

**Minutes of the May 17, 2016 Board Meeting  
of Southeast Area Transit Board of Directors Meeting**

**Members Present:** Mark Nickerson (East Lyme); Kevin Skulczyk (Griswold); Thomas Sparkman (Lisbon); Ronald McDaniel (Montville); Michael Passero (New London); John Salomone (Norwich); Daniel Steward (Waterford)

**SEAT Staff:** Michael Carroll; Alfred Fritzsche; Ginger Morse

**SCCOG Staff:** James Butler

**Other Attendees:** Patricia Johnson (ATU); Michael Maynard (ATU) Ryan Blessing (The Bulletin); Kimberly Drelich (The New London Day); Jewett City Warden John Connelly; Special Guest: James Redeker

1. **Roll Call:** Meeting called to order at 9:36 am by Chairman McDaniel; it was noted that a quorum was present. Chairman McDaniel welcomed Mr. Redeker, DOT Commissioner.
2. **Minutes:** Minutes of the April 20, 2016 SEAT Board meeting were distributed prior to the meeting via email, copies of the reports were also available at the meeting. Mr. Sparkman moved approval, seconded by Mr. Salomone. The minutes were unanimously approved. Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Skulczyk abstained.
3. **Public Comments:** None
4. **Communications:** None
5. **Reports:**
  - a. **Manager's Report:** The report had been distributed prior to the meeting via email, copies of the report was also available at the meeting. Mr. Carroll introduced the new SEAT Administrative Assistant, Ginger Morse. Mr. Carroll provided a summary of the reports distributed. New to the package is a Road Call Report – Fixed Route, it points out service calls that were made including “Major” and “Minor” reports. Questions were raised about the numbers listed under the Service Interruptions by Month, as to why they did not add up. Mr. Carroll explained the “Missed Pull-Out” numbers should not be included in total count and this will be noted in future reports. The question regarding July’s Reported Mechanical Defect was a typo and will be corrected. It was noted there has been a decline in ridership including Paratransit. The grant funding for the two Hybrid buses has been received and the 1.254 million dollar liability has been removed from SEAT’s balance sheet. Mr. Nickerson moved acceptance of the report; Mr. Steward seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.
  - b. **Treasurer's Report:** The report had been distributed prior to the meeting via email, copies of the report were also available at the meeting. After much discussion including noting a \$150,000 deficit will most likely take place at the end of the year, all questions were answered. At this point it was moved by Mr. Skulczyk and seconded by Mr. Steward.

6. **Old Business:** None

7. **New Business:**

- a. **Open discussion was held with James P. Redeker, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Transportation.** There was conversation regarding the budget and deficits. Mr. Redeker noted SEAT has a very unique complex structure. He does not see an immediate crisis as it is being managed well however changes may need to be made down the road. Mr. Steward raised concerns of the possible Ledyard withdrawal from SEAT and loss of funding where the remaining Municipalities will need to make this up. Mr. Redeker expressed there is no "magic solution", and possibly the structure would need to change. He noted that SEAT's public union was a factor in any structural change. Mr. Skulczyck expressed concern about the budget and stated he is considering applying for 5310 funding for a bus and perhaps withdrawing from SEAT. Mr. Skulczyck felt their area is often forgotten about and the residents need help to get from point A-B. Mr. Redeker said everyone had hoped the transportation lockbox would be approved, however this did not occur. Mr. Redeker pointed out 56% of his budget is allocated for buses and rail and is well aware there is no magic bullet. There were discussions about having a separate business planning session for the Board. Mr. Redeker agrees SE Connecticut needs transit service. Mr. McDaniel spoke about Governor Malloy's previous visit and his vision for transportation but that vision is not matching reality. Mr. McDaniel also commented that he sees quite a few commercials on the CT Fastrak and its possible expansion eastwards. Mr. Redeker noted that generally there are no marketing dollars for transit and should be reconsidered. Mr. Redeker said he will pledge everything and anything to help but the current budget situation will limit his options. Mr. Redeker was very surprised that SEAT's Paratransit ridership has declined, and noted that from an economic point of view, this is a positive trend.
- b. **FY17 Operating Budget:** Mr. Carroll and Mr. Fritzsche developed the FY17 budget based upon continuation of current service and fare levels. Mr. Carroll does not anticipate moving forward in the upcoming fiscal year with systematic service recommendations from the recent Service Study, but will try to move forward in FY18. Minor adjustments and economic assumptions have been made and were built into the proposed budget. Health insurance rate increases are 5-6%, Labor Costs incorporate a 2.75% contractual wage increase (note: last year of current labor contract); Fuel costs decreased substantially. The budget submittal is due to the state in the next two weeks. It was noted the ECTC increase in contract for Paratransit is essential as they have been struggling with staffing to meet current demand due to very low wage rates; if SEAT were to take this over it would be even a more substantial increase. Several members questioned some line item increases, and questioned the wisdom of submitting a budget which required an increase in State funding in the current budgetary climate. After much discussion it was proposed the current budget, with the need for increased state funding would go forward to the state. However, the Board directed staff to develop a balanced budget with no increases in state funds for review and consideration at the June meeting.
- c. **Adjournment:** There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 10:29 am.

8. **Next Meeting:** June 15, 2016 am