

May 21, 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; Sarah Nevin, Community Disabled Rider Rep, Edgartown; Angela Gompert, VTA, Lauren Thomas, VTA, Andrew Grant, VTA and Suzanne Cioffi, VTA.

Absent: Carlton Crocker, Community Rider Rep, Chilmark; June Manning, Aquinnah

Guests: Richard Townes and Jason Chalifoux

9:47 Ms. Butler called the meeting to order and welcomed Susanna Sturgis as newly appointed member representing West Tisbury.

Public Comments: there were no public comments

Minutes: Ms. Miller made a motion to accept the minutes from April 30, 2020. Mr. Snider seconded. Ms. Sturgis abstained as she was not appointed to board. m/s/c

Financial Update:

- A) Draft Financials: Ms. Gompert presented the board with year to date financials through April 30, 2020. The board asked questions about balancing the budget for the remainder of the year. Ms. Gompert provided answers and stated that with extending the winter service we will see cost savings for May and June. She stated she expects that by close of FY20 we will be on budget if not a little under. She stated the in-season schedule will not have as much service as historically and periphery trips will not have as much service. She said the Spring Schedule will be extended until at least June 19th. She said service will be added based on demand.
- B) CARES Funding: Ms. Gompert stated she has the contract for CARES funding of \$1,462,310.00 that is effective through September 30, 2021. CARES funding is to backfill lost revenue and increased expenses due to the pandemic. She advised the board that she extended the winter service schedule through April 30 but increased service on May 1, 2020 as there was an uptick in ridership. She stated the summer schedule will likely be reduced as well and will begin collecting fares starting around July 1st. She believes that ridership numbers may be off for the next few years but due to CARES funding will be able to backfill lost revenue.

10:05 Mr. Jason arrived

Old/New Business:

- A) **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update and Future Plans:** Ms. Gompert stated rear door boarding is still occurring. Mr. Snider inquired about passengers and bus capacities for transit. Discussion and questions were asked and answered, as well as following current industry standards and best practices Ms. Gompert stated that VTA is following MassDOT guidelines. She stated in addition to daily sanitizing, she has procured a 55 gallon drum on 99% alcohol; each driver will be given a spray bottle to sanitize high touch areas during their shift. She said the schedule will have time to allow drivers to disinfect the buses during their shift. She said the CDC has now come out stating person to person contact spreads the disease more than surface touching. She is waiting for buses to be retrofitted with barriers for drivers’ protection and that no later than July 1st fares will begin to be collected.

*indicates arriving late or leaving early

Ms. Gompert stated drivers have been given masks to hand out to passengers who do not have masks and by the end of the week gloves will be on the buses.

B) Operations Update: Ms. Gompert stated drivers have been arriving to the island and have been self-quarantining. She stated that they will begin training and obtaining licensing after the 2 week quarantine period.

C) Capital Projects: Ms. Gompert gave the following updates on Capital Projects:

- Solar Canopy- the contract has been signed and should begin work in mid-August
- Edgartown/Church Street- will be addressed at Special Town Meeting
- Smaller projects are progressing slowly

D) Comprehensive Regional Plan: Ms. Gompert stated the consultants are continuing working on the plan and it will now include post pandemic planning. She stated a micro-transit, door to door or curb to curb, service is being explored. Ms. Sturgis inquired the consulting firm. Ms. Gompert stated MassDOT hired AECOM consulting firm.

Ridership:

Ridership is down 82% in April; she informed the board she is optimistic will see an increase for May.

Items not reasonably anticipated to be discussed:

Mr. Snider began a discussion regarding capacity on the buses whether there should be a set number of passengers for the bus to be full. Ms. Nevin stated she was concerned for everyone’s safety and that she would not feel comfortable riding the bus right now. Ms. Gompert stated that a definitive number cannot be established as there are different numbers depending on the bus. She reiterated that MassDOT has not implemented a policy and MassDOT might have guidance for June. Ms. Butler advised the board that this needs further discussion and should be an agenda topic for June.

10:59 Mr. Jason made a motion to go into executive session and not reconvene in public session. Ms. Butler yes, Mr. Snider yes, Ms. Miller yes, Ms. Sturgis yes, Mr. Jason yes and Ms. Nevin yes.

Next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2020.

Date

Signed

*indicates arriving late or leaving early