

VTA

Public Hearing Notes

April 17, 2019

The Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority Advisory Board met Wednesday, April 17, 2019, at 9:30AM at the offices of the Transit Authority, 11 A Street, and Edgartown. Present were Alice Butler (Oak Bluffs), John Alley (West Tisbury), Lenny Jason (Chilmark), June Manning* (Aquinnah), Elaine Miller (Tisbury) and Lou Paciello (Edgartown). Also present were Angela Grant (VTA), Lauren Thomas (VTA) and Suzanne Cioffi (VTA).

Guests at the meeting: Steve Soriano and Mike Amaral.

The Public Hearing was Called to Order by Ms. Butler at 10:02AM.

Public Hearing:

Ms. Grant stated at the last board meeting there had been a preliminary discussion to have financial information available at present meeting in regard to an in-season zone fare increase from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per town and \$0.75 to \$1.00 for reduced fares, which include seniors over 65, persons with disabilities, and military veterans. The in-season starts mid-May and goes to the end of September. A zone fare analysis outlining sales from Edgartown Visitor Center, Edgartown Ticket Seller, Oak Bluffs Ticket Seller, Vineyard Haven Ticket Seller and bus sales from June, July and August was distributed and discussed. Ms. Grant stated there would be no change to the multi-day passes or annual pass prices. She stated this increase of \$0.25 per town would conservatively generate \$75,000, but does not include the Lift fares – and those fares would need to be revisited again in a few years. She stated that we are just under the Mendoza line for farebox recovery for Lift Services.

Ms. Miller inquired when the last increase occurred. Ms. Grant responded that there was a multi-year fare increase that spanned over 5 years beginning 1/1/14, but 2015 was the last zone fare increase. Ms. Grant stated we had thought about adding a seasonal pass or 3 month pass, but was not sure if that would generate revenue.

Mr. Jason suggested raising the fares to \$2.00, as it was easier change wise, and that would hopefully mitigate the need to raise them again in a few years. Ms. Grant advised that an additional \$0.75 per town would be a huge increase. Ms. Manning agreed. Ms. Grant stated that if fares are raised that much of a percentage, VTA should do a fare equity analysis due to the Tribe and lower income population. Mr. Alley inquired about increasing the rate by \$.050. Ms. Miller stated that going back to Mr. Jason's point, that a \$0.25 would not buy much of anything, and going up to \$2.00 will be a hard change but people get used to it.

Mr. Soriano stated that the VTA is the best deal on the Vineyard.

Ms. Manning inquired if this would be only for the in-season - Ms. Grant advised yes. Ms. Grant said the island residents are very well represented for passes. She stated island students and seniors can get annual passes at reduced rates through the schools or COAs. Ms. Manning asked about Falmouth Academy. Ms. Thomas stated they would go to the school that they would otherwise attend to purchase the discounted pass. Ms. Grant stated in the fall the board will need to look at adjusting the Lift fares, while keeping in mind they cannot be more than double the fixed route fare. FY 2018 brought in \$30,000 in lift revenue – a \$0.50 increase per town would go to about \$45,000.

Ms. Grant stated an individual fare from Vineyard Haven to Edgartown would be \$6.00 - if it was a family or multiple people travelling, they might opt for a different option. Ms. Miller stated if standing there they will really plan it out based on cost – Ms. Grant stated yes, if they have UBER app or other rider share app, it's likely to happen.

Mr. Amaral stated that people will be buying more one day passes, as it will be cheaper - Mr. Paciello agreed.

Ms. Miller inquired why we are not discussing increasing the one day pass - stating a day pass should go to \$10.00. Ms. Grant advised that this public hearing did not include one day passes in its posting, only zone fare increases.

10:39AM - Ms. Butler closed the public hearing.

Documents:

Zone Fare Analysis 2019