

AGENDA

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MEETING

Thursday, October 2, 2003 - 1:30 PM

Union Station, Conference Room A

New Haven, Connecticut

1. Approval of the September 4, 2003 meeting minutes
2. Guest Speaker – No Guest Speaker at October meeting
3. Comments from the public
4. Report from operating entities
5. Chairman's report
6. Old business
7. New business

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CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MEETING ATTENDANCE

THURSDAY, September 4, 2003

Legislative Office Building, Hearing Room 1B

Hartford, Connecticut

VOTING MEMBERS

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

GUESTS

Peter Cohen
Mario Marrero
Jean Pottinger
Bradshaw Smith
Stephen Troster

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Cindy Gollareny
Len Lapsis
Laila Mandour

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes

September 4, 2003

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

The meeting was opened with the welcoming of new member Mr. David M. Reed to the Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 7, 2003

The August 7, 2003 minutes were approved with the following corrections and additions:

A comment by Mr. Harry Harris, Bureau Chief of Public Transportation, indicating that the CTTransit fare would rise to \$1.10 in FY 2004 and \$1.25 in FY 2005, was inadvertently omitted.

The July 10, 2003 meeting was opened by Vice-Chairman, Morton Katz and turned over to the Chairman upon his arrival.

It was noted that the August meeting was held at the Department of Transportation, Newington, not at the Legislative Office Building, Hartford.

FEATURED SPEAKERS – KEY POINTS

Peter Cohen, Director of Government Affairs, Amtrak, reported that there has been an increase in Amtrak ridership in 2003. Regional trains in the Northeast up 9.9%, the Acela Express between Boston and New York up 13% as a result of lower fares, and the Springfield Line up 38% as a result of reduced fares and five additional trains. Also, ridership in Stamford, Connecticut has increased 46% between 1999-2002. Mr. Cohen also reported that July was the highest ridership in Amtrak's history with over 2.2 million passengers.

Mr. Cohen stated that Amtrak was temporarily unable to provide service north of New York as a result of the black out. However, limited service was available between Penn Station and points south along the Northeast Corridor.

Mr. Cohen referenced Amtrak's partnership with Connecticut to (a) upgrade the Springfield - New Haven line to permit heavy-axle load freight traffic as well as improve reliability and enhance safety, (b) improve stations and platforms along the Shore Line East service, and (c) improve Metro-North service from New Haven to New Rochelle by making track, curve and catenary improvements, including the replacement of a series of interlockings.

Mr. Cohen announced that Mr. David Gunn, Amtrak President and CEO, has requested a budget of \$1.8 billion in FY04 for operating and capital expenses, divided approximately 50/50 between them. Mr. Carpenter made a motion to send an email to the Congressional Delegation urging them to provide Amtrak with the \$1.8 billion for FY 2004 requested by Mr. Gunn. Mr. St. John seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ms. Jean Pottinger expressed her concern with the recent changes in the CTTransit Berlin Turnpike Flyer and L-3 Route bus services and the hardship they have caused the riders. Ms. Pottinger also expressed her concern with statewide construction projects.

Mr. Bradshaw Smith inquired on the status of several State projects and the ConnDOT hearings on FTA Sections 5307 and 5309 funds.

REPORT FROM OPERATING ENTITIES

Fred Riese attended a meeting regarding the replacement of the Northeast Corridor Bridge over the Pattagansett River, East Lyme. Mr. Riese reported that Amtrak would like to replace the bridge and raise the tracks to allow for both an increase in operating speed from 90 mph to 105 mph and a slight increase in boat clearance. The cost of the 18-month project is approximately \$5 million and is scheduled to begin in spring 2004.

Richard Schreiner reported that 3 buses were on standby during the duration of the power outage at the request of the City of Danbury. The buses were not called into service.

Russell St. John stated his disappointment in the reduction in funding for the Operation Lifesaver program.

Linda Blair met with the ConnDOT webmaster and reported that the ConnDOT website is currently being redesigned and will include the CPTC.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Cheeseman circulated an advertisement for an ADA accessible taxicab that he hopes can be incorporated in the State of Connecticut. The minivan style taxicab can accommodate one wheelchair and 5-6 passengers.

Mr. Cheeseman reported that Congress has decreased Job Access funds and moved these funds into infrastructure for rolling stock and facilities. He also stated that the Connecticut Legislature has appropriated approximately \$40 million for TSB projects mainly to be spent in Fairfield County to relieve congestion.

Mr. Cheeseman announced that the State Association will host an event with Ms. Rachel Simon, award winning author of “Riding the Bus with my Sister”, on October 30, 2003, at Union Station, New Haven, 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Mr. Cheeseman encouraged each Commission member to attend.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Riese announced that the three fall public hearings have been scheduled as follows: Thursday, September 25, in Bristol, Morton Katz moderator; Tuesday October 7, in Torrington, Fred Riese moderator; Thursday October 16, in Danbury, Richard Shreiner moderator. The hearings will take place at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Cheeseman reported that there has been a change in the Dial-a-Ride provider in the town of Wethersfield from the Greater Hartford Transit District to LogistiCare, a brokerage company with a transportation provider network. Yvonne Loteczka reported that LogistiCare will restrict medical trips to a Monday - Thursday schedule.

Mr. Hall reported that the Department of Transportation has published a series of listening sessions for updating the State’s Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRP).

(Meeting adjourned at 3:07 P.M.)