

County Connection

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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

April 15, 2021

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

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

Staff: Ramacier, Sherman, Cheung, Churchill, Hill, Horta, Kamara, Martinez, McCarthy, Mitchell, Rees and Rettig

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Noack moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 18, 2021; (b) Bus Advertising Amendment and Resolution No. 2021-023; Director Wilk seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

REPORT OF CHAIR:

Chair Haydon provided an update on Director Dessayer, and stated that he will keep the Board posted on Director Dessayer's return. He also stated that Director Dessayer has always been the point person for the yearly General Manager's review. In case Director Dessayer is not back in time to perform this function, Rick Ramacier and Madeline Chun will keep them abreast as to the next steps.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

County Connection/LAVTA Coordination

Rick Ramacier informed the Board that as of the date of the meeting, it is now day 15 with Transdev providing service for County Connection and LAVTA. We will start looking at the production numbers in weeks to come and will come back to inform the Board on the progress.

COVID-19 Update

Rick Ramacier stated that with the state opening back up, he has met with the ATU to discuss the capacity on the buses. As of right now, the state has given guidance on distance between the driver and the passengers but not the distance between the passengers and other passengers. We are left to develop our own guidelines on bus capacity as we move forward. We will continue to come back to the Board as developments occur.

Update on the MTC Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

Rick Ramacier explained that the Blue Ribbon Task Force will continue to meet every week to better define the roles and responsibilities of the Transit Network Managers and how will they be held accountable. Our staff has been a part of this process from the beginning, and they will continue to update the Board as new ideas and/or concepts are being introduced.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration & Finance Committee

Adoption of the Draft Fiscal Year 2022 Proposed Draft Budget and Forecast and Resolution No. 2021-022

Director Tatzin introduced the item and explained that the A&F Committee met and discussed opportunities to revise the budget. It is unknown how much we will receive from federal funding and how much the increase in ridership will be. CFO, Erick Cheung, continued that the updated FY 2022 Budget proposes \$46,683,271 in operational and capital expenses for fixed route and paratransit with revenues to offset these costs. County Connection's main revenue source is TDA 4.0 funds from MTC; the budget proposes using \$21,355,413 which is \$2,161,087 more than MTC estimates we will receive next fiscal year of \$19,194,326. TDA reserves are estimated to end lower in FY 2022 with a balance of \$23,160,000. Although some of our funding is uncertain, at this time we are asking to pass this draft budget so that a timely TDA claim can be filed.

MOTION: Director Tatzin moved adoption of the Draft Fiscal Year 2022 Proposed Draft Budget and Forecast and Resolution No. 2021-022; Director Noack seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

State Legislative Update: Amendments to AB476-Mullin and AB629-Chiu

Rick Ramacier stated that the sometime in early May, County Connection should receive its first disbursement of funds that will equal the amount lost in FY19 revenue. As a working draft, AB629 does not contain anything that would pose a strong concern to County Connection. It puts forward additional requirements for MTC to ensure that significant steps are taken to create a more seamless and resilient regional transit system. MTC is to consult comprehensively with the transit operators in these endeavors and is expected to institutionalize the consultations and the results. The draft bill specifically calls out fare integration, universal mapping and wayfinding with common branding, and greater joint use of technology to monitor and adjust services for on-time performance, especially in relation to passenger wait times.

Assembly Member Mullin has amended AB476 to now facilitate the legislation that will ultimately be needed to run transit buses part time on the "shoulders" of I-680. He amended AB476 with the language from last year's

SB1283 (Beall). Beall’s proposal was removed from consideration as a result of the temporary bill caps installed last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mullin intends to make AB476 a two-year bill and move it early in 2022. This is in part to allow the work that the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and others are doing on bringing the California Highway Patrol (CHP) along, to continue. This bill will be amended at some point to reflect that, and other issues being worked on regarding bus operator training, etc.

Federal Legislative Update: Community Project Funding opportunities in the FY22 Federal Appropriations Bill and specific project funding opportunities in the upcoming federal transportation reauthorization bill

Rick Ramacier gave background information on this item by stating that County Connection was invited to consider submitting a project(s) as a Community Project Funding (earmark) request for the FY22 federal appropriations bill and/or to the federal transportation reauthorization mark up. These invitations came from the offices of Congressmen DeSaulnier and Swalwell. Early discussions that we had with the two congressional offices strongly suggest that projects that work to implement a new “one seat” express bus ride in the corridor have a lot of general support. Also, projects that would help County Connection & LAVTA conduct a joint Hydrogen Fuel Cell bus pilot project in an express bus service along the I-680 corridor are receiving strong interest. Staff recommended that we take appropriate actions over the next many months to prepare ourselves to make direct earmark requests should later opportunities to do so arrive. This was an informational item.

Operations & Scheduling Committee

One Seat Ride Pilot Update and Request for Extension and Resolution No. 2021-021

Director Storer introduced the item and turned the meeting over to Rashida Kamara. She provided the Board with a brief update on the One Seat Ride Pilot Program. The pilot project is currently set to end April 30, 2021, and staff from all four partner agencies agree the project has not been in operation for enough time to determine whether it is a success especially from an expansion and funding perspective. Additionally, staff is still working through significant technical challenges ranging from billing algorithms, data management and mapping trips crossing multiple service areas. East Bay Paratransit has expressed an interest in joining the program and as such we still need to work out what phase two and possibly three would look like. However, despite these challenges passengers who are currently participating in the One Seat Pilot have expressed their satisfaction with the service. As a result, the four partners would like to extend the project an additional six months to work through the remaining outstanding issues and ultimately determine the success of the project.

MOTION: Director Storer moved adoption of Resolution No. 2021-021, extending the One Seat Regional Ride program through October 31, 2021. Director Tatzin seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

Accessible Transportation Strategic (ATS) Plan

Rashida Kamara explained that to engage the public, a survey was created and mailed out to 23,000 individuals in Contra Costa County of which 1,149 participated. It was made available in English, Spanish and Mandarin. As part of the study, the consultant interviewed senior managers of transit agencies. Several townhall meetings were scheduled, but due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, these townhall meetings moved to a virtual platform.

As the study progressed, updates were given to both the PAC and TAC for further discussion. Due to grant constraints, the study was required to be completed by February 28, 2021.

Most of the study was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic, preventing many entities from participating fully. Transit agencies were faced with many challenges as they struggled with plummeting service levels and keeping their drivers, customers, and staff safe. For some volunteer transit agencies, shutting down was the only option as they were unable to sustain their transportation services even for essential services. Most of their drivers were either volunteers or at higher risk for contracting the virus. In addition to plummeting service levels, agencies were also dealing with service emergencies such as passenger COVID-19 outbreaks and being called on to participate in emergency services which took priority in managing the spread of the virus. Finally, as the study was ending, transit agencies were busy attempting to vaccinate their operators and public facing staff to protect their employees and passengers.

County Connection along with many other transit partners have already identified gaps in service and are collaborating to address them. This includes the One Seat Ride Pilot Program. This is a six-month pilot, which offers a one seat ride for passengers crossing multiple transit jurisdictions, without transferring. The other transit strategy includes a collaboration with CCCTA/LAVTA to use one contractor to manage paratransit services for both agencies, thus sharing resources, like scheduling software, vehicles, and call centers. These transit strategies have already improved the rider experience in multiple agencies and shows that transit agencies can work together for the common goal.

BOARD COMMUNICATION:

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Haydon adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:15 am.

Minutes prepared by



Lathina Hill
Assistant to the General Manager

Date: May 12, 2021