

## **AGENDA**

### CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, January 3 2008-1:30 p.m.  
Department of Transportation  
Newington  
Conference Room B

1. Approval of the Dec. 06 2007 meeting minutes
2. Featured Speaker: TBA
3. Comments from the public
4. Comments from operating entities
5. Chairman's report
7. Old business
8. New business

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission  
Minutes of December 6, 2007

Office of Rails New Haven  
Fourth Floor Conference Room

**Attendance: Members:** Tom Cheeseman, Russ St. John, , Kevin Maloney, Terry Hall, Rich Sunderhauf, Rick Schreiner, Dick Carpenter, John R. Zelinsky. Chris Adams, Fred Riese, Yvonne Loteczka, William Kelaher, **Ex-officio members:** Susan Simmat, Fred Riese. **ConnDOT staff:** Dennis King. **Guests:** Michael Krauss, Glendine Henry DSS Brook Hoberman

Chairman Cheeseman opened the meeting at 1:35 PM. The minutes of the meeting of November 1, 2007 were approved with several corrections.

**Featured Speaker:**

Michael Krauss of the Regional Growth Connection was the guest speaker. The Regional .Growth Connection is, a transportation to work program for TANF clients is a collaboration of the Regional Growth Partnership, Rideworks and the WorkForce Alliance that has been in existence since 1197. The R G C. will have served over 22, 000 unduplicated riders in calendar 2007. Other programs include the Jobs Starter program, which has been a huge success until the eligibility requirements changed 3 years ago. The program changed to only TANF eligible and those receiving TANF clients. A matrix on income and the number of children in a family determines the eligibility.

The Job Starter program is going to change somewhat going into 2008 State Administered General Assistance (SAGA) A new layer of eligibility is being added. The eligibility will be expanded to SAGA, but only 10% of the total budget can be spent on SAGA recipients

Another very big program is the Auto Emergency Fund Program. For people who drive their vehicle to work, who don't live near public transportation or those who work shifts where public transportation is not available, are able to tap into the Auto Emergency Fund for problems with their vehicle or for auto registration, insurance payments or license renewal fees. The Auto Emergency Fund Program allows for a \$600 one time benefit.

Another item being added to the Job Starter program is the Gas Voucher System. It has never been done before and the demands are unknown. The user would receive a \$20.00 gas voucher that could be renewed two additional times for a total of a \$60 benefit. This program is expected to begin in January 2008. Programs in the past have been very well received and the number of users is growing, based on survey results.

In response to a question on future Federal Support for Job Access, Krauss said CDOT was lobbying Congress for additional funds. Chairman Cheeseman advised that the move from a competitive basis for Jobs Access grants to a Formula based eligibility has hurt Connecticut and

the Northeastern States. In response to an additional question, concerning some bus routes and handicap vehicles, Krauss advised all vehicles used are handicapped accessible

### **Comments from the Public:**

Brook Hoberman advised that the free bus pass program will be extended from Hartford to New Haven and Stamford for first time bus riders traveling to their jobs. She spoke of a problem in New Haven when the Mayor made a broadcast concerning the free passes to 29,000 individuals but failed to note the requirements, resulting in hundreds of calls from individuals not eligible for the program. There were actually 465 eligible requests so far in New Haven for passes in November for this program. There is no way of tracking whether or not a person to whom a pass is issued gives it to someone else or uses it.

Glendine Henry of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services spoke on a transportation program which provides transportation to work for the disabled community. She gave an example of a program at the Walgreen Distribution Center in Windsor in which 1/3 of the employees to be employed will be individuals with cognitive disabilities. The state received a 5 million grant to BRS annually over the next 5 years to investigate and implement measures to get disabled clients to jobs.

### **Reports from Operating Entities**

Sunderhauf- Alvin Douglas is retiring after 30 years of service. Alvin was a Business Agent for the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Rich Schreiner- HART finally finished the Danbury-Bridgeport and Danbury-Waterbury bus proposals. For the Bridgeport connection-looking at a plan similar to route 7 link service to Norwalk. For Waterbury Service-looking at beefing up and subsidizing the Peter Pan service.

William Kelleher reported the union on Metro-North signed a contract last month so all should be quite until 2010 when the contract expires. As far as Amtrak is concerned, President Bush appointed a new Presidential Emergency Board to prevent a strike in December. The Board will present recommendations which either side can accept or reject. If either side rejects, then a 30 day cooling off period begins after which a strike or a lockout could result in February. The strike will have minimum effect on Metro-North however Amtrak and the Shoreline East Line could be shut down.

Sue Summat reported that the Governor's Commission on the reorganization of CDOT has extended the deadline to December 17, 2007 for the completion of the report.

Fred Reise reported on the second meeting of the committee concerning the expansion of I95 and the environmental impact study. CDOT has requested DEP to participate in the Phase 11 of Danbury Branch

### **Chairman's Report**

Chairman Cheeseman reported that after 26 years of operating without a union, Teamsters won elections at the Middletown Area Transit and at the GNHTD

### **Old Business**

DEP has completed the Final Impact Study of Route 11.

### **New Business**

WCBS Radio in New York stated that there would be a change on the new catenaries completion 2017 date. Former completion date was 2012; the additional time was reportedly due to Bridge work on the line.

### **Discussions of Recommendations**

The commission agrees to add to the Accessible tax recommendation in addition to the Cell phone parking lots recommendation to the Annual Report.

Mr. Cheeseman adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.