



# Minutes

**Wednesday July 16, 2012 - 7:00 PM**  
**SWRPA Offices, Stamford, CT**

Council Members in Attendance: Chairman Jim Cameron, Terri Cronin, Sue Prosi, Tim Beeble, Rodney Chabot, Luke Schnirring, David Hendricks, John Hartwell, Roger Cirella, Mitch Fuchs.

State Legislators in Attendance: Senators Carlo Leone and Toni Boucher, State Representatives Gerald Fox and William Tong

Guests: Jim Redeker – DOT Commissioner, Eugene Colonese - DOT, Sue Doering - MNR, James McKenna – MTA Police, John Austin Sr. – Consumer Advocate, Martin Cassidy – The Advocate, Newton Davis, and Channel 12 TV.

Chairman Cameron opened the meeting at 7:02 PM and welcomed David Hendricks as the newly appointed member of the Council. Due to the time constraints of some guests and legislators, Chairman Cameron asked that the Council take up agenda item # 6 first.

## **6: Stamford Garage:**

Commissioner Redeker reviewed the RFQ and indicated that the RFP has been issued and has a deadline of September 24, 2012. DOT aims to sign a contract with the selected bidder by the end of the calendar year. The RFP parameters include that the current number of parking spaces must be maintained throughout construction and the garage must be completed in 3 years. Improvements will be made to connections to the station for pedestrians, bicyclists and Kiss & Ride commuters. DOT wants state of the art technology, and the proposal must meet the definition of Transit Oriented Design (TOD). After DOT reviews and scores the bids, they will award the project to the highest scoring bidder. DOT's goal is to achieve the best return on the state's investment and to provide the best customer service. \$35,000,000 in state funding is available for development only on DOT-owned land.

## Council Comments and DOT Q & A:

There are incentives for early completion, but no penalties for delays.

34% of the scoring is for the garage and 60% is for Return on Investment.

DOT is not dictating whether property is sold, leased or condominiumized.

In scoring, 34% is for customer service, which is also a threshold requirement.

In the Council's opinion, the current garage location is best for commuters.

Minimizing the distance between the parking and the station and protection from the elements is included in the RFP without prescribing how to achieve this.

There will be another public hearing for environmental impact, but not for the project.

The selection of the bidder will be made by the Commissioner.

## Legislator Comments:

Senator Leone: The delegation will advocate for DOT's selection of a bidder who will rebuild the garage in its current location.

Representative Fox: He shares the concerns of the Council, and indicated that the Legislators insist on good interim parking.

Representative Tong reviewed the history of the legislature blocking the \$35,000,000 for the Atlantic Street parking.

**Minutes:** Approval of the minutes of the May 16, 2012 meeting: Motion by Terri Cronin; seconded by John Hartwell, approved. Mitch Fuchs and Roger Cirella abstain.

Note: the June meeting of the Council was cancelled due to a fire at the Government Center.

### 1. **Report on Tour of Eastside Access:**

Chairman Cameron briefly reviewed the Council's May 16, 2012 tour of the East Side Access at Grand Central Terminal.

### 2. **M-8s:**

Gene Colonese reported that 124 cars have been delivered and 112 cars are conditionally accepted. There are 501 weekly trains in the schedule using M-8 equipment. 35% of the trains during the week and 50% on weekends are M-8s. On a daily basis, there are 6 AM trains originating in New Haven and 5 AM trains originating in Stamford using M-8 equipment. DOT expects to have 180 cars by the end of the year. MN is washing the cars more frequently. Approximately 10 M-2s per month are being scrapped. This excludes previously refurbish cars.

### 5. **Review of the Anniversary of 7/12/2011 Westport Stranding and Corrective Actions:**

Chairman Cameron recognized Senator Boucher as being instrumental in getting initiated the Rail Commuter Bill of Rights, now known as the Passenger Pledge.

Sue Doering reported that trains are intentionally slowed on hot days to allow the engineers to watch for wire and rail issues. MN has made communication improvements: The Action Plan is on the website. Conductors have been trained and have been given pocket cards to remind conductors of announcements. MN conducts customer interaction drills as part of its training. MN conducted an emergency drill practice on the New Canaan branch. Water is carried on board many trains and has had to be distributed three times this year in Bridgeport and New Canaan. By 2013, all trains will carry water.

**3. MNR Response to Motorman Video:**

MN has reminded engineers that they are not permitted to read while operating trains. The offending engineer resigned. Commuters report that engineers are now blocking the windows in the doors with newspaper. Sue Doering reported that covering the door windows is a measure to combat glare on the windshield from the ceiling lights in the car shining through the window of the door.

**4. NYS Office of the Controller Audit of MN Inspectors:**

The audit cited the MN inspectors' practice of nepotism, working short days, falsifying their log of rides, and failure to document work. Current inspector staff has been reassigned. Of the 6 inspector positions, 4 positions remain. The Inspector assignments have been re-delegated to other personnel.

**7. Shore Line East:**

MN scheduled 23 extra trains for Operation Sail and carried 2,300 additional passengers.

**8. Main Line:**

TIGR3 funding will be used for LCD Realtime Information by the end of Summer.

The Public Address system improvement is behind schedule but should be completed in the Fall. The improvements will be first completed in Stamford.

A new iPhone app for ticket purchases is being tested by MN employees. MN needs to incorporate protection in the app against fraud and provide expiration of iPhone tickets. Credit card on-board ticketing is being explored. Gene Colonese will work on elimination of the "skip stops" and provide hourly service for the October Schedule. Ridership is up 2.3%. MTA Police reported on the Norwalk assault of a conductor; the arrested passenger is serving jail time. MTA Police are conducting random bag checks. Sue Doering reported the MN monitors ridership on every train to adjust train sizes.

**9. Branch Lines:**

Waterbury branch will be served by busses for 2 months while work on 4 bridges is underway. Buses will depart earlier in order to make the Bridgeport train. Danbury signalization improvements are proceeding.

10. Motion to Adjourn by Mitch Fuchs and Seconded by Rodney Chabot. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM

Respectfully submitted by:  
Tim Beeble  
Secretary