

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT ETD MEETING

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT
RIVER VALLEY TRANSIT
REGULAR MEETING
Friday, August 8, 2025
91 N. Main Street, Middletown, CT and
Via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strauss called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. In attendance included: Leslie Strauss, John Hall, Charlie Norz (ZOOM), Tim Griswold, Kathryn Russell, Beverly Lawrence, Joan Gay, Mike Pelton, (ZOOM), David Lahm, Christine Marques (ZOOM, left at 10:43 a.m.), David Cox (ZOOM, left at 10:43 a.m.).

Guests/Staff: Chris Dennison (ZOOM), Brendan Geraghty, Lisa Gibson, Joe Comerford, Jennifer Egeberg, Halyna Famiglietti, Jared Whitcomb, Nick Kulakowski

VISITOR COMMENTS

CT Rides – Jennifer Egeberg, CT Rides Outreach and Engagement Specialist

Jennifer Egeberg, CT Rides, reported that CT Rides is a DOT program, that helps residents and commuters find convenient transportation options (public transportation, carpools, etc.) throughout the state for both business, school and pleasure.

She encouraged individuals to visit their website. Information on their website includes:

- How to find transportation options
- Available support resources
- CT Rides app overview
- Recreational travel resources

Her report was screenshared and Jennifer was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members.

The Board thanked Jennifer for her presentation.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

On a motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the 6/13/25 Board meeting were approved as presented with Christine Marques abstaining from the vote.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the 6/13/25 Expansion Committee meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the 8/5/25 Facilities Committee meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the 8/6/25/25 Finance Committee meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

TREASURER’S REPORT – None.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the order of the agenda was revised to discuss NEW BUSINESS after TREASURER’S REPORT. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Officers

On a motion made and duly seconded, the following were unanimously elected as River Valley Transit Officers:

Leslie Strauss, Chairman
Joan Gay – Vice Chairman
Charlie Norz – Treasurer
Tim Griswold – Secretary

Committee Assignments

On a motion made and duly seconded, David Cox was appointed to the Personnel Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

Board members interested in changing their Committee assignments were encouraged to contact Leslie Strauss.

Conflict of Interest Forms

Leslie requested that board members return their conflict-of-interest forms (included in the Board packet).

AAA Authorizing Resolution

David Cox made a motion to authorize Joe Comerford, or in his absence or inability to act, Leslie Strauss, on behalf of the Estuary Transit District, to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents required to obtain funds from the Senior Resources Agency on Aging. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DOT Authorizing Resolution

David Lahm made a motion to authorize Leslie Strauss, or in her absence or inability to act, Joan Gay, having been since August 8, 2025, are hereby authorized on behalf of the Estuary Transit District to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents required to obtain funds from the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Katheryn Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Relations Services Authorizing Resolution – a copy of the Resolution was included in the Board’s packet.

On a motion made and duly seconded, Joe Comerford is hereby authorized on behalf of the Estuary Transit District to negotiate and execute all necessary contract documents with Quinn and Hary Marketing in an amount not to exceed \$300,000.00 for Public Relations Services. The motion passed unanimously.

Extension of RiverCOG Contract

On a motion made and duly seconded, Joe Comerford was authorized to extend the contract with RiverCOG for 5 years. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Committee

The minutes of the Facilities Committee meeting were included in the Board's packet. Highlights of the meeting include:

- Facilities Master Plan
 - Master Plan completed.
 - DOT is entering into negotiations with consultant. NEPA requirements and historic preservation requirements must be met.
 - DOT is working with the city on a temporary construction right of way.
- Shoreline Facility
 - DOT is entering into negotiations for a scope with Michael Baker, Consultant.
 - \$300,000 is available for the project.
 - A Feasibility Study and NEPA Study will be conducted simultaneously.
 - NEPA requirements may be impacted by new Federal regulations.
 - The study should be completed in 30-45 days.
- Middletown Terminal Renovation
 - Property survey being conducted.
 - Potential concept plan developed
 - Concerns related to egress and loss of parking spaces
 - Terminal renovations are on hold until safety issues addressed.

Bus Shelters

The DOT is working with the City on details and a groundbreaking/ribbon cutting ceremony will be scheduled. Two of the four shelters are currently being installed.

On a motion made and duly seconded the Facilities Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

Finance Committee

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting were included in the Board's packet. The Committee reviewed all financial documents. No issues or concerns were reported.

Charlie will continue to meet regularly with Halyna to review appropriate financial data.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the Finance Committee Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

Marketing Committee

The Marketing Committee's recent focus has been on Public Relations.

On a motion made and duly seconded the Marketing Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

Legislative Committee

Joe Comerford reported that the Legislature have been busy with transit bills this session. The District has been sending comments on these bills.

On a motion made and duly seconded the Legislative Committee Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

Transit Advisory Committee – No report.

Expansion Committee

- The Committee continues to evaluate the calculation of dues.
 - For future members joining the District, we will try to have a basic base fee to join, focused on population.
 - Additional fees may be added depending on routes.

The Committee is reaching out to East Haddam, Cromwell, Madison and Guilford regarding possible inclusion in the District.

The Committee will continue to evaluate the calculation of dues.

On a motion made and duly seconded the Expansion Committee Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

Personnel Committee – None.

COG Update

Brendan updated the Board on COG grant initiatives including:

- Old Saybrook has adopted the THRIVE Plan.
- Clinton has incorporated many components of their THRIVE Plan and are likely to adopt.
- Westbrook is considering the THRIVE Plan.
- Middletown is in the process of scheduling and reviewing the THRIVE Plan.

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the COG Update as presented. Kathryn Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joe reported:

- He is working with Clinton to find a long-term solution to fund the Summer Trolley.
- Electric Bus – the range of the batteries in the electric buses is better than anticipated, even in the hot weather with the use of the AC.
- The DOT contacted the District to inquire as to why the District has seen recent ridership gains as surrounding districts have experienced declining ridership. The expanded services recently offered, including weekend service has increased ridership.

Joe was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members.

Katheryn Russell made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report as presented. Charlie Norz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MOBILITY MANAGER REPORT

Lori McElroy provided an overview of her recent initiatives including:

- Marketing tools
- Meetings with various groups (senior citizens, disabled citizens, Veterans, etc.)
- Website updates, Social Media
- She plans to meet with the Towns of Clinton and Cromwell regarding the program.
- She participated in the recent National Night Out.

A copy of her contact information will be emailed to Board members.

On a motion made and duly seconded the Mobility Manager's Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

TRANSIT PLANNERS REPORT

Brendan reported:

- Bus Stop Project
 - Bus stop locations are being finalized.
 - Making field visits to collect data
 - Reaching out to CTDOT Highway District 1 Municipalities for permitting/approval of locations. These towns include Middletown, Middlefield, Meriden, Cromwell, and Berlin.
 - Our Contractors K-5 will likely be reaching out if they haven't yet got to go about the permitting or approval process for bus stops on municipal roads.
 - Either RVT or K-5 corporation will be following up with the other towns with bus stops on municipal roads in the coming weeks.
 - Quick assistance on this would be greatly appreciated so that we can keep the project moving along
- Bus Shelter
 - Middletown bus shelter zoning change was made and approved by the Planning &

Zoning Committee.

- Construction has started on at least two locations, and the others will likely be installed in the next few weeks.
- XtraMile
 - Ridership is continuing to be strong.
 - Madison & Guilford continue to grow with month-over-month growth. Last month we had 2518 riders in the month of July! 300 more than the Old Saybrook Zone which is also doing excellent
 - XtraMile Middletown is off for the summer but will resume in Early September
 - We are doing promotions to new students to continue the success of last year.
- Fixed Route Expansion
 - Fixed route expansion from May 2024 continues to be strong. Both May and June had strong numbers for expanded services. Sundays have been strong lately with 1158 rides last month.
- Clinton Trolley
 - Clinton trolley is up and running despite the Park Connect program coming to an end this year. Ridership so far seems good, and the Town of Clinton is helping promote and get more creative about Making it a success.

Brendan was available to address questions/comments posed by board members

Charlie Norz made a motion to accept the Transit Planner's Report as presented. Kathryn Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Copies of the financial reports (Budget vs. Actual and Cash Flow) were included in the Board packet and screenshared. No issues were reported.

Halyna reported that all financial documents were reviewed with the Finance Committee. In addition, the budget is the end of year, pre-audit budget and some adjustments are expected once it is reviewed by the auditors. The auditors are expected back in late August/early September. No issues are anticipated.

Halyna was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members.

On a motion made and duly seconded the Finance Director's Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ridership figures were included in the Board packet and screenshared.

Jared reported:

- Routes are increasing

- All Dispatch positions have been filled.
- Updated board on staffing of drivers.
- Reviewed protocol for addressing complaints.
- The District routinely receives 4.8 to 4.9 star ratings (out of 5).

Jared was available to address questions/comments posed by Board members.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the Operations Director's Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Maintenance Director's report was screenshared.

Nick reported:

- The Maintenance Dept. is fully staffed.
 - More services are now able to be done in-house.
- Electric buses have exceeded expectations.
 - Emergency Service personnel have been trained on the electric buses.

On a motion made and duly seconded, the Maintenance Director's Report was unanimously accepted as presented.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

CHAIR COMMENTS – None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None.

ADJOURNMENT

John Hall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 a.m. Joan Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting – October 10, 2025 - 9 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk