

**AGENDA**

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MEETING

**October 2, 2008 - 1:30 PM**

Union Station, Fourth Floor Conference Room  
New Haven

1. Approval of the September 4, 2008 meeting minutes
2. Featured Speaker:
3. Comments from the public
4. Comments from operating entities
5. Chairman's report
6. Old business
7. New business

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission  
Minutes of September 4, 2008

Legislative Office Building, Conference Room 1A  
Hartford, Connecticut

**Attendance: Members:** Tom Cheeseman, Morton Katz, Russell St. John, Terry Hall, Yvonne Loteczka, Richard Schreiner, Richard Carpenter, Richard Sunderhauf, Kevin Maloney, Ed McAnaney, Christopher Adams. **Ex-officio members:** Susan Simmat (OPM), Connie Mendolia (DEP), Fred Riese (DEP). **ConnDOT staff:** Dennis King. **Guests:** Stephen Troster.

Chairman Cheeseman opened the meeting at 1:30 pm. The minutes of the meeting of August 7 were approved as written.

Scheduled speaker Norman Garrick of the UCONN Transportation Institute had a family medical emergency arise today and was not able to attend the meeting. Therefore, Chairman Cheeseman moved on to other agenda items.

**Comments from the public**

None.

**Comments from Operating Entities**

Fred Riese described recent progress on two fronts concerning agreements to formalize the access rights of Providence and Worcester Railroad and Valley Railroad at Old Saybrook. The agreements would implement the requirements of the Federal Railroad Administration's Record of Decision on the Northeast Corridor Electrification Project. Amtrak notified Riese that it has forwarded a request to its central real estate office in Philadelphia to develop a license agreement granting Valley Railroad access rights to the legs of the Old Saybrook Wye. The wye is owned by Amtrak. Valley Railroad uses the wye very occasionally but access to these tracks is important on those rare occasions when they need to store cars or place equipment near the Old Saybrook station.

The second item of progress relates to the lease agreement under which Valley operates on the DEP-owned Valley Line property. A revised lease agreement has been drafted and recently forwarded to the Attorney General's office for review and approval. Provisions of the revised lease agreement will resolve the issue of who is responsible for maintaining the southernmost 2,000 feet of the leased track to FRA Class II standards. This will remove the final sticking point which has held up a three-way lease agreement between Valley, P&W and DEP concerning P&W's rights to access this portion of the track for occasional use as a siding.

Richard Schreiner informed the Commission that HART's Ridgefield-to-Katonah Shuttle, which provides access to the Harlem Line of Metro-North, is running at capacity, with both the buses and the Ridgefield parking lot at Jesse Lee Methodist Church being full. HART is also retiring some of its buses, and six of the retired RTS buses are being sent to New Britain to meet vehicle needs there.

### **Chairman's Report**

Chairman Cheeseman will be in Philadelphia Sept. 16-17 for a Federal Transit Administration seminar. He also reported on recent developments at the Middletown Transit District. A new contractor to operate the Middletown Area Transit service has been selected and talks will begin at noon Friday on a contract with this operator. Tom reported that there was a \$1,000,000 difference between the winning bid and the second bid. As soon as the operating contract is concluded, that firm will sit down with Local 671 to negotiate a labor contract. Tom also mentioned that the contractor who was to fabricate a new wrought iron gate for the new bus terminal was unable to perform that work and has bailed out of the contract.

### **Old Business**

Fred Riese solicited volunteers to moderate the four fall public hearings. Tom Cheeseman will officiate at the Middletown hearing September 9. Mort Katz will preside September 23 in Winsted. The Willimantic public hearing October 8 will have Kevin Maloney as moderator. And the Danbury hearing on October 21 will be chaired by Russ St. John.

Terry Hall reported that work is still continuing on the Thames River Bridge replacement project and the contractor's contract has been extended. The removal of the concrete counterweight of the old bridge is continuing. Bumpers (fenders) are still being added on the new Amtrak bridge. Reestablishment of double track service over the new bridge has not been completed. Work at the Thames River Bridge should be completed by February 2009.

Russ St. John mentioned that ConnDOT is co-sponsoring a Transportation Forum in Meriden on September 11. It appears to be generally confined to highway issues. Tom Cheeseman plans to attend the forum and will report to the Commission next month.

Dick Carpenter asked for updates on the status of the New Haven Yard rail maintenance facility and on the delivery schedule for the new M-8 rail cars, which he had heard is being delayed. He also lamented the two-year timeframe involved in the preparation of the EIS for the proposed Springfield Line commuter rail service. A recent Hartford Courant editorial had also questioned the value of going through that process for this project.

### **New Business**

Fred Riese reported that the Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority (RIPTA) is instituting very severe service cuts to deal with a \$12 million deficit. The RIPTA cuts, which were announced yesterday, will affect 50 routes, with service being either reduced or eliminated. Service to four towns will be eliminated entirely. The cuts will eliminate 4.7 million rides annually, or about 20% of the total annual ridership, but will still only partially resolve the agency's \$12 million deficit.

Tom Cheeseman said that the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority is considering a fare increase from \$1.50 to \$1.75 to deal with fuel cost problems.

Chairman Cheeseman adjourned the meeting at 2.59 p.m.