

County Connection

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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

January 20, 2022

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

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

Staff: Churchill, Chun, Duran, Glenn, Hill, Horta, Johnson, Kamara, Longmire, Martinez, McCarthy, Mitchell, Reeb and Rettig

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Judy Barrientos, a bus driver with CCCTA stated her concern with some of the routes being cut and not enough meal breaks in-between.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Wilk moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of December 16, 2021; (b) Resolution No. 2022-020 Clipper MOU Amendment, (c) Resolution No. 2022-019, Declaring that the Proclaimed State of Emergency for the COVID-19 Pandemic Continues to Impact the Ability for the Board and its Committees to Meet Safely in Person, and Directing that Virtual Board and Committee Meetings Continue. Director Haydon seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

REPORT OF CHAIR: None

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

COVID-19 Update

General Manager Bill Churchill stated that the Omicron variant has hit the Bay Area hard, and we have ten employees who tested positive, which is the largest spike we've had since December 2021. None of our cases has ended in hospitalization and nine out of ten employees were fully vaccinated. We have implemented the stoppage of group gatherings in breakrooms, and require wearing masks all the time for the unvaccinated. We also continue to provide masks, wipes, and gloves to all employees.

PEPRA and Section 13(c)

Bill Churchill stated that the U.S. District Court issued a stay order and preliminary injunction, to require the U.S. Department of Labor to continue to process all applications for grants. We're eligible for a number of grants that we will be applying for and the Court has set a final hearing date for February 11, 2022.

MTC Network Management Business Case Advisory Group

Bill Churchill informed the Board that the MTC Blue Ribbon Task Force has concluded its work, and an advisory committee has been set up to review the business case for a transit network manager. MTC hired a consultant, VIA, to develop the business case analysis and possible models. The advisory group consists of seven general managers and seven advocates. The first meeting was on January 10, 2022 and the officers were selected. He will continue to update the board with any new developments.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration & Finance Committee

Transit Operator Recruitment

Kristina Martinez, Director of Recruitment & EEDevelopment explained that as the economy continues to recover from the pandemic, County Connection alongside many other transit agencies are faced with the challenges of labor uncertainties. For perspective, County Connection received 128 applications for the Transit Operator position in FY 2019, 107 applications in FY 2020, 31 applications in FY 2021, and 25 applications since the start of FY 2022. Since July 2021, the recruitment and training departments have continued to actively recruit new Operators with a total of nine (9) Operator hires made to date. These hires did not increase the number of Operators, rather, it kept the Authority at a net zero as normal attrition rates occurred. As County Connection moves forward, ongoing recruitment of Operators will be imperative to meeting current service needs as well as new service demands.

To assist in our recruitment efforts and allow for a more competitive position, staff is proposing an increase to the starting wage for all new incoming Operators at \$26.15/hr. (Step C). This would also include a move in pay for all existing County Connection Operators currently at Step A or B. Under this new strategy, the goal is to increase the current staffing levels by approximately 5%, or seven (7) Operators and reduce the effect of overtime costs. This target is to meet the Authority's current reduced service due to COVID-19 and provide the ability to make additional hires as we continue to recover post pandemic. Since the Operator shortage is anticipated to remain over the next calendar year staff would propose maintaining this change through to the end of the existing contract which is set to expire in January 2023.

MOTION: Director Haydon moved approval of the starting hourly wage for incoming Transit Operators at Step C and to move existing County Connection Operators who are at Step A or B to Step C for the remainder of the contract with the ATU through January 2023. Director Hoffmeister seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Haydon, Hoffmeister, Schroder, Storer, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: Tatzin

Absent: Directors Hudson, Noack and Sos

PERS Actuarial Valuation for June 30, 2020; Rate for FY2023

Amber Johnson explained that the CalPERS Actuarial Valuation Report (Report) for the period ending June 30, 2020, is used to set the rate for the next fiscal year and provides County Connection's funded status. The employer rate for FY 2023 will be 9.0% and the required unfunded accrued liability payment will be \$890,950. County Connection's funded status is currently 87.9% funded, which is down from 89.2% the prior year. CalPERS return on investment (ROI) for 2020 was 4.7% which was well below the discount rate of 7.0%.

It is CalPERS' policy to use a constant investment return rate for the actuarial report rather than the actual rate of return. This is called asset smoothing- the delayed recognition of part of the investment gains or losses dampens the effect of short-term market value fluctuations in setting employers' rates. Prior to fiscal year 2019, CalPERS employed a policy that amortized all gains and losses over a fixed 30-year period which was smoothed by ramping up/down the increase or decrease over a 5-year period. This method is referred to as "direct rate smoothing." Beginning last fiscal year, the CalPERS Board approved amortizing gains/losses over a 20-year period based on a level dollar amount and removed the 5-year ramping. Finally, CalPERS does not use the actuarial value of assets, but uses the market value of assets.

Due to budgetary constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic, no additional payments towards the pension liability were made in FY 2020 or FY 2021. Staff is not requesting any additional payments towards the pension at this time, with the Plan's funded status at a healthy level of 87.9%.

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

I-680 Corridor Projects

Ruby Horta gave a brief background stating that transportation agencies serving the I-680 corridor between Fairfield and the TriValley have conducted numerous studies aimed at reducing single-occupancy vehicles (SOV) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Most recently, the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA) completed a study that included commuter service between the Martinez Amtrak Station and the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, with some trips extending to the Pleasanton ACE Station. Those efforts have been incorporated into the Innovate 680 strategies developed by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). By partnering with both LAVTA and County Connection, CCTA has developed a project proposal to seek grant funding.

County Connection has been involved in all the Innovate 680 strategies and most recently was part of the TIRCP project development for commuter service along the I-680 corridor. CalSTA staff has been encouraging project submittal for zero emission buses, specifically, hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. The implementation of a one-seat express bus service between the Martinez Amtrak Station and the Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station using hydrogen fuel cell buses and fueling stations was included in the funding plan submitted to MTC by CCTA, seeking MTC endorsement.

Operations & Scheduling Committee

Choice in Aging New One Year Demonstration Project and Resolution No. 2022-021

Rashida Kamara explained that following the six-month pilot, staff was scheduled to continue participation in the program with Choice in Aging with the option for same day booking. Unfortunately, effective March 16th, there was a Statewide shelter in place order issued by the Governor of California, due to the widespread of COVID-19. Social services like Choice in Aging were forced to close their doors. Since the onset of the pandemic and the slow removal of restrictions, County Connection continues to work with Choice in Aging in their reopening plan. As a result, passengers have started to return to in person participation and Choice in Aging would like to renew participation in the Silver Ride program. The cost per trip will be \$37.50. Prior to the pandemic, County Connection budgeted \$250,00 but only spent \$115,000 for the program. This year staff budgeted \$300,000

anticipating the program would ramp up this summer and operate for a full year. With the slow start staff anticipates the program expense at \$75,000 for the remainder of FY 22. The extension will not have an additional impact on the paratransit budget because it was included in the approved budget in anticipation of continuing the project.

MOTION: Director Storer moved approval of the new one-year demonstration project with Choice in Aging, through December 2022, adopting resolution No. 2022-021.

Aye: Directors Andersen, Haydon, Hoffmeister, Schroder, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Directors Hudson, Noack and Sos

Report from the Advisory Committee

Marji McWee, Chair of the Advisory Committee gave an update on the Advisory Committee

Maji McWee explained that the Advisory Committee's purpose is to inform the County Connection Board with stakeholder feedback to help it understand the influences impacting the system's ridership. She identified three goals: first, adding members from under-represented districts and stakeholder groups (e.g., commuters, intercounty riders, students, economically-disadvantaged, individuals with disabilities, and senior citizens); secondly, onboarding new members to equip them for effectiveness; and lastly, exploring strategic questions and issues posed to the Committee by the Board with the Committee reciprocating by posing questions and presenting feedback to the Board.

BOARD COMMUNICATION: None

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Hudson adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:21 am.

Minutes prepared by



Lathina Hill
Assistant to the General Manager

Date: February 2, 2022