

Draft Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
Southeast Vermont Transit Board of Directors  
March 11, 2020  
45 Mill Street, Wilmington, Vermont  
706 Rockingham Road, Rockingham, Vermont

President Chip Stearns called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm. Those in attendance and constituting a quorum were as follows:

**Board Members:** Chip Stearns, Joel Bluming, Seth Boyd, Matt Mann, Jamie Storrs, and Randy Capitani, Wendy Harrison, Scott Tucker gave Chip Stearns his proxy

**Invited Guest:** Tim Bradshaw

**Members of the Public:** Laurel Green, Steve Crofter, Lyn Haas

**Staff Present:** Randy Schoonmaker, Rebecca Gagnon, Christine Howe and Keith Johnson

**Public Input:** Our guests were here to talk about how to coordinate with transportation, within the larger idea of energy efficiency and support the Current to increase ridership. They had no specific ideas but wanted to let us know about their efforts and that they are here to support public transportation in any way they can. Chip talked about the two divisions and the territory we cover. Rebecca will connect with the group and see if there is a way they can work together to advance the goal of the group. Rebecca offered to attend any public outreach or any meetings the group has. A discussion ensued about April 22, and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, and could there be a way to get people from Rockingham to Brattleboro for the event on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Saturday the 24th would be a tour of the town and celebration of transit, and thanking the driver. Rebecca would like to work that with our curb your car event. Rebecca asked for some idea of number of riders to make sure the bus is large enough to accommodate all the riders. Resources were given to the public group regarding planning commissions to contact for more information. They left the meeting 5:20 pm.

**Review of Minutes:** Reviewed with no comments.

**Amend Agenda: Motion:** Matt has requested the NEMT discussion be moved to the first item under Old Business, as he has another meeting to attend. Chip clarified this is to be in open session. Randy requested to amend agenda further and add Coronavirus Virus under new business after Marlboro College.

**Old Business:**

**NEMT: Motion #1:** Joel motioned that SEVT commit to returning to providing Medicaid service condition to the following; 1) VPTA being rewarded the contract from AHS 2) VPTA agrees to adopt a revenue sharing policy that is based on the unified cost allocation, not rider count, and that spreads income to all the VPTA members to cover all of their eligible Medicaid expenses and share any remaining surplus or deficit on a prorated basis. Wendy seconded. Randy C. wanted to know

why we are choosing this motion over the other motion that is more detailed. Randy S asked Chip to read the other motion (option 1, not on the table) since the Wilmington group did not have it in front of them. Chip said it is the same as the motion on the table, except with the following conditions; 1) VPTA be awarded the Medicaid contract for the calendar year 2021 to 2022; 2) VPTA agrees to adopt a revenue sharing policy that is based on the unified cost allocation, and that spreads income to all the VPTA members to cover all of their eligible Medicaid expenses and share any remaining surplus or deficit; 3) VTrans provide a MOU of financial assistance to SEVT to help pay down its \$350,000 loss within five years; 4) the VTrans provide 100% capital assistance to SEVT for required number of vehicles and other capital items and expenses to provide Medicaid services; 5) that a thorough and objective financial review and budget, including Medicaid transportation, be done by SEVT staff and reviewed by the board which provides no additional financial deficit to the company, and; 6) SEVT be given a minimum of seven months after the contract is awarded to gear up staff, volunteers, vehicles and other systems to properly perform Medicaid services. Chip said this motion lists all the requirements from VTrans and state of Vermont and commitments. Those commitments will be pretty much assumed because once we start VTrans will have to assist us to get up and going. This laundry list becomes the quickest and easiest way to say we are not going to do it versus simply VPTA has to agree the transit providers use the same formulas and have to get the contract. Wendy is concerned with the long list because so many things could go wrong, and that we would set ourselves up for another fight if we are that specific. Randy S. wanted to make the detailed motion not to set up to fail, but rather to protect ourselves. We want to go back to Medicaid, but we don't want to expose the company to any more risk that we could not survive. Matt said the more general motion sends a signal to VPTA that SEVT wants to be a part of this rather than having very specific terms and demands. Randy C. asked who is the motion binding to? Chip explained the contract for Medicaid service gets awarded to someone, right now that is VPTA. Last year as a board, SEVT voted to stop providing Medicaid service. This isn't binding to get back to Medicaid unless the two terms are met as stated in the motion on the table. Tim said the contract for Medicaid expires December 31, 2020. The new contract will not go into effect until January 1, 2021, so there will be a lead up time assuming the new Medicaid contract is awarded on or around July 1, 2020. Randy S explained there is no contract within VPTA for revenue sharing. Tim explained the unified cost application plans would go into effect for FY21. Motion passed 7-1, with Randy C voting nay.

**Motion #2:** Joel moved that SEVT Board of Directors instruct the CEO to present a motion to VPTA and vote in the affirmative for VPTA to adopt a revenue sharing policy that is based on the unified cost allocation, not rider count, that spreads income to all VPTA members to cover all of their eligible Medicaid expenses, and share any remaining surplus or deficit on a prorated basis. Wendy seconded the motion. Randy S will do as instructed. Matt left and gave Chip his proxy. Motion passed 8-0. Matt and Scott voted aye through proxy.

**Ridership:** Rebecca said the fixed routes are up by 6%, and Okemo is up 1%. Overall trend is ridership is up. Again, demand response is not apples to apples but is showing a downward trend. Overall, the Current is up 1%.

Randy explained that the use of on time performance from Swiftly is really helping us identify some timing issues with the 70's routes to improve.

Rebecca is going to meet with Dartmouth College, but the contact is still busy since the holiday season.

The MOOver's year-round fixed routes are up by 5%. The seasonal routes are off mostly because of the parking lots. COA shopping and meal routes have an 17% increase in ridership. Overall, the MOOver is down 5%. Chip pointed out the parking lot shuttles are billed by the hour, so that will mean less revenue. Wendy commented that she liked the poster in the lobby of North Star. Jamie asked why we put the parking lots in the winter routes. Randy S said it is because they only operate in the winter, because we only have year-round, winter and demand response. Jamie would like to have a meeting in June to discuss ideas for parking lots.

Randy S showed the February holiday week for the MOOver ridership. This was the sixth best of 24 February weeks. The MOOver does 26,000 in seven days which is about 10% of annual rides. Last year was such a record year.

Randy S reviewed the graphs for the Brattleboro routes which are still trending really well.

**Financial Overview:** The SEVT Finance Committee executive summary was reviewed. Randy S projected we might be in a \$100,000 deficit by June 30<sup>th</sup> and that we may need to extend the line of credit to one million. Chip said there has not been any discussion on how to circumvent the deficit. Randy S has already started to analyze the need for substantially more preventive maintenance money request from VTrans, as we have an aging fleet and it is very costly to maintain.

**Partner Updates:** Randy has contacted Stratton to speak to them soon. We will meet with Mount Snow in June.

**Fundraising:** The sponsorship solicitations for the MOOver will go out next week to about 105 emails to ski companies, soliciting \$40,000 for next winter. We will start working on the Current by the end of March or early April. We have a sponsorship list started for the Current but need to expand that. GoVermont advertising ends May 31.

**Re-Branding:** We are just spotting our first bus and hoping to do one bus a week. We had a vehicle meeting this week and we are integrating the fleet more and moving buses between territories.

#### **New Business:**

**Marlboro College:** Marlboro College is probably going out of operation. They contribute \$4000 per year to us. Discussion ensued about cutting Marlboro College out of the schedule and adding a midday loop to Brattleboro. This is all pending VTrans' and public input. We are asking for direction from the Board. Discussion ensued regarding the current Brattleboro MOOver schedule, and what it would look like to add a 1:30ish run to compensate the fact that there is nothing midday. Chip said the Board, by consensus, agrees to add another midday loop. This would attract more riders with a midday run. Tim agreed with more frequency.

**Coronavirus:** Christine and Rebecca worked together to put out policies and guidelines on cleaning procedures including pre- and post-trip sanitizing and disinfecting. We placed the same statements on our websites and FB pages. Christine listened in to a CDC and FTA phone call to give best practices and procedures. The biggest problem is product availability for disinfecting and sanitizing. Rebecca said we were one of the first transit providers in the state to get info and procedures in

place. As of right now there is no panic in the divisions. We are watching and talking daily about our next steps. E & D rides are seeing some cancellations and some riders not booking, but not too bad right now. Tim stated that VTrans is going by the Vermont Department of Health guidelines and daily updates. VTrans appreciates all the efforts of transit providers as well as the drivers. VTrans has been asked to try to get a line on cleaning supplies for transit providers.

**Company Updates:** None

**Board Member Comments:** Wendy asked about the grant application to help with legal immigrant relocation to Bennington and Windham counties in Vermont. Randy S talked about the grant and he is part of the committee. Joel would like a Route 30 update on the agenda every month. We were funded this year to do a Route 30 study and pushed it to next year with Tim's approval to save our local match. Joel can look for contribution money for the \$4000 local match to the study, and it would be restricted to use for the Route 30 study.

**Future Agenda Items:** Rt 30 Update

**Executive Session:** None

**Adjourn: Motion 3:** Joel motioned to adjourn, all approved, and we adjourned at 6:50 pm