

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Minutes of April 7, 2011

ConnDOT Headquarters, Conference Room B
Berlin Turnpike, Newington

Attendance: Members: Kevin Maloney, Richard Schreiner, Mort Katz, Russ St. John, Richard Sunderhauf, Ed McAnaney, Yvonne Loteczka, Alan Sylvestre, Robert Rodman, Ron Kilcoyne, Kieran Ryan. **Ex-officio members:** David LeVasseur (OPM), Fred Riese (DEP). **ConnDOT staff:** Dennis King, Sherry Osterling. **Guests:** David Bassett, Susana Carrera, Terry Hall, Stephen Troster.

Chairman Maloney called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm. The minutes of the meeting of March 3 were approved as written.

Due to a delay in setting up the PowerPoint presentation, other elements of the meeting agenda were covered before moving on to the featured speaker.

Comments from the Public

None.

Comments from Operating Entities

Richard Sunderhauf noted the following recent developments at Connecticut Transit: 1) the new articulated buses have gone into service in New Haven and Stamford, 2) Connecticut Transit has acquired new supervisor's vehicles, and 3) new operator's run bids are being solicited.

Ron Kilcoyne noted that service reductions went into effect on March 27 on the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA) system to balance the budget. There have been no complaints about the reductions thus far. ADA paratransit is a particular problem area because GBTA has only a limited ability to control the costs of this service to meet the budget. GBTA is still able to meet the program requirements but is not going beyond this minimum level of service.

Rick Schreiner reported that he, Ron Kilcoyne and Russ St. John attended the Northeast Public Transportation Association meeting in Harford on March 30 and 31. GBTA received an award for the best timetable presentation.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Maloney welcomed new Commission members Kieran Ryan and David LeVasseur who are assuming the seats formerly held by Gail Lavielle and Susan Simmat, respectively.

Kevin wrote to Gail Lavielle thanking her for her three years of service on the Commission and assuring her that she will continue to be one of us in spirit. He also wrote to

OPM Secretary Ben Barnes offering the services of the Commission as a bridge between the public and transportation decision-makers.

Featured Speaker

David Bassett, the Transportation Security Administration's Federal Security Director for Connecticut, was the featured speaker for this meeting. He was assisted by Susana Carrera, Acting Assistant Federal Security Director, also from the TSA.

Bassett joined the TSA in 2002 following a 21-year career in the U.S. Navy. He continues to serve to the present in the Naval Reserves. Bassett briefly looked back to September 11, 2001 when terrorist attacks claimed 2,993 lives, with victims representing 84 nations. Bassett contrasted the War on Terror with the Cold War, noting that we are fighting an ideology, not a nation. This battle is further complicated by the rise of domestic terrorism and the proliferation of terrorism plots via the Internet. The terrorists are often educated, dedicated and patient. Attacks are designed to destroy both symbolic and economic targets and to inflict casualties. In this climate, our strategy needs to focus on prevention rather than response.

After recounting several high profile terrorist plots including 'shoe bomber' Richard Reid on December 22, 2001 and the Christmas Day bomber Umar Abdulmutallab (the 'underwear bomber'), Bassett noted that tightened passenger flight security measures have led plotters to look more to cargo plane attacks. Bassett also recalled the Murrah Federal Building bombing by Timothy McVeigh as an example of domestic terrorism tied to anti-government ideology.

Bassett then outlined the TSA's areas of responsibility. These include airlines, highways, rail, urban transit, pipelines, and maritime transportation. In response to a reference to Israel's excellent security system, Bassett noted that the US has 452 commercial airports, two million daily airline passengers, 361 major seaports, and 51,000 annual ports of call by 7,500 cargo vessels. Therefore, TSA's responsibilities are more broad-based than those of Israeli security.

In regard to airline security, the TSA employs a strategy of using layers of security. For the airline industry, these include:

- The reservation process: data bases are checked
- Security checkpoints
- Airport security, including bomb-sniffing dogs
- Airplane security, including hardened cockpits and flight deck officers

The new Backscatter scanners for boarding airline passengers produce a level of radiation equivalent to that received by an airline passenger during two minutes of flight time at altitude. Bassett also discussed the SPO-7 Passive Millimeter Wave Scanner which measures anomalies in the heat and energy emitted by a body such as would be caused by wearing plastic vests containing explosive material. To date, these scanners have been used at a few special events such as the 2008 political conventions and at Super Bowls. The mere availability of such technology causes would-be plotters to avoid areas where it may be employed. Relatedly, Bassett mentioned the SPOT program, which stands for Screening Passengers by Observation

Techniques, a fancy way of saying looking for out-of-the-norm behavior. He also noted that TSA has 800-1,000 bomb-sniffing dogs trained for security service.

In the cargo transport area, Bassett spoke of the hazardous materials credentials that include background checks done before a truck driver can get a HAZMAT endorsement, and the Transport Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program which is a joint TSA/ U.S. Coast Guard program based on the biometrics of the person being credentialed, as well as on a background check.

Bassett also discussed the Secure Flight Program which grew out of the old “No Fly List”. There were many security concerns with the No Fly List because it was publically available. Now the names are held by the TSA, not the airlines, and are no longer publically available. The No Fly List formerly contained many duplicate and inaccurate names and included unnecessary people. In February 2007, a systematic name-by-name analysis of the No Fly List reduced the number of names on it by 50%. The system is constantly being tested by people from the TSA posing as passengers to get on flights.

Old Business

Fred Riese reminded the moderators for the four spring public hearings that they are responsible for doing the publicity for these hearings.

New Business

Governor Malloy’s decision of earlier this week to pursue the development of the New Britain Busway was discussed. Fred Riese noted how closely the language used in the Governor’s announcement matched the wording of the first recommendation in this year’s CPTC Annual Report.

Ron Kilcoyne noted that other local award winners at the NEPTA meeting included Connecticut Transit for Best Family of Maps and the Norwalk Transit District for Best Bi-lingual Map.

Chairman Maloney reminded members that the May 5 Commission meeting will be held at Bozzuto’s on Schoolhouse Road in Cheshire. Mike Riley, President of the Connecticut Motor Transport Association, has agreed to speak at the September Commission meeting. Other potential speakers for upcoming meetings were discussed.

Chairman Maloney adjourned the meeting at 3:13 pm.