

**Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, CT
Transportation Committee – Unapproved Minutes
Meeting of Wednesday, September 17, 2008**

Members Present: Cheryl Trudon, Transportation Committee Chairman
 John Barrett
 Kathleen Ryan

Administrator Present: Sherry Holmes, Fiscal Services Director

Also present were a couple of citizens.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by C. Trudon.

II. Audience of Citizens

Catalina Veerasammy of 104 Hannah Lane asked that the Committee please do something about the overcrowding issues on the busses. She said in particular, the bus her son is on, Bus 15, has students tripling up and there is even a child on the floor. She said this is also happening on Bus 3. She said parents are outraged and she did have a petition signed. She finished by saying anything that can be done to alleviate the situation would be greatly appreciated.

Pam Sewell of 1124 Flanders Road said she saw that the minutes from the August 6 Transportation Committee meeting would be discussed and she is asking for a correction on the minutes in regard to a motion that was made and seconded; it is not recorded in the minutes. In addition, she wanted to know what the policy is regarding student assignment to busses. She asked if students are assigned to one bus or more than one, which might happen if they are picked up or dropped off at multiple locations in a week's time, for instance. She said if the situation does not change we may have to say no to this type of option. Lastly, she said she is afraid of inconsistencies with consolidating bus stops and hopes that fairness is used in decision making.

Carol Bittner of 151 North Farms Road commented on Bus 3's overcrowding issues. She also said that some busses have been as early as 10 minutes in the morning to the Coventry Grammar School. J. Barrett asked if she knew the numbers of the busses. She could not say for sure. Ms. Holmes said she would check with First Student.

III. 2008-09 Bus Route Changes and Concerns

Ms. Holmes said she would like to begin by addressing the changes first and then the concerns. She said Ms. Greenleaf (First Student Dispatcher) submitted changes for the Bus 2 route for the CNH/CHS run. She continued saying the changes Ms. Greenleaf made are in **bold** for the committee's consideration and that group stops were added and some stops were consolidated.

The committee discussed the changes and confirmed their understanding of the consolidation.

Ms. Holmes continued saying that Ms. Greenleaf is still going through the routes with her safety officer to see if additional changes can be made.

Ms. Holmes handed out more changes to Bus 20 and Bus 5 routes, which were being suggested by First Student. C. Trudon asked if Route 6 was the issue. It was said it was actually the timing of the two routes.

Ms. Holmes said the concerns she has received are the ones regarding Bus 15 and Bus 3, which were mentioned during Audience of Citizens. In addition, she also received phone calls from two parents who were concerned about their middle school students being alone at the bus stop with high school students and would like to see the bus stop moved so it could be seen from their homes. The committee reviewed the town map and the associated stop and thought it best not to change this stop, because it could start a chain reaction of requests to change stops. They suggested other avenues be taken, such as modifying or reporting inappropriate student behavior.

IV. Bus Head Counts

Ms. Holmes handed out the bus head counts. J. Barrett asked if the district had received any complaints regarding the Grammar school bus counts. Ms. Holmes said no.

The committee reviewed the numbers. In particular they reviewed Bus 4 and why the afternoon run was much larger. It was decided Ms. Holmes would find that out and would also find out why the same middle/high school bus stopped at Robertson in the afternoon.

They continued to review each bus and the head counts.

It was decided the committee would focus on Bus 5 for any possible additions because that bus had lower numbers. They discussed Bus 5 picking up students living in the Lathrop-Mark Drives area to alleviate overcrowding on Bus 15.

The recommendation was to condense all of the stops associated with the Lathrop-Mark Drives area and move them to the Bus 5 middle/high run and that the details of stops would be worked out by Ms. Greenleaf.

C. Trudon asked how the parents are notified of the stops. Ms. Holmes said it is mailed home. The committee discussed handing out flyers to the students at the stops as well. It was said Ms. Holmes would speak with Ms. Greenleaf about those procedures.

Next the committee addressed the Bus 3 route. Ms. Holmes suggested that Ms. Greenleaf be given the option to address a couple of route changes and subsequently provide suggestions to the committee.

J. Barrett asked how long it would be before the committee could review and act on the changes. After discussion of availability, it was decided Monday, September 22 would be the date for the next meeting at 6:30 p.m. The committee asked that Ms. Holmes have Ms. Greenleaf look at routes 3, 6, and 10 as options for change.

S. Holmes asked if there was a consensus about the changes she had presented at the beginning of the meeting.

It was stated all routes were still “unapproved” routes.

C. Trudon stated that the full Board did not need to vote on the recommendations of the subcommittee and that has not been the history in the district.

J. Barrett said the history doesn’t matter if it has been done wrong. He said it needs to be done right. He added that the subcommittees cannot bind the Board to decisions they make as they don’t have that authority.

C. Trudon said there are other committees that meet and vote and make decisions on behalf of the full Board.

J. Barrett said if that is the case, the Board should officially charge the subcommittees with the role of specific decision making.

C. Trudon said the three members present tonight cannot change past practice and she would ask the Chairman to add it to an agenda for full Board discussion.

Ms. Holmes asked if there could be a consensus on the two (Bus 2 and Bus 5) proposed changes received from Ms. Greenleaf, which were mentioned at the beginning of the meeting.

The consensus was unanimous – the changes could be implemented to the unapproved bus routes. There was also a consensus that Ms. Holmes and Ms. Greenleaf could move forward in researching the changes to the other routes mentioned.

V. Approval of Minutes of August 6, 2008

For the record, Ms. Holmes distributed the answers to the questions that were raised during Audience of Citizens on August 6, 2008.

C. Trudon stated in regard to the minutes there is disagreement with what was actually said on August 6.

J. Barrett handed out the original August 6 minutes that were sent via email the same evening and said a motion he made was originally recorded, incorrectly, but recorded. The motion was left off of the publically posted minutes. K. Ryan said she had adjusted the minutes based on an email that J. Barrett sent which she believed removed the motion.

K. Ryan asked Mr. Barrett what he wanted to do with the August 6 minutes.

J. Barrett said the minutes need to reflect the legal motion that was made.

The Committee discussed the events of that meeting and whether the motion was made and if there was a second. K. Ryan reviewed her notes and again stated she thought she had incorporated J. Barrett’s suggestions into the minutes.

J. Barrett said the legal motion was made to recommend to the Board to approve the bus routes. C. Trudon said she did not believe she voted to recommend them to the Board for approval. The Committee discussed the wording of the motion.

K. Ryan said when discussing minutes at a regular Board meeting, if a Board member asks for an amendment to the recording of their comments it is accepted. With that said, K. Ryan stated she was willing to add J. Barrett's motion as he wishes to the August 6 minutes because that is the practice of the Board in regard to minutes.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the August 6, 2008 Meeting
By: J. Barrett Seconded: C. Trudon

J. Barrett asked that the following motion be added after the first paragraph under 2008-2009 School Bus Routes:

MOTION: That the Transportation Committee recommend to the Board of Education the approval of the bus routes as presented.
By: J. Barrett Seconded: C. Trudon
Result: Motion passes unanimously.

C. Trudon asked that the last sentence in that section be changed to read: The majority of the Committee agreed to submit the 2008-2009 school bus routes for publication.

Result: The motion to approve the minutes with noted changes passes unanimously.

C. Trudon stated that this should not be a precedent setting decision and that the Board needs to decide how to handle subcommittee recommendations and votes.

VI. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at CT at 8:33
By: C. Trudon Seconded: J. Barrett
Result: The motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Michaud
Temporary Subcommittee Clerk

Approved