

Mass Transit and Highway Advisory Commission Minutes
July 23, 2019

Present: Herb Asplund, Josh Johnson, Jim MacPherson, Karen Wagner, Thomas Scheinblum (intern), Sue Larsen, Terry Hart. Guest: Mayor Andy Paterna.

Sue Larsen led the Pledge of Allegiance

The minutes were approved unanimously.

The agenda was approved unanimously with a change moving items 4 and 5 under Old Business to the beginning of the meeting so Mayor Paterna could participate.

Old business

1. *Trolley* – Karen Wagner reported that she met with the new mayor, Mike Maniscalco, and informed him of the Trolley Project and our progress on that front. He is very supportive and happy town staff is helping us. Karen told him that the Commission would probably report to the Town Council in September regarding the project's status.
2. *Intern report* – Thomas summarized his meeting with Jeff Dolittle, Michele Lipe and Thad Dymkowski (the GIS Analyst). Thad showed Thomas how to access the online version for GIS, which is available to the public. Thad suggested making story maps from that to create our story. They will review it. Thomas went over the list of grants that Josh Johnson has compiled. We qualify for all the grants on the list. Generally, they fund 80% of the cost. The BUILD grant looks the most promising. But it has several requirements: partnership projects if possible, a cost-benefits analysis, a plan of our commitment, and a clear timeline. The project must be reliable, safe, affordable, and technically innovative. We need official documents of support, a report of long-term effectiveness, and arguments that we aren't displacing other services. The next steps are the mapping, figured out the grant deadlines, and planning a budget. Jim MacPherson asked how the Enfield grant was similar and different. Josh Johnson explained that. Andy Paterna suggested finding out about CT Transit's potential plan for using a van to connect to Sullivan Avenue as a start to expanding regular transit service in that area until ridership builds up. He also mentioned an opioid treatment clinic on Sullivan Avenue that has patients who have trouble getting there because they don't have cars. Karen asked Thomas to get in touch with them. Andy said that having a list of trolley sponsors in place before applying for the grant would have greater impact. Terry Hart raised concerns that, with rides for the senior population already available, we won't be reducing traffic enough to justify the cost in the long run. Karen Wagner explained that the trolley/bus would benefit other populations, such as low-income job seekers, employers of low-income workers, all patrons of local businesses, college students and young adults who don't like to use cars. Sue Larsen said the town has many commissions and other groups who could help compile the information we need. She will gather a list and share it. The Commission also discussed fees but did not determine whether or not to charge for the

service. Commission members suggested several sponsors: Transportation services that might connect to the trolley, ECHN, Hartford Health Care, chamber members, banks. Karen Wagner said Kathy Hale is still trying to talk to someone at CRCOG about their assistance with this project.

3. *Bus education actions: Teen Center* - Sue Larsen has an August 20 meeting scheduled with Lean Smith from the Teen Center. *Heritage Day*. Karen Wagner will check the handouts we have to make sure we have enough for that booth. She asked everyone to think about volunteering for at least an hour on Oct. 5. *Library's commitment to promote programs*: Karen Wagner met with Library Director Mary Etter, who said the library has no restrictions on displaying materials from for-profit businesses. She asked that Karen give the CT Transit bus schedules to her and she will find the appropriate spots.
4. *Sustainable Communities*: Karen Wagner passed out the draft narrative from our Commission for this year's Sustainable Communities application. Jim MacPherson suggested a few minor edits. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the draft as edited and submit it.
5. *Grants*: Josh Johnson said he has told the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving that he is interested in serving on the South Windsor grant committee. They need 12 people. He expects the group to start up in the Fall.
6. *Bylaw changes*: Karen Wagner reported that she found the motion changing our requirements for a quorum. It is from a regular meeting on May 23, 2017. She sent it to the town clerk's office for recording.
7. *Annual report*: Karen Wagner suggested that the wording of the Sustainable CT piece would nicely match our submission for the annual report, with a few other details. Commission members agreed. She will start working on that.

New Business

1. *Ideas to promote bus use*: Karen Wagner proposed that we tie into the CT Transit promotions for using the bus to get to Hartford on weekends with multiple events and expectations of high traffic volume. She suggested using the town website to do that. Commission members thought the idea was fine.
2. *Possible August meeting*: Karen Wagner said that the Commission is not expected to meet again until after our intern finishes his work. She queried the Commission about a possible meeting to ask questions and get a summary of his work. Herb Asplund suggested that we wait to see if it is needed before scheduling a meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 24.