

Minutes of the Southeast Vermont Transit Board of Directors Meeting  
May 22, 2019  
Hannah Crossman Room  
Brattleboro Municipal Center

President Chip Stearns called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm. Those in attendance and constituting a quorum were as follows:

**Board Members:** Chip Stearns, Travis Wendell, Wendy Harrison, Scott Tucker and Matt Mann

**Staff Present:** Randy Schoonmaker and Leona Linney

**Members of Public Present:** Peter Elwell (joined the meeting at 6:10 pm)

**Public Input:** None

**Review of April minutes:** No comments. Some things were diverted from last month's meeting to today. Tim still is not available so we are still diverting Route 30 and the transit discussion until the June meeting.

**Amend agenda:** none

**Ridership:** Ridership is even with a year ago. There was discussion on the 53 numbers being down. This may be due to probation and parole rides going down. The ridership graphs were discussed. The dotted line for the Red Line shows where we would be if we were still counting the transfers the same as in previous years. On the 53 route, the December 2016 spike in rides is due to an error in Genfare and will be addressed for the next Board meeting. Wendy noted that there are seasonal variations and that rides seem to spike in March.

**Financial Overview:** The Finance Committee executive summary was reviewed. Randy noted the replaced engines are running well. Wendy noted the \$57,000 we are behind in the budget. Randy explained that \$30,000 was expensed and not capitalized and this is part of the \$57,000. We do not have a projection of where our borrowing will be on June 30. Next month we will look at cash flow and borrowing. We continue to spend money on new engines. We will end up spending \$51,000 on un-reimbursable capital in FY19. We have parked one bus that needs a new engine until next fiscal year when hopefully we will receive a grant to replace its engine. Tim will make us whole for our FY19 E&D federal share of actual costs.

**Current Addition Update:** Randy and Rebecca met with Steve Horton on the building addition. We signed a contract with Dubois and King to do the engineering. We still have earmark and state money to use for this. It will be a one bay addition. We must update our permits to go from four bays to one. We will go out to bid in early January and start building in April. It will be a design build project so we will not need our own architect. Steve is still our project manager. Chip noted if we don't keep the earmark alive the FTA could take back the funds.

**Okemo and Stratton Update:** Randy reports that there is nothing new for Okemo. Stratton gave us a schedule of the service they would like. Randy is looking at ways to keep the cost down. They want 6, 7, and 8 am arrivals from Manchester each morning. With departures from Stratton at 9, 10 and 11 in the morning and 2, 3, 4 and 5 pm departures in the afternoon and evening. This is an hour each way, so we would need two buses to do this. Then there are layover times. What do we do with the buses for two hours? Randy is looking into other possibilities. He will continue to work on the

schedule to see what we can come up with. We are trying to line up with the bus that goes to/from Albany to catch the train, bus, and airport.

**E&D Update:** The pilot program was discussed. Randy presented an overview of the program with comparisons between December 2017 and February 2019. December 2017 is the last full month we had Medicaid. We are doing 100 less SAAD rides per month than in FY 2017. The SAAD director told us they have fewer clients and it is not due to service. Eighty eight percent of the SEVT SAAD rides are done with volunteers. Marble Valley runs mostly vans. We might lose 1488 rides per year working with Marble Valley. We are working with Tim on who gets to count the rides. Marble Valley is counting them now. We are doing the outlying rides that are harder for Marble Valley to do and we are doing them with volunteers which is more economical. Randy explained how we are a “pass through” for the funding and how it is more cost effective doing it this way. Randy agreed with Chip that we are not presently getting credit for the rides.

The Gathering Place’s pilot program was discussed. We don’t have as much information on them as we do with SAAD. There are 115 less rides a month now than in late 2017. GMCN does 81% of the Gathering Place rides. We do 63% of SAAD’s adult day rides. We are getting a few more TGP rides each month. The Gathering Place chooses which transit provider to assign clients to. GMCN is able to provide the service cheaper than we do, so the question is what happens to the funding going into the new year? We are currently given \$700,000 to provide service to southern Vermont and GMCN is given \$40,000 to provide TGP service for six months. VTtrans will decide how much to fund southern Vermont next year and who to fund it with.

Matt noted that numbers for SAAD had dropped off. He asked if the numbers for the Gathering Place were stable. We don’t have that information.

#### **New Business:**

**Brattleboro phone call:** An anonymous phone call was received at the Current a couple of weeks ago. It was sent to Randy, the Board and the Brattleboro police. A woman went on about transit and drugs in Brattleboro. She used disparaging language about our riders. She thought transit was contributing to the drug problem and that we should move the transportation center. Chip reminded the Board not to respond to “all” when replying to emails. This constitutes a meeting. The person on the phone call left no name or number so we could not call them back. Scott asked if there was a role for us at the Transportation Center and what is the driver feedback? Things have gotten better in the past few months. Peter pointed out that after the large sweep by the police a lot of the perpetrators were gone. The town is seeing less violence associated with drug activity. Wendy suggested we plan a meeting where the Board goes to see the office at the Transportation Center and possibly also see where the buses are stored on Putney Road. Peter said he would invite the police along. Matt also asks what can we do to address the problems as a community partner. Matt feels that we should at least offer to be at the table and is not suggesting that we move the bus stop, just what can we do to help.

**Brattleboro Route serving Putney Road:** There was discussion on the Putney Road improvements, the bus stops, and the roundabouts. There is concern from some of the businesses in the Hannaford plaza about the bus and riders and these are being worked on.

**Company Updates:** Christine and Rebecca are at the yearly CTAA Transportation Expo in Palm Springs, CA. They were both accepted into the CTAA Leadership Academy. They will have a year of training with a mentor and work on a project. They start this year with a day of class in Palm Springs. They will finish with two days of training at Expo next year. They got scholarships for the training. Christine is also taking the Certified Community Transit Manager (CCTM) training and certification. Tim will be sending the FY20 grant award letters soon. We awarded our three-year large cutaway bus procurement last week to Alliance Bus. Rebecca will order the first of our new buses for Brattleboro when she gets back. Lead time on the bus is 6-8 months. The buses are all cutaways with diesel engines. This bid was made good for any publicly funded transit company in New Hampshire and Vermont. It's an SEVT procurement built for piggy backing.

**Board Member Comments:** Wendy would like us to notify the Select Board, riders and legislators beforehand when we have our meetings in Brattleboro. We can do this in other places as well. She wants to let more people know. Swiftly is not yet up and running to the public. They are waiting for all transit companies to get the bugs out. When this happens, it will be unveiled for the public. We are using the management side of the software now.

**Future Agenda Items:** Route 30 and Tim's Annual Route Performance Review Report, a tour of MOOver projects, borrowing and year end cash management.

Scott made a motion to go into executive session to discuss contracts, Travis seconded, the motion passed. The Board came out of executive session at 7:25 pm. Wendy made a motion to authorize Chip to send a letter with minor changes to the Gathering Place Board. Travis seconded and the motion passed.

Wendy motioned to adjourn the meeting and Chip seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.