

## June 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes – Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority Advisory Board

***Ms. Gompert stated in accordance with Governor Baker's emergency modification of the Open Meeting Law this meeting will be held virtually. Remote participation only via Zoom Video Communications.***

Present: Alice Butler, Oak Bluffs; Mark Snider, Edgartown; Elaine Miller, Tisbury; Lenny Jason, Chilmark; Susanna Sturgis, West Tisbury; June Manning\*, Aquinnah; Sarah Nevin, Community Disabled Rider Rep, Edgartown; Angela Gompert, VTA, Lauren Thomas, VTA, Andrew Grant, VTA and David Zeilinger, TCI General Manager.

Absent: Carlton Crocker, Community Rider Rep, Chilmark

Guests: Richard Townes, Anne Sylvester and Karen Colombo

10:17am Ms. Butler called the meeting to order

**Public Comments:** Ms. Colombo, Aquinnah Board of Health, read a letter written to the VTA Advisory Board regarding COVID-19 safety measures to protect drivers and passengers. She also stated the other concern for overcrowding buses in town is that the public restrooms are not currently open. Letter attached hereto.

**Minutes:** Ms. Sturgis made a motion to accept the minutes from May 21, 2020. Mr. Snider 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ms. Manning abstained as she was absent from meeting. m/s/c

### **Financial Update:**

- A) Draft Financials: Ms. Gompert presented the board with financials through May 31, 2020 year to date and for month of May. Ms. Gompert stated she has been able to close the funding gap for the year. She stated to date spending is \$5,201,832 and operating budget is \$6,100,000, so will come in under budget. Ms. Miller inquired if the budget reflects CARES funding. Ms. Gompert stated CARES funding for the month was \$225,004.79. The board asked questions regarding CARES funding and implementation. Ms. Gompert answered the board's questions.
- B) CARES Funding: Ms. Gompert stated she has the contract for CARES funding of \$1,462,310.00 effective through September 30, 2021. She stated again the funding for the past month was \$225,004.79.

### **Old/New Business:**

- A) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update & Vehicle Load Standard & Resuming Front Door Boarding: Ms. Gompert presented the board with a presentation: **VTA Bus Operations Summer 2020: Demand Expectations & Management Ridership Crowding & Standards**. She advised the board that the guidance the VTA is following is from the MBTA and regulations are from Title VI; part of the

\*indicates arriving late or leaving early

plan, for the VTA's resumption of service, front door boarding and fare collection had to be submitted to MassDOT .

Ms. Gompert stated on Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, we will begin our in- season service. It is not the same as previous years, for example: there will be no Route 12 as Chilmark does not want the sunset bus route this year, headways for Route 2 and 4 will be every other hour—if there are no ridership on those routes will have buses be redeployed to other routes.

Ms. Gompert discussed with the board Ridership Crowding and Standards. The board asked questions and Ms. Gompert provided them with answers regarding buses. She advised that the Transloc Rider app will show percentage amount of riders per bus. She stated we will use "X" buses to help high demand Routes of 1 and 13.

Ms. Gompert advised the board once fares begin being collected again that there will be Ticket Sellers at the stops; to help load the buses with no standees so that there is room to pick up people along the routes.

Ms. Gompert cautioned the board not to listen to false narratives that have been posted on social media. Ms. Gompert shared a Facebook post that was proven to be inaccurate after watching the video footage of the route in question. There was no evidence to support any of the accusations or facts as written.

B) Operations Update: Mr. Zeilinger stated he is proud of his drivers for doing an excellent job during these trying times; he stated the buses have been out there every day and very proud of the job his staff has been doing. Ms. Gompert advised she had been successful with the RMV to open to allow our drivers to take CDL test and State Police will be conducting road test beginning of July.

C) Capital Projects:

Edgartown Visitor Center: Ms. Gompert updated the board VTA was unsuccessful at Town Meeting 94-86 for the project; she advised the board the next steps. The Town will form a committee for the public review. Ms. Gompert provided four options/outcomes for the project: 1) stay the course, public outreach and education of the project and continue it as planned, 2) move one of the chargers to Oak Bluffs but would be a significant increase in cost, however having an additional a charger for Routes 7 , 9 & 13 provides more resiliency, 3) to purchase more buses however would have significant operating cost increases, and 4) keep Edgartown with diesel vehicles and keep 1/3 of our fleet as diesel.

D) Comprehensive Regional Plan: Ms. Gompert stated the comprehensive plan is still progressing along; Regional Transit Authorities asked for an extension but MassDOT felt it needs to continue

\*indicates arriving late or leaving early

forward. Ms. Gompert stated a survey should be available on the website next week and that a survey will be dispersed to the drivers next month.

**Ridership:**

Ridership is down 85% in May; Ms. Thomas stated most of the ridership is occurring on Routes 1, 10 and 13.

**Items not reasonably anticipated to be discussed:**

Ms. Gompert requested for the board meetings to be moved in the fall from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday until the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday due to financial statements and month closing activities.

Ms. Sturgis asked about how the potential of Micro-transit would work. Ms. Gompert stated it would only potentially be available for the Winter Schedule and practicality of operation—scheduling, how it will be serviced still needs to be determined.

Ms. Gompert updated the board of the Tisbury Traffic Circle and taxis; she stated that the request is for buses to not drop off passengers in the taxi lane. Mr. Zeilinger advised the board he was at the circle yesterday and operations were not impacted by new taxi locations.

**Next meeting** is scheduled for July 16, 2020 at 9:30am.

Ms. Butler inquired if there was a need to go into Executive Session and Ms. Gompert advised that there was not a need to enter Executive Session.

Ms. Miller made a motion to adjourn meeting at 11:45am, Mr. Snider 2<sup>nd</sup> m/s/c

-----

Date

-----

Signed