbally challenging passengers to wear masks on public transit is not encouraged, but strong recommendations and providing masks to those not wearing them have become the norm across the country.

Mr. Mitchell then called upon Ms. Shotland to provide the CRCOG Transportation Committee report from December 14, 2020. She stated the following: Under the guidance of the CT Department of Transportation, CTrides, its commuter services program, conducted a digital survey this past July to gauge how the COVID pandemic has affected the CT workforce in terms of the workplace commute. CTrides received a total of 4,133 survey responses. The survey results highlighted commuting concerns as they related to bus, rail, and carpool/vanpool service. Regarding future plans for method of commute to work, per CTrides, "The majority of surveyed respondents indicated their primary method of commute would remain consistent when they return to their workplace; however, a majority of those who used a vanpool reported they intend to shift modes in the future. Requirements for wearing masks, social distancing practices, increased service and increased cleaning were all ranked as top priorities to return to public transit".

Mr. Mitchell called for new business. He reminded the Directors that the next meeting will not be held on March 3, 2021, and will be changed because March 3<sup>rd</sup> is a Wednesday not a Thursday. Ms. Shotland will forward an updated calendar shortly. There being no further business brought before the Board, Mr. Quintero moved that the meeting be adjourned. Upon seconding by Mr. Raney the motion passed by a vote of 19.38yea, 0.00 nay, and 0.00 abstention. The Regular Meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

for  (Ex. Director)  
James R. McCavanagh  
Secretary

