

County Connection

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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

February 21, 2019

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

Chair Noack called the special meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 9:34 a.m. Board Members present were Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Haydon, Hoffmeister, Hudson, Schroder, Storer, Wilk and Worth. Director Candell was absent.

Staff: Ramacier, Chun, Sherman, Cheung, Churchill, Hedgpeth, Hill, Horta, Mitchell and Reeb

Public Comment: None

Staff Presentation: General Manager Rick Ramacier made introductory remarks. The purpose of this special meeting was to review the current state of County Connection, review current and potential future initiatives, and discuss the future direction at County Connection.

Brief history of County Connection

General Manager, Rick Ramacier explained that in 1980, County Connection was formed upon the execution of a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) by seven initial member cities and the County of Contra Costa. Current members are the cities of Clayton, Concord, Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, Moraga, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, and Contra Costa County. The JEPA provides for the establishment of the Authority as a separate public entity distinct from its member jurisdictions, to administer and implement coordinated public transportation services within its service area. The by-laws state the general purpose of the Authority is to provide, either directly or through contract, public transportation services within certain areas of the member jurisdictions, and that, as determined by the Board of Directors, the Authority shall plan for public transportation services and coordinate such planning among contract operators, member jurisdictions, and regional agencies. Authority staff may provide assistance to member jurisdictions in developing local plans and plan amendments. General Manager Ramacier noted that County Connection continues to fulfill these purposes to this day but that it becomes more challenging to do so with the various regional agencies moving at different rates and directions. Thus, it is an opportune time for the Board to take stock of current trends, and reflect upon County Connection's role in addressing the challenges that public transportation agencies face today.

Current financial condition of County Connection

Assistant General Manager, Bill Churchill, summarized the Authority's current status including the services provided; fixed routes, LINK services and special shuttles, for example, Alamo Creek, CSUEB, St. Mary's and BART bridges. We have an annual budget of \$40 million and an annual ridership of \$3.5 million. We receive funding from TDA, STA, Measure J and LCTOP as well as federal funding which are all government based funding sources. Current funding sources are volatile and subject to other governmental agencies in determining how much revenue the Authority receives. Bill discussed how other Transit Authorities organized as a District instead of a JPA have demonstrated the ability improve the stability of their funding streams.

Bill then demonstrated how the erosion of revenue has reduced the volume of service provided and illustrated the direct relationship between the amount of service provided and the number of passenger trips taken.

Ridership trends with County Connection Services

We compared the ridership information from the time periods between FY2006-FY2018. Ridership was at its highest FY2007-2008 and it is lowest FY2011-2012. We had a service change in 2009 due to economic downturns and in 2019 we did a service restructure.

Setting priorities for County Connection

Ruby Horta, Director of Planning, discussed setting priorities. Currently we have staff continually attending meetings of the surrounding cities as well as other transportation agencies. Staff presented the following options to prioritize planning activities. The Board recognized the importance of Transportation Expenditure Plan followed by Sub-Area with less interest in our Strategic Plan.

After some discussion, Director Andersen suggested that County Connection be open to the idea of operating autonomous shuttles on an improved Iron Horse Trail.

Director Storer stated that County Connection should focus on what we do best, and that's provide basic public transit to the community and figure out how to fill the buses up, instead of chasing technology that is not yet here. Other Directors including Dessayer said similar things.

Director Worth would like to see some creative ways in using innovation to connect communities with BART that cannot be served with traditional public transit.

Director Noack stated that in Pleasant Hill, the street traffic has gotten worse over the last few years. She would like to see County Connection address these issues as well in order to better serve the public.

There was general discussion regarding the use of technologically advanced public transportation solutions to reduce congestion in the 680 corridor.

The Board as a whole stated that staff needs to work closely with CCTA regarding the development of the next local measure.

Director Hoffmeister left the meeting.

County Connection's role as public transit operator and/or Mobility integrator

Mobility integration is an evolving definition with the goal of incorporating all public transportation modes through a single provider. Director Worth recognized CCTA's position to lead a mobility integration effort in Contra Costa County. She went on to say that County Connection should be involved in the process comprehensively and early on.

After discussion, general direction was given to staff to draft a letter to be sent to CCTA conveying the idea that CCTA should take the lead and County Connection have a strong supporting role in the mobility integration process. Staff was asked to return with the letter in the near term.

Conclusions and Direction to Staff

The General Manager noted that the Board generally agreed:

- 1) They do not want to pursue any different organizational/governance structure changes.

- 2) Agreed that the agency should focus on participating in the new Transportation Expenditure Process and ideas flowing from Sub Area as discussed at the workshop
- 3) Staff should draft a letter to CCTA as noted above.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Noack adjourned the special Board meeting at 1:42 p.m.

Minutes prepared by

Lathina Hill
Assistant to the General Manager

Date