

EASTERN SIERRA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Minutes of Friday, February 20, 2009

The Board of Directors of the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority, State of California, met at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, February 20, 2009, at the City of Bishop Council Chambers, 301 West Line Street, Bishop, California. The following members were present: Skip Harvey, Susan Cash, Vikki Bauer, Susan Cullen, Jeff Griffiths, Linda Arcularius and Byng Hunt. Director John Eastman was absent. Director Cash led the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comment The Chairperson opened the public comment period at 10:04 a.m. Brigid Salamon asked the Board if there is a possibility of expanding the Night Rider service to run during the week. Ms. Salamon was told she should make her request at a Local Transportation Committee meeting. There was no one else from the public wishing to address the Board. Public Comment was closed.

Consent Agenda Moved by Director Cash and seconded by Director Bauer to approve the minutes of the ESTA Board of Directors Meeting of January 23, 2009 and February 2, 2009. Motion carried 7-0 with Director Eastman absent.

**Summer 2009
Operation of Reds
Meadow Shuttle** Mr. Helm explained to the Board that the Forest Service approached ESTA with a proposal to operate the Reds Meadow Shuttle Service beginning this summer. Mr. Helm introduced Jim Upchurch, Forest Service Supervisor for the Inyo National Forest. Mr. Upchurch thanked ESTA staff and Forest Service staff for working on the proposal. Mr. Upchurch stated that he believes ESTA would provide better service to the visitors of the Inyo Forest by partnering with the Forest Service and operating the Reds Meadow Shuttle. Mr. Helm stated that based on historical ridership numbers the fare revenues should fully cover the cost of the service. The Forest Service will provide financial assistance to ESTA in the event that passenger volume does not generate sufficient fare revenue. Mr. Helm reported that staff has received a proposal from Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) to lease buses to provide the service. Final details regarding the bus lease and the arrangement with the Forest Service will need to be worked out. Moved by Director Hunt and seconded by Director Cullen to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate an agreement with the United States Forest Service for the operation of a fixed route servicing Devil's Postpile and Reds Meadow, and an agreement with Mammoth Mountain Ski Area for the lease of

buses for the operation of the shuttle service and to bring the agreements to a future Board meeting for approval. The agreement will be dependent on the Forest Service's grant funding, which can be used to offset certain operational and leasing costs. Motion carried 7-0 with Director Eastman absent.

Operations Report

Monicka Watterson gave the Operations Report for the month of January. Ms. Watterson reported that overall ridership was up for the month. Director Bauer questioned as to why the Mammoth Express is using the Mammoth McDonalds as a bus stop and not using the Village Transit Hub or the Park & Ride. Ms. Watterson explained that the amount of time the bus has in Mammoth is limited and to travel that much further into town would cause the bus to run on a tighter schedule. Director Arcularius questioned the policy of child passengers misbehaving. Ms. Watterson stated that the policy is the same for children as it is for adults. If the rider distracts the driver from performing his job safely, steps taken begin with a warning and can lead up to removal from the bus.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Helm reported that the lines of credit from each of the four jurisdictions have been paid down to \$50,000. The plans for the use and repayment of the lines of credit are on schedule.

Structural Budget Deficit

Mr. Helm reported to the Board that ESTA is facing an approximate \$140,000 operating budget shortfall for the 2009/2010 fiscal year. Revenues are projected not to be sufficient to cover the operating costs for the current service level. ESTA also needs to begin building a fund balance. Mr. Helm presented to the Board ideas for possible service cut options. The CREST, Lone Pine to Bishop and Mammoth Express routes have been awarded additional federal funding and services cannot be reduced. The Board had an extensive discussion regarding how any of the service cuts relate to the Short Range Transit Plan and how the services can be more efficient. Staff was requested to explore the possibility of other options before looking at service reductions. The Board directed staff to look at internal cost cutting measures as well as service cut possibilities. Additional budget balancing options will be presented to the Board at the March meeting.

Vehicle Graphics

Mr. Helm presented to the Board several new vehicle graphic ideas. A short discussion followed. Moved by Director Harvey and seconded by Director Bauer to approve the graphic using the colors of the new logo in a swoosh design with a final version to show the size and location the postcard graphic that can be placed on vehicles. Motion carried 7-0 with Director Eastman absent. Chairman Griffiths clarified for the audience that the funds being used to apply graphics are from grant funding that has been received specifically for vehicle graphics and cannot be used for operations.

Approval of Request for Leave Without Pay

Moved by Director Cash and seconded by Director Harvey to approve an employee request for leave without pay as recommended by the Executive Director and in compliance with the Authority's Personnel Rules. Motion carried 7-0 with Director Eastman absent.

Resolution 2009-01

Moved by Director Bauer and seconded by Director Hunt to approve and adopt Resolution 09-01 declaring impasse in the negotiations between the Authority and the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Management & Confidential Employees Association. Motion carried 7-0 with Director Eastman absent.

Reports

Director Cash stated that she read in the Inyo Local Transportation Commission (LTC) meeting minutes that grant money had been allocated to ESTA for fencing the parking lot at the Bishop airport. Director Cash voiced concerns whether this had been discussed with Inyo County staff in regards to ESTA paying rent for parking vehicles. Director Cash requested the parking arrangement history be researched and seek proper approval before fencing construction begins.

Chairman Griffiths reported that due to the unavailability of Inyo County Personnel Analyst, Sue Dishion, for employee negotiations, the City of Bishop has donated the time of City Administrator Rick Pucci for negotiations.

Executive Director John Helm commented to the Board on some mix-ups that occurred regarding the holiday service closures of ESTA. One had to do with the Benton to Bishop route, which was scheduled to be closed on Thursday, February 12. A passenger had a doctors appointment scheduled and said she did not know the bus was not running. Her concerns were brought to the attention of staff and were satisfactorily addressed. On Presidents Day, February 16, a passenger in Lancaster wanted to ride the CREST bus and did not know the buses were not running. The passenger stated there was no information posted at the Greyhound/Metrolink

Station and the person at the information booth had no information about the CREST bus. Mr. Helm reported that the normal policy regarding Holiday closure notices is to post on the website, place ads on the local radio stations and newspapers, post notices on the buses and change the message on the phone. Mr. Helm also gave an update on the progress of the vanpool services. Three vans have been ordered with Mono County STIP funds and are due to start service in April. Advertising will begin next week in the Mammoth Times and the Sheet. Mono County has submitted the surveys to their employees. Anyone interested in vanpool services is being asked to complete a survey.

Future Agenda
Items

Description of Mammoth Mountain and ESTA transit services in the Town of Mammoth.

Closed Session

The Chairperson recessed the meeting at 12:39 p.m. for a ten-minute break. The Board reconvened in closed session at 12:50 p.m. with all Board Members present except Director Eastman to consider: Agenda Item #15a. Conference with Labor Negotiators. (Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6). Representatives- John Helm. Bargaining group; ESTA Management & Confidential Employees Association, and; Agenda Item #15b. Performance evaluation of the Executive Director. (Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957). At 3:00 p.m. Director Cullen left the meeting to attend another appointment.

Report on Closed
Session

Closed session was recessed at 3:10 p.m. to reconvene in open session to receive a report on closed session with all Board Members present except Directors Cullen and Eastman. There were no items discussed in closed session, which were required by law to be reported on in open session.

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m. to a Special Meeting to be held on Monday, March 2, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. in the Town of Mammoth.

Recorded & Prepared by:



Susan Rottner
Board Clerk
Eastern Sierra Transit Authority

Minutes approved: **March 13, 2009**