

AGENDA

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MEETING

Thursday, December 4, 2003 - 1:30 PM

Union Station, Conference Room A

New Haven, Connecticut

1. Approval of the November 6, 2003 meeting minutes
2. Cynthia Lemek, Executive Director, All Aboard! Inc.
3. Comments from the public
4. Report from operating entities
5. Chairman's report
6. Old business
7. Discussion and voting on Annual Report recommendations
8. Other New business

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CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MEETING ATTENDANCE

THURSDAY, November 6, 2003

D.O.T. Headquarters, Conference Room B

Newington, Connecticut

VOTING MEMBERS

Linda Blair
Tom Cheeseman
Morton Katz
Yvonne Loteczka
David Reed
Russell St. John
Richard Sunderhauf

GUESTS

Charles Langley
Mario Marrero
Jean Pottinger
Stephen Troster

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Cindy Gollareny
Dennis Jolly
Peter Richter

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes

November 6, 2003

(Meeting convened at 1:33 p.m.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 2, 2003

Accepted as written.

FEATURED SPEAKERS – KEY POINTS

MARIO MARRERO, Jobs Access Project Manager, North Central Region, Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), provided an update on the Job Access program. The program began on 1997 and averages 3,000 passengers per month in this region. Funding is received from the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). In addition, this year the program received special legislative funding through the Eastern Connecticut Transportation Access Program (ECTAP), as well as high performance bonus money from the DSS. As a result, services are being provided from New Britain and Hartford to the casinos for approximately 130 employees. Bus service for two (2) shifts is being provided from Hartford, and for one (1) shift from New Britain. However, these and or other services may be in jeopardy in the event the program does not receive this additional funding next calendar year, or if the FTA reworks the funding formula.

Mr. Marrero reported on the success of the bus-users Environmental Justice forum that took place in the Hartford area for the public to express concerns with the public transportation system.

Mr. Marrero announced that funding for bus signs has been secured and they will be installed across the region in the towns that currently have CTTransit service. Funding for bus shelters requires a 20% town match and CRCOG is currently working with the towns to secure that match.

Mr. Marrero provided a brief update on the following: (a) the Hartford-New Britain Busway Station Area Planning Study, final recommendations for land use in the vicinity of transit stations are expected in early 2004; (b) the New Britain Busway, the consultants have initiated the design phase; (c) the Griffin Study, the next step is the selection of the locally preferred alternative; (d) the Manchester Busway, existing and future conditions and alternatives analysis are complete and the draft plan to be finished later this year, steering committee and public information meetings expected to take place early next year; and (e) the New Haven - Hartford - Springfield Rail Commuter Implementation Plan, consultants considering options for alternatives of minimum-build vs. maximum-build infrastructure.

DR. MARK MITCHELL, Founding President of the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice (CCEJ), reported on the CCEJ Clean Bus Campaign. The long-term goal is to improve air quality in the Hartford area and to reduce asthma and increase public and policymaker awareness of diesel emissions.

The CCEJ is particularly concerned with diesel engines and the particulates they emit. Particulates come primarily from the burning of fossil fuels. Diesel fuel contributes up to half the total PM 2.5 emissions in urban areas. PM 2.5 is very small (2.5 microns or less) particulate emissions that can be absorbed within a person's body. These particulates have been linked to asthma and other medical problems. However, diesel is not known to cause asthma but rather to exacerbate it. PM 2.5 has been directly related to the daily death rate. New Haven is the only area in CT that is not in full compliance with the current PM 2.5 standards.

Dr. Mitchell reported that since the three-minute school bus idling law went into effect October 1, 2002, the number of school buses idling decreased from 2/3rds to 1/3rd. Dr. Mitchell reported that new generation school bus engines produce much lower particulate emissions than current buses, and that the use of particulate traps on the buses can reduce the emissions further.

The objectives of the CCEJ include: advocating for a state-of-the-art clean fuel technology transit bus fleet; retrofitting older diesel transit buses with pollution control technologies; restricting diesel truck traffic through residential neighborhoods; and the enforcement of emission control regulations for diesel school buses.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

REPORT FROM OPERATING ENTITIES

Richard Sunderhauf distributed a newsletter for CTTransit metroHartford customers with service adjustments going into effect November 9, 2003. Mr. Sunderhauf also reported that CTTransit, Hartford Division, advertised for 6 Bus Driver positions and as a result mailed over 400 applications.

Charles Langley, reported that Richard Schreiner participated in a planning charrette for the redeveloping of the former Gilbert & Bennett wire mill in Georgetown, CT.

Dennis Jolly, Connecticut Department of Transportation, reported on the success of the low sulfur demonstration in place in Stamford. Mr. Jolly also reported that the Department is exploring funding possibilities of switching appropriate transit systems to 100% use of ultra low sulfur diesel which would require approximately \$600,000 additional funding statewide.

Peter Richter, Connecticut Department of Transportation, reported that the Danbury Branch Electrification Feasibility Study is approximately 50% complete with an approximate completion date of mid 2004. Information on the study can be found at danburybranchstudy.com. The Connecticut Rail Station Governance Study is also expected to be complete in mid 2004. Information on this study can be found at ctrailgovernance.com.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Cheeseman reported that the glitches associated with the new CORE-CT software being phased in by the State are improving, and as a result, payments from ConnDOT to the transit districts should be forthcoming.

Mr. Cheeseman expressed his surprise regarding the recent announcement of the proposed Intermodal Transportation Center in Waterbury.

OLD BUSINESS

Fred Riese announced that there was a large newspaper article in the Waterbury Republican written as a result of the Torrington public hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

Morton Katz commented on a recent trip to Italy and expressed we have a great deal to learn from European railroads.

(Meeting adjourned at 3:33 P.M.)