

AGENDA

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MEETING

Thursday, September 2, 2004 - 1:30 PM

Legislative Office Building, Hearing Room 1B

Hartford, Connecticut

1. Approval of the August 5, 2004 meeting minutes
2. Featured speaker: H. James Boice, Bureau Chief, Office of Policy and Planning, Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT)
3. Comments from the public
4. Report from operating entities
5. Chairman's report
6. Old business
7. New business

CPTC Liaison – Cynthia Gollareny (860) 594-2832  
cynthia.gollareny@po.state.ct.us

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MEETING ATTENDANCE

THURSDAY, August 5, 2004

D.O.T. Headquarters, Conference Room B

Newington, Connecticut

VOTING MEMBERS

Dorothy Adamson  
Linda Blair  
Tom Cheeseman  
N. Terry Hall  
Morton Katz  
William Kelaher  
Yvonne Loteczka  
David Reed  
Richard Schreiner  
Russell St. John  
Richard Sunderhauf

GUESTS

Stephen Troster  
Anthony Savino

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese  
Philip Smith

CDOT STAFF

Cindy Gollareny  
Pamela Guinan  
Michael Sanders

# CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

## Minutes

August 5, 2004

(Meeting convened at 1:31 p.m.)

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – July 8, 2004

Linda Blair made a motion to accept the minutes pending any necessary corrections, additions or deletions. Dorothy Adamson seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

### **FEATURED SPEAKER – KEY POINTS**

None.

### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

### **REPORT FROM OPERATING ENTITIES**

Richard Sunderhauf reported that the members of Amalgamated Transit Union locals in Hartford, New Haven and Stamford have authorized a strike if a new contract cannot be reached for approximately 700 bus drivers, mechanics and maintenance workers. Both the Amalgamated Transit Union locals and CTTransit will work diligently to attempt to reach a deal before the latest contract extension expires on August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Fred Riese reported that Kimberly-Clark of New Milford is shutting down their Diaper Division at the end of September. This is one of Housatonic Railroad's largest customers.

Richard Schreiner announced that the Job Links Task Force, in conjunction with The Kennedy Center, has scheduled "Public Transit 101", an outreach workshop designed to teach human services professionals in Northwest Connecticut about people with disabilities accessing public transportation in order to get to work. The first workshop will take place on September 14<sup>th</sup> in Torrington.

Russell St. John reported the substantial track upgrades on the Providence and Worcester tracks in Middletown are in the final stages. Mr. St. John also reported that the state is doing fender replacement work mandated by the Coast Guard on the Connecticut River Swing Bridge.

William Kelaher reported that MetroNorth is going into a second year without a contract for over 73% of Union's on MetroNorth. The coalition is moving forward to file for mediation to begin the process on moving the stalled contract talks.

In May, labor was contacted by MetroNorth and ConnDOT to have MetroNorth assume the servicing contract of Shore Line East equipment, while Amtrak remain as the operating agent. This issue has been postponed to possibly June or July 2005. Additionally, the 28 railcars the state was acquiring for MetroNorth is also being postponed.

Michael Sanders reported that marketing activities, the statewide telephone number (1-877-CTRIDES) and CTRIDES.com will all be enhanced during this fiscal year. Approximately \$1 million in Federal and State money has been allocated for marketing activities, which is a 50% increase from previous years. CTRIDES.com will include a travel itinerary planning system known as Trips 1-2-3. This is a tri-state effort with New York, New Jersey and CT where customers have the ability to input the ends of their trip and the system will provide a transit planning routing. The state will have operators available to assist customers who do not have access to the Internet. The areas of the state that touch the rail system will be included in the system at this time. A second soft launch is scheduled for this month and the system may be in place before year-end. Mr. Sanders noted that CT must have a good transit product, i.e., a high quality of service, in order for the marketing efforts to be successful.

Mr. Sanders also mentioned that there has been no mention of accommodations for transit in any information he has seen about the proposed Blue Back Square development in West Hartford.

Regarding the bus stop relocations in New Haven, Mr. Sanders clarified that, for city streets, the Traffic Commission makes the decisions. The state has worked with the city since 1998 and is in favor of restoring the stops as close to their original locations as possible.

Mr. Sanders also reported that although there is a fare increase taking effect in January, there would not be a reduction in service.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr. Cheeseman received an email from Peggy Hetherington of MetroPool, Inc. stating that the ridesharing organizations are in the midst of a negotiating process with ConnDOT to keep most of their programs in place following a competitive qualification process. Philip Smith of OPM clarified that it is not the scope of the services being provided that is being changed, but rather that a competitive bid process will be conducted to provide these services. In the past, ConnDOT has simply renewed the existing brokerage operations contracts on an annual basis.

Mr. Cheeseman referenced a letter from Senator Joseph Lieberman pertaining to the federal transportation reauthorization process. The letter stated that it would be an “uphill battle” to protect the level of funding in Connecticut. Currently the proposals from the Senate and House are in the hands of the conferees and Mr. Cheeseman is hopeful that Connecticut’s interest will be protected.

In the last several weeks, three (3) transit organizations have shut down across the country for financial reasons. Mr. Cheeseman has been tracking one of these districts in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The district was established in 1991 and a year ago was \$235,000 in debt. As of last month, their debt had ballooned to \$1 million. The State of PA cut the statewide public transportation funding by 6%, having an effect on the agencies that provide public transportation. The transit district and state are currently pointing fingers at each other over who is going to assume the debt. This demonstrates how cuts in public transportation funding can effect agencies that are responsible for carrying out the mission, and establishes that transit managers and those responsible for oversight must do their parts. Mr. Cheeseman will continue to monitor the others.

Mr. Cheeseman referenced an editorial from the July 26<sup>th</sup> edition of “Transit News” which stated that Northern New Jersey Transit is “booming” compared to CT. As a result, Mr. Cheeseman finds it necessary to closely examine how we are doing business, how we can improve, how we can get more public support, and how we can get individuals out of their cars and onto trains and buses.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Cheeseman distributed a copy of a letter to former ex-officio member of the Commission, John Radacsi, congratulating him on his retirement and thanking him for his service.

Fred Riese reminded Commission members to submit their reimbursement forms to him for review.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Fred Riese recommended the four (4) fall public hearings be held in North Canaan, Old Saybrook, Middletown, and Waterbury. Dates to be announced.

(Meeting adjourned at 2:25 P.M.)