

**Coventry Board of Education**  
Coventry, Connecticut

**Transportation Committee Meeting**  
Approved Minutes of Thursday, March 17, 2022  
Administration Building Conference Room

Committee Members Present:

Eugene Marchand, Committee Chair  
Peter DePaola  
Emma Eaton

Also in attendance:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools  
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations  
Pat Cox, Athletic Director  
Christian Marcinczyk, District Transportation Liaison  
Jon Hipsher, M&J

**I. Call to Order**

E. Marchand called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

**II Audience of Citizens**

There were none.

**III. VOTE: Approve the Transportation Committee Minutes of Tuesday, October 26, 2021**

**MOTION: To approve the Transportation Committee Minutes of October 26, 2021**

**By: E. Eaton**

**Seconded: P. DePaola**

**Result: Motion passes unanimously**

**IV. Discussion: Spring Athletics**

Dr. Petrone reviewed the athletic transportation situation due to the lack of drivers. Mr. Cox talked about providing coach buses in the previous season.

Dr. Petrone said they plan to use the coach buses again, as needed. He added that the costs are slightly higher. He said he did not want to make this decision in isolation.

Mr. Hipsher offered suggestions on how M&J could still provide service in this area. Dr. Petrone said our first priority would be to work with M&J, but have the coach buses as an alternative when necessary. He said he would like to give Mr. Cox this flexibility.

P. DePaola asked for a cost analysis to determine the real cost and asked M&J for a commitment to whether they can provide transportation or not.

E. Marchand noted that this work was done and the Committee voted to continue some of the middle school sports as possible. E. Marchand said this can be worked out at the

administrative level, using the best cost available. Mr. Hipsher noted the great relationship that M&J has with Coventry and he appreciates the flexibility.

The Committee agreed that M&J would be first choice and coach busing would be back up.

#### **V. Discussion: M&J Invoicing**

Mr. Carroll reviewed the information. He noted that there have been reductions to bus runs on particular days. He said M&J has been proposing credits on their invoices and asked for explanation from Mr. Hipsher.

Mr. Hipsher said when we are fully staffed we are running 16 buses, however, that could be less in the afternoon, from the morning. He noted that he has a fixed cost on those buses, whether they run or not. His only adjustment is the labor amount and that is where the amount of the credit comes in to play. He said he also added on some to the credit due to the trouble it causes the district.

P. DePaola said he believes the two credits are very generous.

Mr. Carroll said there were times when we docked M&J the full daily amount or a full half-day amount, as noted in the contract.

Dr. Petrone reviewed the history.

Mr. Carroll reviewed his interpretation of the invoice and that for a certain number of days there were only 15 buses.

Dr. Petrone said we have to be cognitive of the tax payers.

Mr. Hipsher talked about the challenges they are facing this year with the lack of drivers.

P. DePaola asked for the full amount that M&J is looking for relief on. Mr. Carroll said M&J has calculated, due to the shortages, that the January credit would be \$2,200. Mr. Carroll said the 100% scenario would be \$8,200.

P. DePaola said considering the size of the budget, which is deep enough and strong enough, he does not believe M&J's request is out of line and perhaps we could meet in the middle.

Dr. Petrone said, from a management standpoint, a formula would be helpful.

P. DePaola suggested Mr. Carroll and Mr. Hipsher come up with a formula.

E. Eaton said she appreciates M&J's willingness to work with the district. She has trouble justifying losing a regular bus run because athletics needs to be covered and then we have to pay for the athletic run also. Mr. Hipsher said he wouldn't be looking for the additional monies, but asked that it be taken into consideration.

Dr. Petrone made a suggestion that Mr. Hipsher and Mr. Carroll get together and come up with an agreeable solution, which can then be presented at Fiscal.

There was consensus from the committee that Transportation would review the proposal first before it goes to Fiscal.

#### **VI. VOTE: Adjournment**

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:02 a.m.**

**By: E. Eaton**

**Seconded: P. DePaola**

**Result: Motion carries unanimously**

Respectfully Submitted:

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Kimberlee Arey Delorme  
Board Clerk

Approved: May 12, 2022