Southeastern Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Meeting

Date: Thursday, April 27th, 2017

Location: Fall River Government Center (Cafeteria)

1 Government Center

Fall River, MA 02721

(1) Call to Order

**The meeting was called to order at 5:11PM EST by the Advisory Board Chair.**

(2) Roll Call

Present:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| City of New Bedford | City of Fall River |
| ADA Representative |  |

Absent:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Town of Acushnet | Town of Mattapoisett |
| Town of Dartmouth | Town of Somerset |
| Town of Fairhaven | Town of Swansea |
| Town of Freetown | Town of Westport |
| Riders Representative |  |

Additional Attendees:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Erik Rousseau, SRTA | Kristen Sniezek, SRTA |
| John LeBert, SRTA | Arthur Frank, Legal Counsel |
| Shayne Trimbell, SRPEDD |  |

(3) Approval of Minutes

**The motion was made (Fall River) and seconded (ADA Representative) to approve the minutes from the previous March (03/30/2017) Advisory Board Meeting. So Voted.**

(4) Citizen’s Participation

Mr. Gary Pires (ATU Local 1037 President / South Coast Transit Management) expressed gratitude on behalf of the Drivers / Mechanics for the quick resolution to the matter brought forth at the previous Advisory Board Meeting (retro paychecks) as well as cited the beginning stages of a working, healthy relationship with the new General Manager and Assistant General Manager.

Mr. Pires expressed greetings and salutations from the former Riders Representative Board Member—Sigute Meilus (now executive director for transportation America)—and noted the hope for her replacement (riders rep seat filled) can only be a plus. The Board acknowledges Ms. Megilius’ greetings.

A resident from Fall River (BRU) questioned if there will be bus service to the soon to be opened Market Basket in Fall River. SRTA noted that service did previously enter that lot, however is not currently due to site being closed for construction, however, service will commence upon completion of construction. As done at the Market Basket in New Bedford, Market Basket is said to be building a bus shelter on the premises.

A resident from Fall River questioned the bus stop sign at the Fourth Street & Branch Street intersection stating the difficulty in seeing and as well as navigating to and from said stop due to cars being parked around that area. SRTA asks that this issue be reported to Customer Service and SRTA will formally look into the matter.

(5) Operator’s Report

Karen Walton (General Manager) introduced herself to the Board as the new General Manager (First Transit / South Coast Transit Management) as well as pointed out Mark McClanan as the new Assistant General Manager—noting the 35 plus years’ experience between the duo.

Ms. Walton began by noting the recent meetings and relations with the Union and (echoed by Mr. Pires’ earlier statement) expressed positive remarks. Working with the Union officials, Management has been able to impose a strengthened cell phone policy, clear all grievances and avoid arbitration, resolve any and all confusion regarding the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), and instituted an *Open Door Policy* between the Operators and Management whereas the formerly locked door between Operations—Management will now be unlocked during business hours.

Ms. Walton shared with the Board the decision to establish a satellite office in the Fall River Garage of which herself and Mr. McClanan (Assistant General Manager) will be working out of periodically; allowing the Fall River personnel more access to Management.

Together, Ms. Walton and Mr. McClanan have been able to complete Environment Inspections at both the New Bedford and Fall River Facilities as well as work closely with the Authority on recent projects such as Maintenance Management, Fuel Management, and Transit Management Technology—in addition to the Operating Budget.

Lastly, Ms. Walton noted the initial stages of possible restructure of upper management at the Operator level.

(6) Civil Rights Update

Title VI: The new Title VI Plan has been submitted and is awaiting approval. To date there have been no Title VI complaints under the new Plan.

EEO: The new EEO Plan for South Coast Transit Management was submitted on August 19th, 2016 and is awaiting approval. To date there have been no EEO complaints.

DBE: The SRTA DBE goals for Fiscal Year 2016 through Fiscal Year 2018 have been submitted and are awaiting approval. SRTA achieved their DBE goal for Federal Fiscal Year 2016. SRTA’s DBE goal for Federal Fiscal Year 2017 will be 2.2% participation. The first reporting period of this year will be June 1st, 2017.

Environmental Justice: This is a requirement that SRTA has to engage the Public whenever there is a major project or route change. SRTA is constantly working to increase Public participation. If any Public input is needed, it will be reported to the Board as part of this report.

(7) Old Business

*Update on Security:*

SRTA continues to work on the security matters at the Fall River Terminal and will continue to update the Board, accordingly. At this time, there have been no major developments.

*Update on ADA Certification:*

SRTA was provided the “Best Practices” from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), of which the current application was derived from. The Authority is awaiting final guidance and subsequent approval from FTA on this matter.

*FY18 Draft Budget Discussion:*

Mr. Erik Rousseau (Administrator) presented the SRTA FY18 Draft Budget highlights which included the Operator moving toward a self-funded Short Term Disability plan as well as the recurring effects of the ongoing MMS, FMS, and TMT projects. Also noteworthy is the (Operator) pension figure increase which is as a result of shifting the fund assumption from 7.5 to 7 percent growth on the assets (this lower growth is cause for the higher contribution).

The City of New Bedford questioned the reduction under General and Administrative of which Mr. Rousseau stated is due to the previous budgetary year had accounted for contract (CBA) negotiations—which will not occur during the next fiscal year.

The City of Fall River questioned the reduction under Operating Revenue of which Mr. Rousseau stated is due to the apparent downtick in ridership, however, this decrease in ridership is a State / National trend—whereas SRTA’s decline is lesser than that of its peer Agencies.

(8) New Business

No new business to report.

(9) Logistics for the Next Advisory Board Meeting

The next SRTA Advisory Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 25th at 5:00PM in New Bedford; with the objective to reserve Room 314 of the New Bedford City Hall.

City of Fall River (May 25th is the firm date; last Thursday) stated the inability to attend, however, the City will look to alternatives (potential proxy / stand-in) to nullify this matter due to the importance of the next meeting.

The City of New Bedford asks that the next Advisory Board Meeting correspondences emphasize the importance of participation for this meeting since the Authority / Board will be looking to approve the budget—whereas participation / quorum is of utmost meaning.

Mr. Arthur Frank (Legal Counsel) mentioned the action to reach out to the Town of Somerset in order to stress the importance of having representation present at SRTA Advisory Board Meetings.

(10) Adjournment

**A motion was made (Fall River) and seconded (ADA Representative) to adjourn the meeting at 5:38PM EST. So Voted.**