



Commissioners: [David L. Jaeger, Jr.](#), [Alice McQuaid, Esq.](#)
Chief Executive Officer: [Matt Pentz, CPA](#)
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**NORWALK TRANSIT DISTRICT COMMISSION - SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MAY 25, 2023, AT 6:00 PM – NORWALK TRANSIT DISTRICT
CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM MEETING**

ATTENDING

Norwalk Transit District Commissioners:

David Jaeger, Jr., Zoom Participant
Alice McQuaid, Esq., Zoom Participant

Norwalk Transit District Staff:

Matt Pentz, CEO
Lori Hammill, Chief Compliance Officer
La-Keba Hamilton, Transportation Manager
Mark Allbee, Interim CFO
Leslie Grattan, HR Consultant

Public:

Tanner Thompson

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 PM via ZOOM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public were given the opportunity to provide comment. There were no members from the public present.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE MAY 25, 2023 MEETING

- ** Commissioner Jaeger made a motion to approve the agenda.
- ** Commissioner McQuaid seconded the motion.
- ** Motion to approve the agenda passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 19, 2023 SPECIAL MEETING

- ** Commissioner McQuaid made a motion to approve the minutes.
- ** Commissioner Jaeger seconded the motion.
- ** Motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

FINANCE UPDATE

April Financial Report – FY23

Mr. Pentz formerly introduced Mark Allbee, interim CFO and provided the YTD April Financial Update. He stated that through 10 months of the fiscal year, the net deficit from operations was \$1.3m. This included the recoup of fare loss from the ARPA free fare funding. The deficits are the results of the Fixed Route (\$420k), Stamford ADA (\$402k) and Norwalk ADA (\$433k) programs. Both revenues and expenses are up vs prior year related to the post-pandemic recovery of services. Mr. Pentz stated that the deficits were in line with expectations as funding shortfalls continue to exist in the Norwalk Fixed Route and ADA services, in addition to a lingering impact from the Stamford ADA funding cuts made during the pandemic that have not been restored. He mentioned, these funding issues have been addressed in the FY 24 budget submittal, and that relief funds were available to cover the gaps.

Budget Report – FY24

Mr. Pentz summarized the FY 24 budget submittal that was sent to DOT. He stated projected expenses were up 3.2% and the state funding request once again included the long-standing Coastal Link funding shortfall, resulting in a State subsidy funding request of 12.12% over PY. He mentioned that fares and other revenue were projected to be up 52% due to projected ridership levels and an uptick in bus and shelter Ad revenue.

Tanner Thompson, member of the public joined the meeting and announced himself at 6:16 pm

OPERATIONS

April Ridership Report

Ms. Hamilton presented the April 2023 ridership report highlighting YTD fixed route ridership that exceeded both prior year (up 64%) and FY 19 pre-pandemic levels (up 8%). Paratransit ridership exceeded prior year (up 75%), but remained slightly under FY 19 levels (down 2%). Ms. Hamilton stated that commuter shuttle ridership was trailing in ridership recovery given the continuation of hybrid

work models. The immediate impact of free fares was a 28% decline in ridership, however following the initial shock, the decline tapered off in the 15% range.

Commissioner Jaeger commented that while people say ridership is down, in looking at the overall ridership for the fixed route services, he highlighted that overall ridership is actually up, he stated this is a good message and should be communicated. NTD concurred.

Workers Comp and Accident Review

The Workers comp and Accident Review item was tabled and will be presented in the next meeting.

PROCUREMENT UPDATE

Ms. Hammill reported and requested formal approval for the following solicitations that are funded with both operating and capital grant expenditures.

- ✓ **Award Recommendation for Lease Agreement for Temporary Office Space during construction.**
 - Request concurrence in awarding a large capital procurement in the amount of \$145,503.96 for a lease agreement for temporary office space during construction.

A motion was made by Commissioner McQuaid to approve as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Jaeger. Motion passed unanimously.

- ✓ **Announcement of Award of Tire Lease procurement.**
 - Updated the Commissioners on the award of a large operating procurement in the amount of \$212,304.15 for a tire lease agreement for a 5-year period.

CEO UPDATE

Facility Renovation Update

Mr. Pentz stated that the facility renovation at 275 Wilson Ave was underway and that staff has been doing a great job being flexible in working around the construction disruptions.

Triennial Review Results

Mr. Pentz stated that the triennial review was near completion and that the FTA reviewers only presented one finding. He stated that Ms. Morton was instrumental in assisting with the review and that it was a very positive outcome for the district.

Comprehensive Operational Analysis Update

Mr. Pentz stated that the initial phases of the NTD COA are underway with the consulting firm, Nelson Nygaard. He mentioned there would be a COA management team as well as a COA Stakeholder committee, planning for both were in progress.

Westport Consolidation

Mr. Pentz mentioned that preliminary discussions regarding consolidation were underway with the Town of Westport Transit Director, Peter Gold. It was noted that they are in the very beginning of information gathering and there would be more to come on this topic in upcoming months.

Miscellaneous Items

NTD informed the board of directors that the district had been the victim of attempted theft in the form of check fraud. The fraud scheme was being perpetrated by external actors as the activities were consistent with forged instruments that were being attempted to be drawn on the NTD bank account. There were 4 separate forgery attempts made for under \$4,000. All of these attempts were appropriately stopped by our financial control procedures on our bank account. Due to the volume of the fraud NTD, in agreement with Community bank has put the account on lockdown. All checks and payments are manually approved on a daily basis and a new account is being created. Over the course of the coming weeks/months NTD will fully migrate all cash activity to the new account.

Commissioner McQuaid questioned the origination, NTD verified that this was an external scam, Commissioner Jaeger stated this was rampant. There were no loss of funds related to this fraudulent activity.

Other business brought before the board

No other business was noted.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 22, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Adjournment

** Commissioner Jaeger made a motion to adjourn.

** Commissioner McQuaid seconded the motion.

** Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 PM