

VTA Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

July 24, 2019

The Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority Advisory Board met Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 3:30 PM at the offices of the Transit Authority, 11 A Street, Edgartown. Present were Alice Butler (Oak Bluffs), John Alley (West Tisbury), Lenny Jason (Chilmark), June Manning (Aquinnah)*, Elaine Miller (Tisbury) and Carlton Crocker, Rider Community Member-Chilmark. Also present were Angela Grant (VTA), Lauren Thomas (VTA), Suzanne Cioffi (VTA), Andrew Grant (VTA), and Darren Morris (TCI).

Guests at the meeting: George Gamble, Mitzi Pratt, Kevan Nichols, Mardi Moran, Brian Langhammer, Kathy Laskowski, Susanna Sturgis, John Christensen, Colin Cochran, Renee Bonnell, John Steve Edwards, Michael Cochran, Maggie Bresnahan, Jonathan Chatinover, Rich Townes, Loretta May, Cecily Greenaway, Vernon Harris, Rez Williams James Malkin and James Hagerty.

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM by Ms. Butler.

Approved meeting minutes from April 17, 2019. Mr. Alley made a motion to accept minutes and Mr. Jason 2nd. M/s/c 5-0-0.

Ms. Grant reminded everyone in the audience to please sign in and it appears the meeting will be recorded live and if anyone had any objections.

State Budget

Ms. Grant stated that on Monday she received notification that the State Budget as it relates to our line item has gone through the House and then it went through on Senate as well. The total line was \$90.5 Million, of which \$87 Million to be distributed to the RTAs through MassDot's the existing formula, which gives the VTA 1.93 % or \$1,679,000 - a \$95,000 increase of State Contract from FY19. Ms. Grant stated 3.5 Million will be available for discretionary grants but the figure will be more around 1.5 Million, as the remaining 2 Million will go to the remaining two transit systems that have less State Assistance than Local Assessment Assistance. She advised the Board that the Governor has ten days to approve the budget, and currently has seven remaining days. She said they are fairly confident that the budget given will remain, and the disappointing part is that they were planning to put in a CPI adjustment similar to the MBTA's, but it was not included in the language.

Correspondence: All Board Members were left a confidential letter from a non-strike driver.

3:34 Ms. Manning arrived.

* indicates either arrived late or left early

Update Negotiations of July 22nd and July 23rd:

3:35PM - Mr. Morris stated he and Greg Dash, Labor Negotiator, met with the Union Bargaining Committee for the last two days, Monday and Tuesday, and there was a significant amount of progress on union negotiations. We are in agreement on just about the entire proposal, there are 29 articles on the proposal; Perhaps the biggest issue that we ever have to get through is the economic part of it, which we are in agreement on. There are a few minor things, language issues, that we were cleaning up. We expect to submit the final draft to the Union Bargaining Committee later today, but no later than tomorrow. Mr. Morris stated that the contract will need to be ratified and voted on; he further stated he is looking forward to welcoming back drivers next week and ending the strike.

Ms. Miller asked if the drivers will be back next week and Mr. Morris stated it depends if the agreement is brought to all members and whether it gets ratified. He stated the sentiment that everyone is ready to vote.

Sub-Committee

Mr. Jason brought up the topic of a sub-committee; he stated at the last meeting Ms. Miller and Ms. Manning requested to form one. He felt the work should be divided up and a sub-committee created. He recommended Ms. Miller and Ms. Manning to form a group, as they were the most political ones to deal with the legislators and he was willing to deal with our Town Selectpersons. Ms. Miller stated it was a wonderful idea. She stated they would like for them to get together as a group to develop the same mission statement. Mr. Jason stated we are going to be short money and will need to get it from somewhere and Ms. Miller agreed. Ms. Miller agreed to get the Towns more involved in the finances of the VTA. Mr. Jason said one thing that is important to keep in mind is that whatever the Board goes to the towns with keeps with our legislation.

Ms. Grant stated that overall 21% over 3+ years is the cost that we need to keep in mind. VTA has fare box revenue, additional state funding and service cuts in the off season. She recommended coming together in the next week to regroup and catch up, but in mid-August will need a plan to move this forward on how much money from the State, Legislative, Towns will be needed.

Ms. Miller stated if we meet in August can set up the goals of the sub-committees to keep the ball moving forward. Ms. Grant stated concern is timing, as we need to set the off season schedule. She stated that we cannot deficit spend our budget.

Old Business

Ms. Manning asked if the cost of this strike will come back to VTA to cover the cost. Ms. Grant said yes, VTA covers all of the cost.

Mr. Jason asked who was going to vote on the contract. Mr. Morris responded there is a list of members in Union in the three categories that they have in the bargaining agreement.

* indicates either arrived late or left early

New Business

Electric buses: Ms. Grant stated in the end of October we will receive four 35 foot buses and at the end of January two 30 foot buses funded by VW Mitigation. Outside there is infrastructure: energy storage installed and waiting to connect final power. Solar canopies should be complete by end of December. Ms. Grant said she needs to go back to towns for approval of final plans for inductive charging stations.

Ms. Grant stated she's still trying to procure electric vans as they are still very expensive. She stated they are not comparable to buses, so it's still cheaper to purchase gasoline; however, stated that the price will eventually come down.

3:50PM Ms. Butler asked if there was a motion to adjourn: Mr. Alley made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Jason 2nd. M/s/c 6-0-0

Documents:

Draft Advisory Board Meeting Minutes from April 17, 2019

Date

Signed

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