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**DRAFT MINUTES PENDING APPROVAL**  
**NORWALK TRANSIT DISTRICT COMMISSION - MEETING MINUTES**  
**DECEMBER 21, 2023, AT 6:00 PM – NORWALK TRANSIT DISTRICT**  
**CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM AND IN-PERSON 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  
Joe Scappatura, Director of Fleet and Maintenance  
Andy Gallagher, Operations Manager  
Andrea Zarate, Human Resources Manager  
Besim Krasniqi, Data and Planning Analyst  
Greg Nordin, Nelson Nygaard – NTD COA Project Manager

**Public:**

Tanner Thompson  
Paul Fox – joined at 6:14pm

**I. CALL TO ORDER – CEO**

Matt Pentz called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM via ZOOM.

## **II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Tanner Thompson thanked NTD and Nelson Nygaard for their ongoing work on the COA. He also highlighted the latest passenger advisory committee meeting and mentioned that he brought guests who have since achieved appointments to the Common Council and mentioned appreciation for the forum which enabled public official involvement.

## **III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE DECEMBER 21, 2023 COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

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

## **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 23, 2023 COMMISSION MEETING**

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

## **V. REPORTS**

### **1. Procurement Update**

Ms. Hammill reported and have been formally approved for the following solicitations that are funded with capital grant expenditures:

**i. Award recommendation for Routematch Annual Software Agreement for Core System for period 12.1.23 – 11.31.24 in the amount of \$43,651.44**

**ii. Award recommendation to approve Option 4 (Year 5) to the successful proposer, VIA Mobility, LLC in the amount of \$75,720.00**

### **2. Finance Update**

#### **i. FY 23 Audit Update**

Mr. Pentz said NTD compiled a number of open items and submitted them to the auditors. Although a little behind schedule, NTD requested a 1-month extension and expects the audit to near completion soon.

**ii. November Financial Update** - Mr. Pentz said the overall deficit from operations is \$660k through five months of the fiscal year compared to \$1.051m in the previous year. The deficit improved compared to prior year due to the return of fares. Expenses were up due to CBA wage increases, professional services, fuel and additional need for purchased transportation contractors due to increasing demand.

### **iii. FY 25 City of Norwalk Budget**

Mr. Pentz stated that NTD was requesting a flat budget to prior year. NTD expects to finish paying down the agencies long standing debt in FY 25. Commissioners McQuaid and Jaeger approved the \$661k City of Norwalk budget submittal.

## **3. Operations**

### **September 2023 Ridership Report**

Besim Krasniqi presented ridership slides as a comparison of November 2023, 2022 and 2019 (pre-pandemic). NTD had 101,471 rides on the fixed route system in November 2023. Ridership is down 19% to prior year due to the free fare impact.

Commissioner McQuaid asked about ridership for the Greenwich Commuter shuttles. Mr. Krasniqi explained that the Western loop in Greenwich was eliminated due to lack of productivity and that commuter patterns have changed following the pandemic.

Mr. Krasniqi explained that NTD continues to see recovery in paratransit ridership. Ridership is up compared to prior year which is encouraging given the return of fares.

A brief update was given on the Evening and weekend shuttle expansion as part of the Governors initiative, which NTD rolled out on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) Update**

Greg Nordin, Nelson Nygaard project manager for the NTD COA project explained the COA, and its intent to be transformative for the bus system. He stated they just completed the State of the System report and they are in the development of future transit scenarios. They will eventually recommend a network intended to best meet the needs of Norwalk and they will develop and implementation plan. Mr. Nordin spoke about the benefits of 15-minute frequency.

Commissioner McQuaid asked about the aging fleet, and there was discussion about the replacement timeline for paratransit vehicles. Mr. Nordin mentioned that the pandemic had an outsized impact on the paratransit vehicle availability and he stated there is a long backlog nationally.

Mr. Nordin discussed opportunities for system Improvement which included a discussion on facilities and infrastructure improvements.

Tanner Thompson asked about people knowing when the bus is coming, and if there is any data on how familiar non-transit riders are with the NTD system. Mr. Nordin stated the purpose of the project includes making the system as easy as possible to understand. Mr. Thompson asked why buses are running ahead of schedule. Mr. Nordin and Mr. Pentz acknowledged that running early is problematic in any transit system and that there is a need for more robust data to highlight early performance for potential purposes of additional monitoring.

#### **4. Human Resources**

Ms. Zarate mentioned that two long tenured drivers will be retiring in January; Sylvia Dixon and Yvon Philitas. There is a new driver training class in January. Driver hiring remains a challenge. She stated that construction continued to be a challenge for the workforce.

#### **5. Safety and Security**

Andy Gallagher covered the following:

##### **i. Quarterly Worker's Compensation / Accident Review Report**

Mr. Gallagher said there were 2 minor injuries in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, and 1 in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter when NTD had 1 employee with an injury. Mr. Gallagher reported that the overall workers comp ratings have been good, but cautions an adverse impact going forward.

Mr. Gallagher received approval for the annual Public Safety Transportation Plan. There were no objections from the commissioners.

#### **6. Maintenance**

Mr. Pentz said there were no issues to report from the maintenance department.

## **7. Chief Executive Officer**

### **i. Facility Renovation Update**

Mr. Pentz said the CTDOT and FTA got involved and CTDOT brought engineers to help look at the enclosure project and design. After review and dialogue CTDOT presented some scenarios one of which removed 6 out of 20 columns which presented an overall design enhancement that would work much better for NTD operations.

Banton the construction company is reviewing the feasibility of the design to determine next steps.

### **ii. 2024 Meeting Calendar**

Mr. Pentz presented a 2024 meeting calendar; a motion was approved unanimously by the board.

### **iii. Microtransit Award**

The Commissioners were updated on the \$2.1m microtransit award and December 6<sup>th</sup> press conference. Ms. Zarate spoke about a separate event where the NPS recognized 8 NTD employees at a special event at City Hall.

### **v. Miscellaneous Items**

NTD will be doing a demo with Token Transit for mobile ticketing and expects to roll out the 18-month demo in mid-January.

Mr. Pentz mentioned that NTD has finalized the lease for a small space in the Yankee Doodle Garage for a new customer service center near their bus hub.

Tanner Thompson and the Sustainable Street group received a shout out of appreciation for the Pub Crawl which was initiated by their Sustainable Streets group.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Executive session was tabled.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

\*\* Commissioner Jaeger made a motion to adjourn.

\*\* Commissioner McQuaid seconded the motion.

\*\* Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM