Southeastern Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board Meeting

Date: Thursday, September 29th, 2016

Location: Fall River Government Center (Cafeteria)

1 Government Center

Fall River, MA 02721

(1) Call to Order

**The meeting was called to order at 5:03PM EST by the Advisory Board Chair.**

(2) Roll Call

Present:

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| City of Fall River | Town of Swansea |
| City of New Bedford | Town of Fairhaven (late arrival) |

Absent:

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

(3) Approval of Minutes

**The motion was made (Fall River) and seconded (Swansea) to approve the minutes from the previous Advisory Board Meeting held on May 26th, 2016. So Voted.**

(4) Citizens Participation

A passenger observed a bus driver utilizing his/her phone while operating. This particular instance occurred at the Dartmouth Mall. Additionally, this passenger also observed a separate bus driver traveling at excessive speeds on Route 6.

A resident from Fall River expressed that there needs to be additional security at the Fall River terminal during the later hours as fighting and drug use has become a more prominent issue. This resident would like to see a Police presence later hours at the Terminal.

A resident from Fall River voiced concern over the Fall River Terminal benches stating that the interior benches are too low and this resident has witnessed the elderly and handicapped struggling to get up and down.

(5) Operator’s Report

Mr. Tim Hegarty (General Manager) noted that Union Contract negotiations are still ongoing, however, meetings are happening with much more frequency as of late.

The recently implemented program with the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth—whereas students are able to show their Student ID and ride at no direct cost to the Student—has generated respectable numbers since inception in early September at approximately eight thousand (8,000) trips provided. As detailed in the program, UMass Dartmouth will compensate the Authority based on the number of trips provided based on an agreed upon per trip fare.

An ongoing driver training program will be implemented in October of 2016 and will include 3 individual areas; Defensive Driver Training, Customer Service Training, and System Security and Awareness Training. One of the goals of this program would be see improvements (via reductions) in preventable accidents and complaints—both of which are currently tracked on a monthly basis—with an ultimate goal of seeing a reduction in *overall* accidents.

Also noted was the recent acquisitions of six (6) 2016 Gillig Transit Buses, of which three (3) are 40 foot buses which have shown to alleviate former overcrowding issues.

(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 has been submitted and is awaiting approval. The average goal for the Authority throughout the plan will be 4.5%. The next report due on December 1st, 2016.

(7) Old Business

*Expanded Intercity Service:*

The final Public Hearing for this expansion of service was held on June 7th, 2016 while funding for this expansion of service was previously voted upon and passed.

**A motion was made (Fall River) and seconded (Swansea) to formally adopt the half hour service on the Intercity Route between the hours of 9:30AM and 6:00PM, Monday through Friday, into the regular fixed route schedule. So Voted.**

(8) New Business

*Pilot Service to Clover Leaf Mills:*

A request for service was made to Clover Leaf Mills in Fall River of which is currently being operated via a Pilot Service. The City of Fall River has agreed to cover the cost of the Pilot Service through the City of Fall River’s Local Assessment that is paid to the Authority—leaving no impact on State Contract Assistance, Federal Funding, or any other Community Local Assessment.

**A motion was made (Swansea) and seconded (Fairhaven) to formally adopt the Pilot Service to Clover Leaf Mills in Fall River for the duration of one year; of which will be analyzed for effectiveness during the spring. So Voted.**

*Pilot Service to Amazon:*

A request for service was made to Amazon in Fall River. Amazon will be consolidating all of their recruiting efforts to their new Fall River facility by mid-October 2016.

Amazon has expressed willingness to fully contribute to the additional incremental costs incurred by incorporating such service extension—approximately 1 mile and add 1 to 2 minutes of running time. Conversations between the City of Fall River and the Authority are ongoing as to determine the most effective and appropriate way for receiving (recipient) such funds. Once the mechanism has been decided upon, the Authority is prepared to commence said service expansion.

Initial plans are to commence with current operating hours (approximately 6:00AM to 8:30PM, Monday through Friday), however, Amazon has expressed interest in whether or not service can be started at an earlier hour. From the Authority standpoint, a discussion needs to be had with SRPEDD in order to determine the feasibility of starting at an earlier hour.

**A motion was made (Fall River) and seconded (Fairhaven) to commence the Pilot Service to Amazon in Fall River. So Voted.**

*Report from Audit Committee and Accept Audit:*

The Authority has recently completed the FY2016 Audit—conducted by Hague, Sahady & Co., P.C.—which demonstrated no findings.

The City of Fall River Representative—whom is part of the SRTA Audit Committee—reiterated the statement of no findings and reported to the Board that revenues have increased from the prior year. The Committee also reported on the preparation to address the impending OPEB liability (voted on in a previous meeting).

Mr. Rousseau deferred to Ms. Kristen Sniezek (Deputy Administrator & Chief Financial Officer) to address the question of the Chair regarding the Statement of Changes in Net Fiduciary Position. Ms. Sniezek explained to the Board that this new GASB pronouncement does not come with any *current* additional expenses to the Audit and the Authority has already begun planning and started working on the required disclosures for the 2018 Audit.

The Chair commended the staff at Southeastern Regional Transit Authority on a successful Audit.

**A motion was made (Fall River) and seconded (Swansea) to accept the Report from the Audit Committee and accept the Audit. So Voted.**

(9) Chair’s Remarks

The Chair restated the commendation of the staff at the Authority for a job well done.

The City of Fall River Representative provided commentary on their recent dealings with the Authority stating that the existing strong, positive working relationship between the local government and the Authority is critical in providing needed service throughout the community. The City of Fall River Representative noted that the goal is to take advantage of opportunities in order to increase ridership—of which the aforementioned Pilot programs are designed to accomplish.

(10) Adjournment

**A motion was made (Swansea) and seconded (Fall River) to adjourn the meeting at 5:39PM by the Advisory Board Chair.**