

Notes of the May 15, 2024
Meeting of the Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors

Board Members Present: Mark Oefinger (Groton), Robert Boris (Groton); Tom Sparkman (Lisbon); Michael Passero (New London); Carey Redd (New London); Michael Schefers (Stonington)

SEAT Staff: Michael Carroll (General Manager), Cherise Simpson, Thailisa Clark (Finance Manager)

SCCOG: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Ratan

Other Attendees: Sendra Childs, ATU Local 1209 President

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 9:41 am by Chairman Sparkman; it was noted that there was no quorum.
2. **Public Comment:** No public comment
3. **Minutes of March 20, 2024:** No Motion; no quorum.
4. **Communications:** Mr. Carroll received an email from a representative from the Cross Sound Ferry asking if SEAT would consider becoming a lead grantee for a 5307 FTA grant for ferry rehabilitation. Mr. Carroll is looking into the ramifications of SEAT taking the lead on becoming a grantee for a subrecipient. Mr. Carroll will report back in subsequent meetings regarding his findings and communications with Cross Sound Ferry about that request.
5. **Staff Reports:**
 - a. **Managers' Report:** Mr. Carroll stated the following new services started: Route 3 Saturday which services Niantic, Waterford, New London, and Groton; Groton HOP demand response service; and the Electric Boat shuttle between Norwich and EB. Additional services will start in the future including Sunday services, additional evening hours in Groton, New London, and Norwich; Groton Route 627; night Smart Ride service, and Waterford HOP. SEAT continues to struggle to hire CDL and non-CDL operators and is advertising and interviewing applicants and should start a training class next month. Operator training typically runs 8-10 weeks. A staff member completed the six-week DOT CDL program and now has her CDL license. SEAT will consider utilizing this program to hire otherwise qualified applicants who lack a CDL. However, there is a risk that upon completion of the paid training program, new hires leave and go elsewhere for employment. Ridership is stable. It increased in March but dropped slightly in April. Paratransit ridership is stable. HOP and New London HOP ridership is

stable. SEAT operators occasionally need law enforcement assistance in dealing with customer confrontations, many related to fare disputes. Capital projects: SEAT acquired the 4 electric Ford Transit vans for Microtransit services, and they are being prepped for service. There have been challenges with CTDOT approval of the charging units at SEAT. The question arose about how SEAT is marketing the new services. The electric vans should be on the road by July 1st. Discussions ensued about putting out the word to all member towns regarding new services.

- b. **Financial Report:** Mr. Carroll stated that the expenses year to date are under budget. Fare revenues are exceeding the plan as well. Mr. Carroll cautions that SEAT continues to rely on the one-time Federal COVID monies with a Year to date drawn down 1.8 million dollars. SEAT still has one grant left that we continue to draw down which is projected to be fully exhausted in FY25. Mr. Carroll reminded the Board the New London Smart Ride program relies heavily on the COVID monies to pay for it and lacks State funds. The current service, Weekdays and Saturdays between 8am and 8pm is exclusively funded by COVID money which will run out sometime in FY25.

6. **Old Business:**

- a. **Bus Stop Program Update:** Mr. Carroll stated a list of the stops, maps and other information was provided to all member towns two months ago. Groton has responded with comments about the bus stops. Groton is prepared to manage the installation of the stops within the town. Mr. Carroll suggested that SEAT take the lead through a third-party contractor for installation of all bus stop signs utilizing an old capital grant for funding to expedite the program. He offered to work with those towns that may choose to manage installation themselves. Talks ensued surrounding the bus stop signs. A comment was made for concerns regarding having an outside contractor install signs when some towns have not responded yet. The second concern is having the outside contractors deal with local concerns. An additional concern was raised concerning non-member towns (Franklin, Ledyard, North Stonington, and Preston) that currently have service and proposed stops. Talks ensued surrounding these four towns who receive transit services with no local funding. It was recommended that Mr. Carroll prepare a draft letter for those towns to initiate a discussion about becoming members of SEAT.

7. **New Business:**

- a. **Remix Planning Software Procurement:** Deferred action.

- b. **Management Contract RFP**: Board members need to start thinking about where they want to go as an organization with Transdev. The contract ends at the end of the year. SEAT is prepared to write an RFP. Mr. Carroll Board guidance by June.
- c. **Council of Governments Board Representative**: Deferred to June Meeting
- d. **Board Secretary Vacancy**: Deferred to June Meeting
- e. **June Meeting Date Change**: The June meeting has been moved to June 18th at 9:30 am in recognition of the Juneteenth Holiday.
- f. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff**: None
- g. **Adjournment**: Motion to adjourn at 10:26 am

8. **Next Meeting**: June 18, 2024

Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors Meeting

9:30 AM, June 18, 2024

The meeting will be held **in person at the SE CT Council of Governments Office, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich CT.**

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Public Comment:
3. Meeting Minutes
 - a) March 20, 2024 Meeting
 - b) May 15, 2024 Meeting
4. Communications: None
5. Reports:
 - a) Management Report: Accept and File
 - b) Financial Report: Accept and File
6. Old Business:
 - a) Bus Stop Program Update/Review
7. New Business:
 - a) FY23 Financial Audit: Accept and File
 - b) Remix Planning Software Procurement: Accept and File
 - c) Bus Router Procurement: Accept and File
 - d) Spare Labs Software Procurement: Accept and File
 - e) Management Contract RFP: Review
 - f) Council of Governments Board Representative
 - g) Board Secretary Vacancy
 - h) Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff
 - i) EXECUTIVE SESSION: Labor Contract Negotiations Update
8. Adjournment
9. Next meeting: July 17, 2024

Member Municipalities
East Lyme Griswold Groton Lisbon Montville
New London Norwich Stonington Waterford

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**Minutes of the June 18, 2024
Meeting of the Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors**

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Board Members Present: | Mark Oefinger (Groton), Robert Brule (Waterford), Cary Redd (New London), Robert Boris (Groton), Dan Cunningham (East Lyme), Thomas Sparkman (Lisbon), Michael Passero (New London), Michael Schefers (Stonington), John Salamone (Norwich) |
| SEAT Staff: | Michael Carroll (General Manager), Cherise Simpson, Thailisa Clark (Finance Manager) |
| SCCOG: | Amanda Kennedy, Kate Ratan |
| Other Attendees: | Sendra Childs |

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 9:41 am by Chairman Sparkman; it was noted that a quorum was present.
2. **Public Comment:** Sendra Childs spoke about the following issues: 1. Bus stop signs. 2. Safety is a big concern for the drivers. 3. Drivers have been threatened. Both physical and verbal threats. 4. Ms. Childs stated that drivers are underpaid.
3. **Minutes of March 20, 2024:** Motion to approve: Passero / Brule Unanimous with no abstentions.
4. **Minutes of May 15, 2024:** Motion to approve: Passero / Brule Unanimous with no abstentions.
5. **Communications:** None
6. **Reports:**
 - a. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Carroll stated that he sent out the report to everyone. SEAT continues to struggle with hiring drivers. Three drivers are currently in training; however, a current operator resigned. SEAT continues to look at other ways to advertise. Mr. Carroll is considering a hiring bonus and will speak to the union about it. SEAT has started some service expansions. However, starting new services is constrained by staffing. Ridership is up for all services. Staff continue to collaborate with CTDOT for approval of modifications of the current facility to install the three (3) charging stations. Cross Sound Ferry approached SEAT to spearhead 5307 FTA ferryboat rehabilitation grant. Mr. Carroll advised Cross Sound Ferry that SEAT does not have the staffing to apply or manage the on-going FTA grant requirements related to the grant. He suggested Cross Sound Ferry discuss their needs further with CTDOT. Motion to file and accept: Oefinger / Brule. Unanimous with no abstentions.

b. **Financial Report:** Mr. Carroll stated SEAT is a little under budget. Fare revenue has been strong. SEAT continues to rely on federal COVID funds to support operations. Those monies will be running out sometime in FY2025 and will not be renewed. In FY2026, Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT will be looking at some financial challenges moving forward. Mr. Carroll reminded everyone that the New London Smart Ride is funded primarily with federal COVID money. To the best of Mr. Carroll's knowledge, that program has not been funded by CTDOT through their traditional grants or the Micro transit pilot grants. This will become an issue later in FY2025 unless additional funding can be found to continue that program. The night Smart Ride, which is projected to start in the evenings from 8 pm to 12:30 am, is funded under the Micro transit pilot program for the next 2 years. Mr. Carroll stated there was legislation passed by the General Assembly two sessions ago that froze transit funding for transit districts. That legislation has yet to be repealed. This is going to be a challenge. Mr. Carroll continues to collaborate with CTDOT and other transit districts to try to get that repealed in FY2025 & FY2026 and beyond. Cost for labor, equipment and supplies can sometimes get extremely high. Motion to file and accept: Boris / Brule. Unanimous with no abstentions.

7. **Old Business:**

a. **Bus Stop Program Update:** Mr. Carroll stated the topic came up last month regarding towns that are not members of the SEAT: Franklin, Preston, North Stonington, and Ledyard. Mr. Carroll was instructed to draft a letter to those towns to advise them that SEAT is transitioning to bus stops and would like to put bus stops in those towns; but to do so, they would need to consider being members of the District. Related to that, Mr. Carroll was tasked to determine the local cost to join the District for each town. Mr. Carroll also looked at Foxwoods. As a reminder, Foxwoods had funded a portion of Route/Line 108 which goes from New London to Foxwoods. In 2014, Foxwoods chose to discontinue funding that service although SEAT has continued the service. During COVID, SEAT added Route/Line 982 that runs from Norwich to Foxwoods, which has been very productive with strong ridership growth. In the interest of moving expeditiously, Mr. Carroll suggested installing the bus stops via a third-party contractor. Discussions ensued surrounding bus stops, installation of bus stops, talking to the four towns as it relates to becoming members and public relations for bus stops. Mr. Carroll is to revise the letter and send it out to the 4 towns and Foxwoods within the week. Mr. Carroll will also reach out to the member towns who have not responded to the bus stop project.

8. **New Business:**

- a. **FY23 Financial Audit:** Mr. Carroll stated that the audit has been completed, and copies sent to the Board under separate cover. No deficiencies or material defects were reported. Motion to accept and file: Oefinger / Schefers Unanimous with no abstentions.
- b. **Remix Planning Software Procurement:** Mr. Carroll stated that this software is over \$100,000. Remix is a tool that is used for route planning, GTFS files, bus stop locations, and operator scheduling. Motion to accept and file Schefers / Sparkman, Unanimous with no abstentions.
- c. **Bus Router Procurement:** Mr. Carroll stated that this is a purchase of hardware which will provide cell-based internet Wi-Fi for cameras, Token Transit Fare Validators, Automatic Passenger Counters and Vehicle Location services. It will also provide Wi-Fi for the internet on the buses. SEAT has received 3 quotes from 3 different vendors. It costs a little over \$100,000. Motion to accept and file: Passero / Schefers; Unanimous with no abstentions.
- d. **Spare Labs Software Procurement:** Mr. Carroll stated that this is a renewal of SEAT's Micro Transit and ADA Paratransit schedule and reporting software. This is a year contract that costs \$122,964. This software also includes a free app which allows customers to schedule and track their rides. Motion to accept and file Passero / Schefers: Unanimous with no abstentions.
- e. **Management Contract RFP:** Mr. Carroll stated that the staff is still developing an RFP. Mr. Carroll's understanding in the last meeting the Board would like to continue with the current management model. The current contract expires at the end of the current year. Cynthia Schilke is working on a draft RFP which will be brought to the board at the next Board meeting.
- f. **Council of Governments Board Representative:** Thomas Sparkman will be the representative for SEAT. Motion to accept. Oefinger / Passero; Unanimous with no abstentions.
- g. **Board Secretary Vacancy:** Nomination for Robert Brule as Secretary was moved and accepted; Passero / Salamone; Unanimous with no abstentions.
- h. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff:** Ms. Rattan stated that the bus electric facility for WRTD is moving forward. They are going to roll out in three (3) phases. The first phase is bringing power to the location.
- i. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Labor Contract Negotiations Update at 10:47 am
- j. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 10:51 am; Unanimous with no abstentions.

9. **Next Meeting:** July 17, 2023

Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors Meeting

9:30 AM, July 17, 2024

The meeting will be held **in person and via ZOOM at the SE CT Council of Governments Office, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich CT.**

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Public Comment:
3. Meeting Minutes: June 18, 2024 Meeting
4. Communications: None
5. Reports:
 - a) Management Report: Accept and File
 - b) Financial Report: Accept and File
6. Old Business:
 - a) Bus Stop Program Update/Review
7. New Business:
 - a) 2024-2026 Collective Bargaining Agreement
 - b) Spare Labs Open Fleet Presentation (Kyle Rouhani)
 - c) Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff
8. Adjournment
9. Next meeting: August 21, 2024 (Proposed)

Member Municipalities
East Lyme Griswold Groton Lisbon Montville
New London Norwich Stonington Waterford

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Zoom Instructions: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84830119165>

Meeting ID: 848 3011 9165

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,84830119165# US (New York)
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• +1 305 224 1968 US
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• +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
• +1 646 931 3860 US
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• +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
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Meeting ID: 848 3011 9165

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kyqKXF011>

Minutes of the July 17, 2024
Meeting of the Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors

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|------------------------|---|
| Board Members Present: | Mark Oefinger (Groton), Robert Brule (Waterford), Cary Redd (New London), Robert Boris (Groton), Dan Cunningham (East Lyme), Thomas Sparkman (Lisbon), Michael Passero (New London), Michael Schefers (Stonington), John Salamone (Norwich) |
| SEAT Staff: | Michael Carroll (General Manager), Cherise Simpson, Thailisa Clark (Finance Manager) |
| SCCOG: | Amanda Kennedy, Kate Ratan |
| Other Attendees: | Dulcie Harris (ATU), Cathy Gross (CTDOT), Kathy Rouhani (Spare Labs) |

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 9:45 am by Chairman Sparkman; it was noted that a quorum was present.
2. **Public Comment:** No Comment
3. **Minutes of June 18, 2024:** Motion to approve: Passero / Schefers Unanimous with no abstentions.
4. **Communications:** None
5. **Reports:**
 - a. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Carroll stated that there was a slight drop in ridership for the month of June. Additional services were added for Route 3 on Saturday and extended hours on Route 982 which travels from Norwich to Foxwoods. Reports show that Micro Transit numbers and ADA numbers were stable. SEAT continues to struggle to find operators to expand services such as the Sunday service, Waterford HOP, and a new Groton bus route. SEAT has three CDL drivers in training. SEAT is working on the training program for the new electric transit vans. Motion to file and accept: Boris / Oefinger. Unanimous with no abstentions.
 - b. **Financial Report:** Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT has come to the end of the fiscal year. Adjustments may be made. SEAT is in decent shape overall. Passenger revenue is up over 30%. Operating expenses are tracking a little under budget because this budget included service expansions that SEAT has not implemented due to operator shortages. SEAT relied on two million dollars of federal COVID money to balance the budget. The New London Smart Ride has not been approved or funded by CTDOT. This program has solely relied on the federal

COVID money to continue the service. The funds will run out in FY25. The total operating cost for last fiscal year was about \$561,000 to run SmartRide. SEAT will continue to collaborate with CTDOT to try to get their approval to fund the SmartRide program. So far, CTDOT has not been willing to fund that service. Discussions ensued surrounding SmartRide and who to talk to about getting funding for SmartRide. Cathy Gross from CTDOT stated that SmartRide is a duplication of current fixed-route service and is the reason CTDOT is hesitant to fund the service. Mr. Redd would like Ms. Gross' assistance in doing an analysis surrounding SmartRide and its current service. Motion to file and accept: Schefers / Oefinger. Unanimous with no abstentions.

6. **Old Business:**

- a. **Bus Stop Program Update:** Mr. Carroll stated that he does not have any major updates for Board members as he has been away for over two weeks. He stated that he will get back into this project. Mr. Carroll did get an overlay to SEAT's mapping with the State routes in the region. He will be working on highlighting which proposed bus stops are on state roads. He will also send out a proposed bus stop list to all the current member towns as well as the four towns mentioned at the SCCOG meeting who are not members of SEAT explaining the impact that it would have on their towns. They will have to become members of the district for SEAT to put bus stops in their perspective towns. If they chose not to become members, the consequence for that is that the bus will not stop in their towns. Mr. Carroll suggested having a special meeting in August to discuss the bus stop program.

7. **New Business:**

- a. **2024-2026 Collective Bargaining Agreement:** Mr. Carroll is pleased to announce that the Union and Company came to an agreement. This is a proposed three-year agreement. The Union ratified the agreement. It called for a 4% increase along with a \$2/hour wage adjustment for all bargaining unit positions other than Customer Service Representatives. In subsequent years, there is a 2.5% increase. The other issue was to revert to the Connecticut Partnership Health Plan. SEAT will have this insurance as of September 1st, 2024. This Contract is through June 2027. Mr. Carroll is recommending that the Board approves the agreement. Motion to approve the agreement. Brule / Schefers Unanimous with no abstentions.
- b. **Spare Labs Open Fleet Virtual Presentation:** Mr. Carroll introduced Kyle Rouhani from Spare Labs. The Spare software that SEAT uses for the Micro Transit services, offers an "open fleet" option which allows selected Micro

Transit trips to be provided by a third-party such as Uber or Lyft in addition to SEAT-owned / operated vehicles. Should SEAT choose to pursue this option for Smart Ride, and/or the new Micro Transit services (but not the Stonington HOP service), management would need to establish contractual terms with the third-party providers(s) and secure approval from CTDOT. Board members told Mr. Carroll to further pursue this option after much discussion.

- c. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff:** Discussions ensued surrounding having an August board meeting between Mr. Carroll and all the Board members present. It was decided that there will be a Board meeting on August 21, 2024, at 8:30 am at SEAT.
- d. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 10:51 am; Motion to adjourn Schefers / Brule. Unanimous with no abstentions.

8. **Next Meeting:** August 21, 2024

**Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors Meeting
8:30 AM, August 21, 2024**

The meeting will be held **in person** at the Norwich Transportation Center, 10 Falls Avenue, Norwich.

Please note the changed time and location! (If you park on the first level of the garage - plenty of spaces, take the steps or elevator down one level to the meeting area)

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Public Comment:
3. Meeting Minutes: July 17, 2024 Meeting
4. Communications: None
5. Reports:
 - a) Management Report: Accept and File
 - b) Financial Report: Accept and File
6. Old Business:
 - a) Bus Stop Program Update/Review
 - b) Management RFP
7. New Business:
 - a) Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff
8. Adjournment
9. Next meeting: September 18, 2024

Member Municipalities
East Lyme Griswold Groton Lisbon Montville
New London Norwich Stonington Waterford

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**Minutes of the August 21, 2024
Meeting of the Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors**

Board Members Present: Mark Oefinger (Groton), Robert Brule (Waterford), Cary Redd (New London), Robert Boris (Groton), Tina Falck (Griswold), Thomas Sparkman (Lisbon), Michael Passero (New London), Michael Schefers (Stonington), John Salomone (Norwich)

SEAT Staff: Michael Carroll (General Manager)

SCCOG: Amanda Kennedy

Other Attendees: None

Note: Meeting was held at the Norwich Transportation Center, 10 Falls Avenue, Norwich CT

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 8:35 am by Chairman Sparkman with a quorum present.
2. **Public Comment:** No Comment
3. **Minutes of July 17, 2024:** Motion to approve: Boris / Oefinger Unanimous with no abstentions.
4. **Communications:** None
5. **Reports:**
 - a. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT continues to recruit operators. Two Operators completed training and are out in revenue service currently. A Third Operator decided to become a Micro Transit Operator. He will be a full-time operator. There are three more operators in training. SEAT continues to recruit both non CDL and CDL operators. In the summertime it would appear as though the regular full-time operators are calling out sick. SEAT hired two new bus servicers and one new mechanic. As a result of a customer service representative being out on leave, the Norwich Transportation Center office is currently closed on Saturdays but should re-open in September. Ridership is up to 92,000 boardings. ADA ridership is steady. There were no rides for the first month of the Groton HOP. Mr. Carroll hopes to start the Waterford HOP in September or no later than October. Several members suggested that staff issue a press release and reach out to local newspapers about the new Micro Transit services. Mr. Carroll started conversations with the DOT about utilizing third-party contractors to provide Micro Transit service. They did not say "no." Mr. Carroll hopes to report back in September with further information. The State DOT has approved plans for EV charging stations. Mr. Carroll does not have any

updated information on the expansion facility. Motion to file and accept: Boris / Oefinger. Unanimous with no abstentions.

- b. **Financial Report:** No financial report this month. There will be a July and August report at the September Board meeting.

6. **Old Business:**

- a. **Bus Stop Program Update:** Mr. Carroll would like to begin implementing the bus stop program. He would like to start by the end of the calendar year. Heavy discussions ensued surrounding the process for determining proposed locations and mapping of that information. Discussions ensued surrounding the bus stop program. Mayor Passero asked Mr. Carroll to send a letter to all the towns regarding the implementation of the bus program. Groton and New London will start immediately after securing a contractor. The other towns will get back to Mr. Carroll within 30 days and after that, SEAT will do installation for the remainder of the towns. Discussions ensued surrounding bus shelters, the CT DOT state-wide program and maintenance of shelters. Discussions on this topic would be taken up at subsequent meetings.
- b. **Letter to Towns That Are Not District Members:** Mr. Carroll will send a letter to towns who are not District members regarding becoming a member. Motion for Mr. Carroll to send out a letter: Oefinger / Salomone. Unanimous with no abstentions.
- c. **Management RFP:** Mr. Carroll reported that Cynthia Schilke is drafting the management RFP and that any suggestions/concerns should be directed to her. Mr. Salomone mentioned a subcommittee of the Board oversaw the prior RFP process.

7. **New Business:**

- a. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff:** Stonington is instituting two HOP stops at retirement centers near Mystic Village. New London has been working on the RAISE grant project for a bus transfer center collocated at the Water Street Garage. They have recently received the site plan for the transit hub. Discussions ensued surrounding bus stop signs and if they were going to be across the street from each other.
- b. **Adjournment:** Sparkman: Motion to adjourn at 9:30 am. Unanimous with no abstentions.

8. **Next Meeting:** September 18, 2024

Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors Meeting 8:30 AM, September 18, 2024

The meeting will be held **in person at the SCCOG Office, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich.**

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Public Comment:
3. Meeting Minutes: August 21, 2024 Meeting
4. Communications: None
5. Reports:
 - a) Management Report: Accept and File
 - b) Financial Report: Accept and File
6. Old Business:
 - a) Bus Stop Program Update/Review
 - b) Management RFP
7. New Business:
 - a) Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff
8. Adjournment
9. Next meeting: October 16, 2024

Member Municipalities

East Lyme Griswold Groton Lisbon Montville
New London Norwich Stonington Waterford

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| Board Members Present: | Mark Oefinger (Groton), Robert Brule (Waterford), Cary Redd (New London), Robert Boris (Groton), Dan Cunningham (East Lyme), Thomas Sparkman (Lisbon), Michael Passero (New London), Michael Schefers (Stonington), John Salomone (Norwich) |
| SEAT Staff: | Michael Carroll (General Manager), Thailisa Clark (Finance Manager), Cynthis Schilke (Assistant General Manager), Cherise Simpson |
| SCCOG: | Amanda Kennedy, Kate Ratan |
| Other Attendees: | Rashad Umrani, ATU Local 1209 Financial Secretary |

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 9:41 am by Vice Chairman Oefinger; it was noted that a quorum was present.
2. **Public Comment:** Rashad Umrani introduced himself as a member of the Union. He has been working for SEAT for the past 2 years. He recently switched over from SmartRide to Groton HOP. He stated that the Groton HOP needs more advertising. Mr. Umrani suggested that once people knew about the route, they would be more likely to ride.
3. **Minutes of September 18, 2024:** Motion to approve: Salomone / Brule Unanimous with no abstentions.
4. **Communications:** None
5. **Reports:**
 - a. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT started new services beginning on September 30th for the Waterford HOP. Mr. Carroll addressed the concerns of Mr. Umrani stating that SEAT will issue a press release for all new services as well as reach out to the senior housing, particularly in Waterford. Mr. Carroll stated that there was a big jump in ridership for Stonington HOP last month with the addition of Saturday services. Fixed route services will run an hour later, which is part of the Governor's Service Initiative in Groton, Norwich, and New London. Daytime services will run until 8 pm instead of 7 pm. SEAT will also start some services earlier on Saturday's as they did not start until 9 am. Most services will start at 7 am and extend some services a little later in the evening, to 6 pm instead of ending at 4 pm. Sunday service roll-out is delayed due to the challenge of hiring new operators. SEAT needs five to six new operators to start the Sunday Service. SEAT continues to work on hiring operators. Additionally, Mr. Carroll

noted the challenges in hiring non-CDL operators for the New London late night Smart Ride services which is delayed until January. Currently CDL operators on overtime cover most of the Smart Ride hours, which is an additional unbudgeted expense. The overtime is putting wear and tear on the employees as well. SEAT's high absenteeism reflects a bit of burnout amongst the employees. Regarding micro transit "Open Fleets", Mr. Carroll received verbal approval from CTDOT, allowing SEAT to utilize third-party providers such as Uber, Lyft, M7, or local cab companies. Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT would have to put guardrails for liability and drug testing requirements. In practice, when a customer books a trip, if SEAT is unable to respond, a third-party provider could. The customer would receive a notice that this trip is going to be offered to a third party such as Uber or Lift. These third-party companies will not be subject to drug and alcohol regulations, and they will ask the customer if they would still like to accept the trip.

Hopefully, this will help alleviate some operator shortages that SEAT is experiencing. SEAT will need to develop a billing process with the third-party provider(s). The Norwich Transit Center has resumed regular hours of Monday – Saturday between 8 am and 8 pm with the return of one half of the employee workforce. Mr. Carroll reported fixed route ridership was up in the month of August with 99,000 boardings, the highest we have seen since COVID. There was also a nice increase in the EB shuttle service from 200 boardings in July to 360 in the month of August. Regarding Capital projects, SEAT is working on installing the charging stations for the Ford transit EVs at SEAT via a licensed contractor. Mr. Carroll stated SEAT has one charger and are testing the real-world range with 1 vehicle. SEAT can track the battery levels in real time and has determined that at 20%, it should return to the garage. SEAT will also look at charging stations throughout the district for remote charging. Mr. Carroll hopes that the next generation of vehicles will have a longer range. Talks surrounding EV charging stations in the district ensued. Motion to file and accept: Salomone / Brule. Unanimous with no abstentions.

- b. **Financial Report:** Mr. Carroll provided a summary of revenue and expenses for July. Mrs. Clark continues to face challenges, but she is working to compile the data. Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT is currently on budget tracking about \$1M in expenditures each month. Mr. Carroll stated that the passenger revenue has been very robust. He reminded the Board that SEAT is dependent upon State monies. There is a sizable increase in state funding for service enhancements, but core services are level-funded at FY24 rates. SEAT continues to use Federal CRISSA COVID relief money as well for operations. Mr. Carroll stated that money will run out either before or at the end of this fiscal year. Mr. Carroll reminded

the Board that the New London SmartRide program is unfunded service with no dedicated State funding or local funding and relies on COVID relief grants. Mr. Carroll stated that he and the Board will have to work on how to address this issue moving forward. Discussions ensued surrounding the New London SmartRide service and other micro transit services. Mr. Carroll will report back at the October meeting when exactly the COVID relief money runs out. Further discussions will continue surrounding SmartRide in the October meeting.

Motion to file and accept: Schefers / Passero. Unanimous with no abstentions.

6. Old Business:

- a. **Bus Stop Program Update / Review:** Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT is moving forward with the bus stop program. Tim McDuff is working hard on getting a third-party vendor. Mr. Carroll stated that one town member is considering installing stops in their locality and signs are available at SEAT. Mr. Carroll sent out information to all the Board members and to the town CEO's and public works directors on proposed locations but has not heard back from anyone to date. Mr. Carroll will assume that the proposed locations are okay. Mr. Carroll will notify the Board members when a contractor has been secured and when they will start installing signs in their respective towns. Ms. Rattan has a meeting on October 3rd regarding bus shelters for the statewide bus shelter program. SEAT has a list of current bus shelters. Discussions ensued surrounding the state funded bus shelter program.
- b. **Management RFP:** Mr. Carroll sent out another revision of the Management RFP which has no major changes from what was sent out last month. Cynthia Schilke, Assistant General Manager and Grants/Procurement Manager attended the meeting. Mr. Carroll asks that any concerns, questions, or suggestions be directed to Mrs. Schilke as he cannot be involved in this process. If this process falls behind schedule, Mr. Carroll suggested that Transdev could agree to a contract extension. The current contract expires at the end of the calendar year. The RFP must be submitted to Region I FTA due to the finding in the last Triennial Review. Discussions ensued surrounding the RFP amongst Board members. Motion indicating the Boards desire to move forward with the RFP for management services: Salomone / Brule. Unanimous with no abstentions. Board members are to let Mr. Sparkman or Mr. Carroll know if interested in serving on the management services committee in the October meeting.

7. New Business:

- a. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff:** Mr. Carroll stated that there were previous discussions on the DEI program partly in response to issues raised

by the Union, and he has reached out to a vendor recommended by the city of New London. Mr. Carroll will draw up an initial contract with them. The program costs around \$30,000 for an initial survey and assessment of the workforce on DEI issues. Mr. Carroll hopes to get a pulse of the organization to see if there are issues from within. Mr. Redd stated that the City of New London is moving forward with the downtown revitalization program of the parking garage and transit hub. Mr. Redd received the final initial conceptual site plan for both transit for the expansion and the bridge connector. Mr. Redd asks that be placed on the agenda for next month.

- b. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 10:20 am: Brule / Salomone. Unanimous with no abstentions.

8. **Next Meeting:** October 16, 2024

**Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors Meeting
8:30 AM, October 16, 2024**

The meeting will be held **in person** at the SCCOG Office, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich.

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Public Comment:
3. Meeting Minutes: September 18, 2024 Meeting
4. Communications: None
5. Reports:
 - a) Management Report: Accept and File
 - b) Financial Report: Accept and File
6. Old Business:
 - a) Bus Stop and Shelter Program Update/Review
 - b) Management RFP
7. New Business:
 - a) Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff
8. Adjournment
9. Next meeting: November 20, 2024

Member Municipalities
East Lyme Griswold Groton Lisbon Montville
New London Norwich Stonington Waterford

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**Minutes of the October 16, 2024
Meeting of the Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors**

Board Members Present: Tina Falck (Griswold), Thomas Sparkman (Lisbon) (Chairman), Mark Oefinger (Groton) (Vice Chairman), Robert Boris (Groton), Leonard Bunnell (Montville), Michael Passero (New London), Carey Redd, II (New London), Michael Schefers (Stonington)

SEAT Staff: Michael Carroll (General Manager), Cherise Simpson

SCCOG: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Ratan

Other Attendees:

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 9:50 am; a quorum was present.
2. **Public Comment:** No public comment.
3. **Minutes of September 18, 2024:** Motion to approve: Boris / Passero Unanimous with a note to correct attendance.
4. **Communications:** None
5. **Reports:**
 - a. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Carroll stated SEAT had over 90,000 boardings in September. SEAT implemented some service expansions. Pending services are Sunday service, late night SmartRide service in New London and a new route in Groton (627) based on recommendations from the old transit study. The service would run from Eastern Point to the Subbase, on weekdays. SEAT has been unable to implement these services due a shortage of operators. Mr. Carroll also stated SEAT struggles, at times, to maintain service. SEAT continues to rely heavily on CDL operators to operate the SmartRide service in New London and sometimes they are pulled from SmartRide in order maintain the fixed route service. Mr. Carroll stated SEAT does participate in job fairs as part of the recruitment process and staff continues all recruitment efforts. The State continues to offer the CDL program. Traditionally SEAT only hires operators with a CDL. Currently, a SEAT mechanic will attend the six-week program to prepare him for the DMV CDL test. The shortage of skilled operators is industry wide. SEAT continues to work with Spare regarding the "open fleets" using Uber to backfill some micro transit service and is working with Spare Labs on the liability/indemnification language. Mr. Carroll was asked if DOT has approved the use of Uber drivers. Mr. Carroll stated that they have verbally. It was suggested that Mr. Carroll seek written approval. Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT is working

with Thought Partners of New London regarding DEI program. They will be meeting with the leadership staff and then will schedule meetings with all employees to take a pulse of the organization. The Union raised this issue several times, particularly race relations at SEAT. SEAT has started limited use of the EV vehicles on HOP and Smart Ride services. They have a limited range slightly in excess of one hundred miles which presents scheduling challenges. SEAT is also identifying charging stations throughout the service area and will explore establishing relationships with those providers to provide remote charging. Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT is confident that the New London SmartRide program can continue through the end of June 30, 2025, utilizing Federal COVID relief funds. Mr. Redd wanted to know if there is any traction on the repurposing of funds from fixed route to micro transit. Mr. Carroll stated that right now the State has indicated they are not willing to consider that option. Discussions ensued surrounding SmartRide, passengers and the New London fixed route services.

Motion to file and accept: Oefinger / Bunnell. Unanimous with no abstentions.

- b. **Financial Report:** Mr. Carroll provided both August and September financial reports in the packet. Staff continues to tweak the report to include budget comparisons. Hopefully in November, the reports will show how SEAT is tracking vis-à-vis the budget. Mr. Carroll stated that SEAT heavily relies on the federal COVID funds. Mr. Carroll stated that in the last Federal census SEAT dropped under 200,000 in the service area or “small urban” which allows federal money to be flexed to support operations. Mr. Carroll has had discussions with CTDOT on this issue, but thus far are not supportive. Mr. Carroll noted this option does not mean SEAT would receive more Federal money; only that it would move total Federal funds from capital programs to operating costs. Since the State controls the allocations of federal money through the governor’s apportionment such action would require CTDOT approval. Mr. Carroll also noted the General Assembly froze transit funding for districts at the FY24 levels and sought the Board’s approval to have a conversation with the SCCOG Legislative Committee. Mr. Schefers stated he serves on the SCCOG Legislative Committee and would be willing to raise this issue at their next meeting. Discussions ensued surrounding how Federal monies are spent, the governor’s apportionment and small urbanized areas.

Motion to file and accept: Oefinger / Passero; Unanimous with no abstentions.

6. **Old Business:**

- a. **Bus Stop and Shelter Program Update/Review:** Mr. Carroll reported SEAT has some flexibility through its current capital grant program to increase the number

of shelters acquired given the limited number in the first couple of years of the State program. Mr. Carroll asked if the Board want to be involved in the process of reviewing the shelter locations, selecting the design, and if additional shelters were desired. The question of SEATs position vis-à-vis a town's responsibility to maintain any shelters acquired was raised. Mr. Carroll's understanding from the State program is routine maintenance of the shelter, cleaning, graffiti removal, snow removal will fall on the town. Mr. Carroll asked if the Board wanted to be involved as a committee of the whole, a smaller committee or does the Board want SEAT staff to produce the final recommendations? It was suggested that SEAT Board members have a working session for not only the bus shelters but also the bus signs as well. Discussions ensued surrounding the bus shelters. It is agreed that at the next Board meeting in November, to discuss this issue further. Mr. Carroll reported on discussions with three of the four towns who are not members of the District. Carroll stated that he would have to follow up as it has been a while since they had had discussions. Preston requested an extension until October 16th so that they could have an internal review. A discussion ensued to invite the four non-member towns to come to the next Board meeting for a discussion on this matter. The Board's consensus was if a town advised the Board, they did not intend to become a member of the District, SEAT services will stop January 1st. The Board also directed staff to place notices on the buses, social media and the SEAT website regarding the potential service stopping in the four nonmember towns.

- b. **Management RFP:** Mr. Carroll asked if the Board wanted to form a committee to evaluate the proposals or if they wanted to have a work session. Proposals are due November 1st, with a proposed award date of November 20. Board members suggested the Executive Committee should review and recommend a proposal at the next Board meeting; with an invitation for all Board members to attend the Committee meeting if they so choose.

7. **New Business:**

- a. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff:** None
- b. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 10:55 am

8. **Next Meeting:** November 20, 2024

Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors Meeting 8:30 AM, November 20, 2024

The meeting will be held in person at the SCCOG Office, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich.

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Public Comment:
3. Discussion with Non-Member Town Representatives
4. Meeting Minutes: October 15, 2024 Meeting
5. Communications: None
6. Reports:
 - a) Management Report: Accept and File
 - b) Financial Report: Accept and File
7. Old Business:
 - a) Bus Stop and Shelter Program Update/Review
 - i) Suggested Shelter Workshop Dates for week of December 9
 - b) Management Proposals; review and approve.
8. New Business:
 - a) Federal Financial Audit: Review and accept.
 - b) 2025 Board Officer Nominating Committee
 - c) Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff
9. Adjournment
10. Next meeting: December 17, 2024

Member Municipalities
East Lyme Griswold Groton Lisbon Montville
New London Norwich Stonington Waterford

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**Minutes of the November 20, 2024
Meeting of the Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors**

Board Members Present: Tina Falck (Griswold); Thomas Sparkman (Lisbon) (Chairman); Mark Oefinger (Groton) (Vice Chairman); Leonard Bunnell (Montville); Michael Passero (New London); Carey Redd, II (New London); John Salomone (Norwich); Michael Schefers (Stonington); Robert Brule (Waterford)

SEAT Staff: Michael Carroll (General Manager); Thailisa Clark (Finance Manager); Cynthia Schilke (Procurement Manager)

SCCOG: Amanda Kennedy; Kate Ratan

Other Attendees: Robert Carlson (North Stonington); Cristen Tolen (Transdev); Nick Promponus (Transdev); Sendra Childs, ATU; Jennifer Pacacha (CTDOT)

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 9:34 am; a quorum was present.
2. **Public Comment:** Sendra Childs (ATU Local 1209 President and Bus Operator) spoke of the Union's concerns about bus operator safety and the increase in aggressive behaviors by customers. She cited several examples in which the Union believes the District is not taking sufficient steps to protect its operators.
3. **Communications:** None.
4. **Old Business/Management Proposals:** The Board moved this item on the agenda. Mr. Sparkman moved that the Board go into Executive Session at 9:40 to discuss the two proposals received from Transdev and Fitchburg Consortium. Sparkman/Salomone; Unanimous with no abstentions. The Board reconvened the open session at 10:30 and made the unanimous recommendation that the management contract be awarded to Transdev.
5. **Discussion with Non-Member Town Representatives:** Mr. Carlson (North Stonington First Selectman) addressed the Board and noted that he discussed the matter with his counterpart in Preston and she shared his views. He expressed concern about the recent social media posting. He thought the January cut-off was too early and should have been extended to the end of the current fiscal year (June 2025). He also noted the cost per projected passenger boardings in his town was extremely high and hard to justify to his constituents. He asked how a member town's cost was determined, and Mr. Carroll provided an overview of the Board-approved formula and noted that cost per passenger is more a measure of transit efficiency and, in fact the formula's use of passenger boardings as one cost factor equated to lower costs for fewer boardings. Mr. Oefinger

requested Mr. Carroll to mail a summary of current members' annual contributions to the Board. Mr. Carlson noted that SEAT primarily relies on State funding and questioned the need for local funds as all towns contribute to State revenues. An animated discussion between Mr. Carlson and several Board members ensued on this subject and the issue of fairness and equity. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was the sense of the Board if a non-member town indicated it was prepared to submit a request to join SEAT during its FY26 budget process, SEAT would delay discontinuance of service to that town until the end of the current budget year (June 2025).

6. **Minutes of October 15, 2024:** Motion to approve: Brule/Salomone; Unanimous no abstentions.
7. **Reports:**
 - a. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Carroll provided a quick overview of the written report in the interest of time and expressed his thanks to member Michael Schefers for ensuring the issue of State funding was included in the recent SCCOG Legislative package.
Motion to file and accept: Oefinger / Schefers: Unanimous with no abstentions.
 - b. **Financial Report:** Mr. Carroll notes the October financial reports were in the packet and noted Staff continues to tweak the report to include budget comparisons.
Motion to file and accept: Oefinger / Schefers Unanimous with no abstentions.
8. **Old Business/Bus Stop and Shelter Program Update/Review:** Members suggested that Mr. Carroll poll members after the meeting to set a date/time for a work session on shelters and updates on proposed bus stop locations. Mr. Carroll will follow up.
9. **New Business:**
 - a. **Federal Financial Audit:** Mr. Carroll reported the audit was sent under separate cover and noted there were no material weaknesses or deficiencies in the report and recommended the Board accept the audit. Motion to accept: Schefers/Salomone; unanimous with no abstentions.
 - b. **2025 Board Office Nominating Committee:** Mr. Sparkman asked if the current officers would be willing to serve in 2025 and indicated he would have a slate of proposed officers at the December meeting.
 - c. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff:** Ms. Rattan reported that CTDOT was programming major bridge work in 2027-28 with lane closures for the Gold Star Bridge and Mohegan Pequot bridge which would impact SEAT services and might require additional transit services for traffic and pedestrian mitigation.
 - d. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 10:55 am
10. **Next Meeting:** December 18, 2024 (at Flanders Fish Market)

**Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors Meeting
9:30 AM, December 18, 2024**

The meeting will be held **in person at
Flanders Fish Market and Restaurant, 22 Chesterfield Road, East Lyme, CT**

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Public Comment:
3. Meeting Minutes: November 20, 2024 Meeting
4. Communications:
 - a) Franklin Bus Stop Telephone Call
 - b) CTOSHA Letter
5. Reports:
 - a) Management Report: Accept and File
 - b) Financial Report: Accept and File
6. Old Business:
 - a) Non-Member Town Bus Stops Update
 - b) Bus Stop and Shelter Program Update/Review
 - c) Management Contract; review and approval
 - d) 2025 Board Officer Election
7. New Business:
 - a) 2025 Meeting Dates
 - b) Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff
8. Adjournment
9. Next meeting: January 15, 2025

Member Municipalities
East Lyme Griswold Groton Lisbon Montville
New London Norwich Stonington Waterford

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**Minutes of the December 18, 2024
Meeting of the Southeast Area Transit District Board of Directors**

Board Members Present: Thomas Sparkman, Chairman (Lisbon), Mark Oefinger, Vice-Chairman (Groton), Michael Passero (New London), Carey Redd II (New London), John Salomone, Treasurer (Norwich), Michael Schefers (Stonington), Robert Brule, Secretary (Waterford); Daniel Cunningham (East Lyme)

SEAT Staff: Michael Carroll (General Manager), Cherise Simpson, Thailisa Clark (Finance Manager)

SCCOG: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Ratan

Other Attendees:

1. **Roll Call:** Called to order at 9:40 am; it was noted that a quorum was present.
2. **Public Comment:** No public comment.
3. **Minutes of November 20, 2024:** Motion to approve: Schefers/Oefinger; Unanimous; with a note to check record of attendance.
4. **Communications:**
 - a. Franklin Bus Stop Telephone Call
 - b. Conn OSHA Letter
5. **Reports:**
 - a. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Carroll said that it was a shorter month in November which resulted in a little decline in ridership. There were over 90,000 boardings in all services. SEAT continues to hire new operators. 2 CDL operators and 2 Micro Transit operators were added to the roster last month. Another CDL operator who continues her training with estimated completion by the end of the calendar year. SEAT needs to recruit 4-5 more CDL operators to implement the Sunday service and the new line in Groton. Mr. Carroll stated when the changes are made and SEAT implements the late night SmartRide service, running until 12:30 am, Monday through Saturday, he would like to convert the existing fixed route line 15 to a Micro Transit Service, as it may provide a better customer experience given the low ridership. Mr. Carroll said he had preliminary conversations with CTDOT who are supportive of transitioning this line to Micro Transit service, perhaps in February. He will also get written approval from CTDOT. Mr. Carroll said that he will reach out to FTA to confirm that no analysis needs to be done due to this transition. SEAT decided to table the "open fleet"

option for Micro Transit (subcontracting) because the current contract language does not protect SEAT. Mr. Carroll said Stonington HOP ridership has grown significantly. It's almost a 40% increase partly due to the addition of Saturday service. Waterford Hop service struggles. SEAT will redouble marketing efforts. Mr. Carroll mentioned a report from Conn OSHA concerning an employee complaint about verbal assaults of operators by passengers. SEAT is continuing to work on this issue. Mr. Carroll provided background information and is planning more customer service training and de-escalating training for operators. Mr. Carroll stated sometimes verbal confrontations are escalated by employees who feel the first time someone addresses them in a negative manner, the police need to be called, and the customer removed from the bus. Mr. Carroll said if an explicit threat is made, or the customer physically assaults (including spitting) or continuously harasses them verbally then law enforcement would be called. It is challenging to bar a customer from service as often SEAT does not have a name or an address, only a picture from the buses video. There were a couple events of mistaken identity where operators thought that a person was barred, and it was the wrong person. Mr. Carroll noted all buses are equipped with barriers that the driver sits behind. Operators also have an emergency button that flashes a head sign that says, "Emergency, call 911" as well as an emergency button through the CAD/AVL system with communication protocols in place to dispatch law enforcement. When possible, SEAT would like the operator to deescalate the situation. SEAT relies on Road Supervisors, the General Manager, the Operations Manager and the Safety Manager as a first step in addressing operator-customer confrontations. He also noted FTA requires a report on operator assaults from all transit agencies, which SEAT is preparing. Mr. Carroll reported on the DEI initiative with Thought Partners of New London, which kicked off this week with an outreach for all employees. It will be ongoing throughout December into January. The answers will be compiled, and management will be able to tell how SEAT is doing as an organization. SEAT started to deploy the small EV buses and are working on how best to schedule them. On December 17, SEAT received approval from the State of Connecticut to finish installation in the 3 remaining chargers at the facility. Mr. Brule would like to talk to Mr. Carroll offline to strategize how to market the Waterford HOP.

Motion to file and accept: Oefinger / Schefers. Unanimous with no abstentions.

- b. **Financial Report:** Mr. Carroll said SEAT finances are tracking very well. Passenger revenue is healthy. It is a little below budget but Mr. Carroll states he expects continued growth in the year. SEAT has not used the line of credit and

relies on the Federal COVID money; these funds also are used to support Smart Ride service. Mr. Carroll predicts Federal COVID money to run out at the end of the current fiscal year. Mr. Carroll noted the Board would need to consider the future of SmartRide service (Monday through Saturday 8 am to 8 pm.) for FY26. Mr. Carroll said there are State funds for Micro Transit pilot program, including late night SmartRide and Sunday SmartRide service to coincide with the Sunday fixed route service. Motion to file and accept: Oefinger / Schefers; Unanimous with no abstentions.

6. **Old Business:**

- a. **Non-Member Town Bus Stops Update:** The town of Franklin said it does not intend to become a member of the District. The town of Ledyard has not responded. North Stonington and Preston have both indicated they would include SEAT membership as part of the FY26 budget process. Mr. Carroll said Franklin service, with a local match less than \$3,000 annually is a small part of Route 5 from the Norwich Business Park to New Park Avenue. There are two stops proposed in that corridor: Norwich Orthopedics and Elijah Brook Retirement Center and another near the intersection of New Park Avenue and SR 32, near the Subaru dealership. Mr. Carroll reported on a call from a citizen of Norwich who rode that bus to go to work at the Orthopedic Center. Mr. Carroll said that he had a conversation with the First Selectman of Franklin who expressed concerns about the WRTD service along SR32 and passengers who have no bona fide business in the town. He also said he believes very few, if any, Franklin residents use SEAT Route 5. Mr. Salomone said that he did research in this matter and noted about 4 – 5 people who access the Orthopedic Center. A bus stop on the Norwich/Franklin line would be ½ mile from the Orthopedic center and under the ADA guidelines, SEAT would still serve the center for those who qualified under ADA. Discussions ensued surrounding this subject. Moving forward, Preston and North Stonington will continue to have the service that they are receiving now. Beginning January 2nd, Franklin and Ledyard service will cease.
- b. **Bus Stop and Shelter Program Update/Review:** Mr. Carroll thanked Board members for going to the presentation on December 17th. Mr. Carroll said fortuitously, SEAT found out that colleagues at River Valley are a little further along in the RFP process and have one ready to go. They agreed to add SEAT to their RFP which streamlines the process. SEAT is getting data to them. Hopefully, they will have that ready for bid in January. Regarding bus shelters, Mr. Carroll's hopes the Board will agree on a basic design. Mr. Carroll said that his preference would be to have a standard shelter throughout the system and then pick 10

locations for the State program. If there are more locations that could not be included in the State program, Mr. Carroll noted he could try to find traditional capital funds to fund those units. Mr. Carroll said SEAT would need a commitment from the respective towns to assume responsibility for routine maintenance of any shelters located in their town.

- c. **Management Contract:** Mr. Carroll reported staff is still reviewing the contract. They have one area of concern related to how SEAT revenues are managed related to a “subcorp” which does not apply to SEAT and ask that it be removed. When staff has the final copy, it will be included as an action item and signature.
- d. **2025 Board of Officer Election:** No changes were made. Motion made for Thomas Sparkman to still be Chairman, Mark Oefinger to remain Vice Chairman, John Salomone to remain Treasurer and Robert Brule to remain Secretary: Motion to accept: Redd/Schefers. Unanimous with no abstentions.

7. **New Business:**

- a. **2025 Meeting Dates:** 2025 dates approved with changing the May meeting to May 14, 2025, to accommodate the USCG Graduation on May 21, 2025.
- b. **Items from Board Members and SCCOG Staff:**
- c. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 10:17 am

8. **Next Meeting:** January 15, 2025