

County Connection

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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

August 15, 2019

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

Chair Sue Noack called the regular meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 9:00 a.m. Board Members present were Directors Dessayer, Haydon, Hudson, Schroder, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth. Director Andersen participated via phone and Director Hoffmeister was absent.

Staff: Ramacier, Chun, Cheung, Churchill, Glenn, Gray, Hedgpeth, Hill, Horta, Kamara, McCarthy, Mitchell, Reeb and Rettig,

Public Comment: None

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Haydon moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of July 18, 2019; (b) Resolution No. 2020-04, Authorizing the General Manager to Submit a Grant Application for FY19-20 SB1 State of Good Repair Funds. Director Storer seconded the motion and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Haydon, Hudson, Schroder, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth
No: None
Abstain: Noack
Absent: Director Hoffmeister

REPORT OF CHAIR:

Election of CCCTA Officers

MOTION: Director Noack moved to elect Candace Andersen, Board Chair, Keith Haydon, Vice Chair and Dave Hudson, Secretary. Director Tatzin seconded the motion and it received the following vote of approval

Aye: Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Haydon, Hudson, Noack, Schroder, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth
No: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Director Hoffmeister

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

Recognition of Employee with 20 years of service

Lisa Rettig-Director of Human Resources

Update on the disposal of retired paratransit vehicles

General Manager, Rick Ramacier introduced the item and turned the meeting over to Kevin Finn, Manager of Grants & Purchasing. Mr. Finn explained that at the time of the Butte County Fire we had a number of paratransit vehicles that needed to be disposed of. After much research, he found a nonprofit that was trying to help those affected by the fire with whom they had pets to care for too. We were able to donate 13 vehicles. It wasn't an easy process but it was rewarding. We are now working on a project where if this should ever happen again, we will be able and willing to help again.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

Transportation Expenditure Plan Update-Verbal Update

Ruby Horta, Director of Planning & Scheduling, provided an update on the development of the TEP. She noted that many of the advocacy groups feel that the percentage of funds dedicated to transit is too low. However, she added that the draft TEP leaves a lot of discretion to future CCTA leadership to decide how funds are ultimately allocated, providing the flexibility needed to accommodate new mobility options. She also mentioned that the new policies that were developed, including one related to transit coordination, will be important for guiding implementation. Contra Costa Transportation Authority staff presented the initial public opinion research, proposed guiding principles and work plan at the April 2019 Contra Costa Transportation Authority Board meeting. At the Contra Costa Transportation Authority Board meeting in May 2019, staff was authorized to proceed with the development of a new TEP for placement on the March 2020 ballot.

Operating & Scheduling Committee

Battery Electric Bus Update

Director Storer introduced the item and gave a brief background. CCCTA received two federal grants, the 2012 Clean Fuels grant and the 2016 Low/No grant, to purchase eight battery electric buses (BEBs) and the necessary charging infrastructure. All eight BEBs operate in Walnut Creek on Routes 4 and 5. Two inductive chargers have been installed at the new Walnut Creek Transit Village to support the continuous operations on these two routes.

The electricity rates have been the major concern since implementation. Since the electric vehicles were put in service, electricity costs remained constant at both the County Connection Facility and Walnut Creek BART station, at about \$0.25/kWh in the summer and \$0.20/kWh the rest of the year. However, starting in May 2019, PG&E adjusted the rate at the Walnut Creek BART station, changing the energy charges from a fixed rate to "Peak" (\$0.58/kWh), "Part Peak" (\$0.28/kWh) and "Off Peak" (\$0.21/kWh). Though this did not significantly affect FY 19 totals, it will likely increase electricity cost per mile in the coming fiscal year.

Electricity costs and bus reliability continue to be the two most important factors when it comes to implementation at a larger scale. Needed specialty support from various vendors has been covered under warranty. However, after the warranty period expires, those services or additional staff resources will be required to ensure proper maintenance. Staff will continue to provide feedback to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as rate structures are developed. As California moves to an all-electric future, staff will continue to report to the Board on the progress of the electric and fuel cell buses. Although staff recognizes the importance of reducing greenhouse gases, there are a number of considerations that should be further analyzed to ensure system wide reliability, which affects overall ridership. Staff will continue to evaluate zero emission buses and determine an appropriate path for County Connection.

Spring 2019 Service and Fare Restructure Update

Director Storer informed the Board that staff has looked at every single route, including the ridership of each route and the uses of payment, be it cash, transfers or Clipper. The March 2019 restructure created some operational efficiencies, such as reducing the number of operators required for full service. During the Winter 2018 bid, a total of 143 operators were needed fulfill our service requirements. In Spring 2019, only 136 operators were needed in peak service. This reduces the pressure on driver recruitment, which is a national problem. If these cuts were not made, County Connection surely would have missed many more trips due to operator shortages. In addition to reducing the number of operators required for service, scheduled overtime was nearly cut in half, with 61 weekly hours required in Spring 2018 compared to 38 weekly overtime hours required in Spring 2019. This has a direct impact on the agency's financial goal to reduce costs.

It appears that the largest impacts of the restructure were to occasional riders, with ridership on peak only routes staying mostly the same. Riders who use the system sporadically are reducing their usage, especially populations that do not use Clipper. Anecdotally, operators have noticed that some of their regulars have consolidated errands in order to take less trips to save money on bus fare.

Staff believes that although the service change created some disruption and ridership has not recovered, there were significant operational efficiencies achieved to reduce costs. Considering the changes in the fare structure (cash increase and elimination of paper projects) and an overall service cut, staff is hopeful ridership will level off. Staff expects ridership to settle out somewhat in the next few months, when riders discover some of the newer service. Ridership on the trip times that most closely resembles the previous schedules are getting the most ridership, with the new service still emerging. After analyzing the fare data, staff believes most of the ridership drops can be attributed to the fare changes, not the service changes.

BART Early Bird (EBX) Service Update

Director Storer explained that for County Connection's summer bid, starting on June 9th, BART requested two changes to the existing early bird service. For Route 712 (Bay Point BART to 20th St and Telegraph Ave in Oakland via Pleasant Hill BART), BART requested to cancel the 4:20am trip, and requested a new trip earlier at 3:50am. This change altered our span of service, which required dispatch to open 15 minutes earlier at 2:45am. For Route 715 (service from North Concord BART to Lafayette stopping at all BART stations along the way) BART requested to end the route at Walnut Creek, due to low ridership to Lafayette. Ridership was steadily increasing until the month of June. County Connection typically has less ridership on more commuter-focused routes in the summer when there are more vacations and traffic is less of a problem

Citizens Advisory Committee Review

Director Storer explained that the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is a combination of two previous committees that previously focused on fixed route issues and paratransit issues. He encouraged the other Board members to go back to their jurisdictions with outstanding vacancies and work with their respective city councils to identify potential new Advisory Committee members.

BOARD COMMUNICATION: None

CLOSED SESSION:

The Board of Directors went into closed session at 9:50 a.m. to discuss;

Public Employee Performance Evaluation; conference with Labor Negotiator
Pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957, 54957.6
Position: General Manager

OPEN SESSION:

The Board of Directors came back to open at 10:08 a.m.

Consideration of Adjustment to the General Manager's Compensation
Resolution No. 2020-05

MOTION: Director Dessayer moved approval of Resolution No. 2020-05, which approves a 5% increase to General Manager's salary to be effective as of July 1, 2019 and the total yearly salary to be \$223,125. Director Schroder seconded the motion and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Haydon, Hudson, Noack, Schroder, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Director Hoffmeister

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Noack adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Minutes prepared by

Lathina Hill
Assistant to the General Manager

Date