

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission**  
Minutes of November 5, 2015

ConnDOT Headquarters, Conference Room B  
2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington

**Attendance: Members:** Kevin Maloney, Richard Schreiner, Chris Adams, Ed McAnaney, Nick Lownes, Robert Rodman, Richard Sunderhauf, Mort Katz, Russ St. John, Bill Kelaher, Alan Sylvestre. **Ex-officio members:** Zack Hyde (OPM), Frederick Riese (DEEP). **ConnDOT staff:** Sherry Osterling. **Guests:** Tom Walsh.

Chairman Maloney opened the meeting at 1:33 pm. The minutes of the meeting of October 1 were accepted as written subject to an addition from Mort Katz to note that his absence from the October 1 meeting was due to a Superior Court magistrate hearing in G. A. Court.

**Comments from the Public**

None.

**Reports from Operating Entities**

Bill Kelaher noted three issues. First, Congress is nearing approval of a new Highway Funding bill but has had to go through a series of over 80 amendments to the bill, many of which are unrelated to transportation. [Note: The new Highway Funding bill was passed the day of this meeting.] Next, he mentioned that the requirement for all railroads to install positive train control on their locomotives by the end of this year has been extended for three years to January 1, 2019. Lastly, there is potential for a strike on New Jersey Transit at the beginning of 2016. Such a stoppage would also affect Amtrak service. A Presidential Emergency Board is to be empanelled to negotiate a new contract. Failing that, the dispute would go to Congress to write up a new agreement.

Russ St. John said a moribund customer is coming back to life on Providence and Worcester's line in Portland, Conn. meaning that the Connecticut River swing bridge will once again be back in action.

Richard Schreiner reported that in the first month of the new UPass service operated by HART for Naugatuck Valley Community College students in Danbury, HART carried 682 students on UPass trips in October. The UPass service in Danbury began on October 1.

**Chairman's Report**

Chairman Maloney reported that several start-up companies are seeking to become the 'Uber of trucking', using smartphone technology to connect cargoes and customers. Trucker Path of San Francisco is an industry leader in this new field. Convoy, a new firm from Seattle, has attracted \$2.5 million in investor funds, including backing from Amazon founder Jeff Bezos.

Meeting attendee Tom Walsh, who had worked on international shipping for United Parcel Service, said that his firm has used drivers in Italy who were not actual employees but

rather short term drivers contracted to move individual loads. Though not UPS employees, we put them in UPS uniforms, Walsh said.

Kevin also summarized an October 8 press release from Governor Malloy's office which discussed the costs and economic benefits of widening Interstate 95 across Connecticut and Interstate 84 between Danbury and Waterbury. The Interstate 84 project, pegged at a cost of \$1.5 billion, was cited as generating \$4.4 billion in new business sales, a \$2.6 billion increase to Connecticut's gross state product, and \$1.8 billion in new wage income to workers. The Interstate 95 figures were \$10.7 billion in project costs, \$15.5 billion in new business sales, \$9 billion of additional gross state product, and \$6.3 billion in new wage income. The economic analysis that developed these figures was conducted by ConnDOT.

### **Summary of Public Hearings**

Fred Riese provided a brief review of the salient issues from each of the Commission's seven public hearings of 2015 in Norwich, Plainville, Hamden, Derby, Old Saybrook, Windsor Locks and Stamford. He also distributed a list of what he saw as potential topics for recommendations for the 2015 Annual Report arising from the hearings. Other members contributed some additional ideas. There was also some discussion of the proposed *CTfastrak* East concept, how far it was likely to extend, whether it would provide significant benefit to UConn students, and whether it would reach close enough to Storrs and Willimantic that a connecting service from the Windham Region Transit District might be feasible.

Fred reminded members that the annual work session for the Annual Report will be Thursday, November 19 at Union Station in New Haven at 5:00 pm.

### **Discussion of November 16 Presentation at UConn**

Nick Lownes shared his vision for the upcoming student lunchtime forum on transportation at UConn. He has already invited several speakers. The time will be 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. at the School of Business conference room. The format of the forum will be a regular CPTC public hearing. Fred volunteered to draft and send a legal notice to Nick and to contact the Windham Region Transit District to extend an invitation. Nick will contact the Mansfield Senior Center to check on interest there.

### **New Business**

Fred said that the Federal Railroad Administration's Tier I EIS on the NEC Future vision plan will be released on November 9. This document will present and evaluate several alternatives for an over-arching 30 year vision for the Northeast Corridor from which individual projects will then flow.

Kevin mentioned he will attend the next in the series of Hartford Interstate 84 viaduct presentations to describe the surviving viaduct replacement options that will be further evaluated and developed for this stretch of I-84. Above ground, at-grade, sunken and tunnel options are being considered.

Chairman Maloney closed the meeting at 3:08 pm.