

County Connection

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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

March 17, 2022

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

Chair Dave Hudson called the regular meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 9:00 a.m. Board Members present were Directors Andersen, Haydon, McCluer, Noack, Schroder, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth. Director Hoffmeister arrived after the meeting convened.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Judy Barrientos, a bus driver with CCCTA, stated her concern with some of the routes being cut, meal breaks and the need for union officers to meet and confer with upper management about these and other bus operator concerns.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Noack moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of February 17, 2022; (b) CCCTA Investment Policy-Quarterly Reporting Report, (c) Resolution No. 2022-023, 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 Andersen seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

REPORT OF CHAIR:

Chair Dave Hudson reported on his trip to the APTA Legislative Conference. He felt the conference focused a lot on innovation and funding for transit. As more time goes on, it is important that County Connection stays informed on funding ideas new and old, and on all grants that we may qualify for. He encouraged Board members to attend the fall APTA conference in Columbus.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

Report on the APTA Legislative Conference

General Manager Bill Churchill asked for Director Wilk's assessment of the APTA conference. Director Wilk said that the conference was very valuable especially since it was in person this year. He thought that County Connection's staff did a great job in scheduling meetings with legislative representatives, which went well. General Manager Bill Churchill shared the same sentiment. He thought that the conference was well attended, and that participants gained a lot of valuable information, and opportunities to pursue.

TSA Mask Mandate

Bill Churchill informed the Board that although school districts have lifted the mask mandate, the TSA extended the mandate for public transit to April 18, 2022. CCCTA will wait for the CDC and the TSA to coordinate guidance on the mask mandate before making any changes on our buses as well as in our offices.

MTC Network Management Business Case Advisory Group Update

GM Bill Churchill stated that the consulting firm VIA showed the advisory group their work plan at the last meeting that was on March 7, 2022. The small operators will meet next week to discuss, and the General Manager will report back on how the group received the information. The General Manager also provided a brief update on the status of SB 917.

Public Comment: Adina Levin, from Seamless Bay Area, offered comments on SB917 and federal funding opportunities.

In person Board and Committee Meetings

Legal Counsel Madeline Chun explained that AB1944 is proposed legislation to amend the Brown Act to allow teleconferencing by board members and remote participation for the public on a long term basis, not only during a state of emergency. In the meantime, the Governor's state of emergency order remains in effect, so teleconferenced meetings are still permissible under AB 361.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration & Finance Committee

5 Year IT Replacement Plan

Director Noack introduced the item and turned the meeting over to Ruby Horta. Ms. Horta explained that staff has prepared a 5-year IT Replacement Plan for 2022 through 2026. The Administration & Finance Committee has recognized that up-to-date information and technology systems are critical and has traditionally reviewed 5-year plans for IT-related costs. This process was interrupted during the pandemic, but staff recognizes the importance of keeping the Board informed of current and upcoming major IT expenses. Information and technology systems have become a foundational component of every department in the Authority. The need for up-to-date information and technology infrastructure is critical for the efficiencies of daily operations of County Connection and our partnerships at the local, state, and federal levels. We anticipate a 5-year cost of \$1,033,000 for the proposed IT plan. The costs will be included in the TDA capital budget.

MOTION: Director Noack moved approval of the 5 Year IT Replacement Plan. Director Haydon seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Haydon, Hudson, McCluer, Noack, Storer, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Directors Hoffmeister, Schroder and Tatzin

Cap and Trade Grant (LCTOP)-FY2021-22 and Resolution No. 2022-024

Melody Reeb explained that the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) provides cap-and-trade funding for transit in order to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities. Over time, the guidelines for eligible projects have been revised, allowing for increased flexibility in the use of these funds. In the last few years, County Connection has utilized these funds to operate Route 99X, connecting the Martinez Amtrak Station to BART via Pacheco Blvd. and Morello Ave., and to increase weekend service on Route 316. Both of these routes serve the disadvantaged communities within County Connection's service area. For FY 2021-22, County Connection will receive a total of \$1,483,983 in LCTOP funds. County Connection plans to use \$600,619 to operate service within the DAC, and \$883,364 to subsidize fares on routes serving the Monument Corridor.

MOTION: Director Noack moved adoption of Resolution No. 2022-024 to approve the proposed allocation of LCTOP funds. The additional project year for subsidized fares on routes serving the Monument Corridor will cover FY2022-2023. Director Haydon seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Haydon, Hudson, McCluer, Noack, Storer, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Directors Hoffmeister, Schroder and Tatzin

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

FY2023 Marketing Plan

Director Hoffmeister arrived at 9:55 a.m.

Melody Reeb explained that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact public transit usage, as many people are still working from home. County Connection's upcoming Marketing Plan will focus on encouraging riders to return to public transit and will involve collaborating on campaigns with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and other Bay Area transit operators. In addition, staff plans to conduct extensive outreach to better understand the community's needs, which may have changed as a result of the pandemic. The plan also includes ongoing efforts to increase engagement through social media and other digital channels. Other tasks that have become routine include the Class Pass Program, Summer Youth Program, partnering with 511 Contra Costa on promotions, and participating in outreach opportunities at schools, colleges/universities, senior centers, employment sites, and community events. We have budgeted \$170,000 to cover the expenses associated with the Marketing Plan.

MOTION: Director Worth moved approval of the Marketing Plan for FY2023. Director Wilk seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Haydon, Hoffmeister, Hudson, McCluer, Noack, Storer, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Directors Schroder and Tatzin

Operations & Scheduling Committee

Draft Zero Emission Bus Fleet Transition Study

Director Storer introduced the item and turned it over to Ruby Horta. She gave a brief background and stated that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation in December 2018 requiring all public transit agencies to gradually transition to a 100 percent zero-emission bus (ZEB) fleet. Beginning in 2029, 100% of new purchases by transit agencies must be ZEBs, with a goal for full transition by 2040. The rule applies to all transit agencies that own, operate, or lease buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 14,000 lbs. It includes standard, articulated, over-the-road, double-decker, and cutaway buses. County Connection operates a total of 125 transit buses (including 30-ft., 35-ft., and 40-ft. buses) that operate daily on the fixed route service and 63 cutaway vehicles that provide paratransit services. Eight of the 30-ft. buses are battery-electric; the remaining fleet fuel is diesel. The 900-series has been programmed for replacement and staff was awaiting the development of the transition study to finalize the fuel type request. Based on the scenarios developed by the Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE), the upcoming vehicle replacement fuel type is recommended to be diesel. The agency's early battery-electric bus (BEB) adoption, efforts to deploy hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs) along the I-680, ZEB technology advancements, infrastructure development and cost are all factors incorporated into the CTE recommendation.

County Connection has partnered with CTE since 2016 with CTE providing project management and technical assistance services for the Low-No battery electric bus project. With their support, County Connection deployed BEBs on Routes 4 and 5. Given their experience with our fleet and service area needs, as well as their work with neighboring agencies such as LAVTA, they were well positioned to develop this study and assist with the rollout plan due June 30, 2023. CTE summarized the report's key findings in a presentation to the Board. Following Board discussion, staff was directed to take the following three scenarios back to the O&S Committee in April for consideration:

1. Battery Electric Bus (BEB) with Depot and On-Route Charging
2. Mixed Fleet (Battery Electric & Fuel Cell)
3. Fuel Cell Electric Bus (FCEB) Only

Director Hudson left at 10:25 a.m.

Transit Signal Priority (TSP) Pilot

Ruby Horta gave a brief background on this item by stating that County Connection, in partnership with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the cities of Concord and Walnut Creek, as well as the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) and interviewed qualified firms for the deployment of a centralized conditional Transit Signal Priority (TSP) system on certain County Connection buses along corridors within the cities of Walnut Creek and Concord, with hopes of eventually expanding countywide in the future.

Routes 4 and 5 in Walnut Creek and 15 and 20 in Concord were selected for the proposed TSP pilot. The project stakeholders, County Connection, CCTA and the cities of Concord and Walnut Creek, plan to improve transit performance and reliability by applying advanced technologies to provide priority treatment to transit vehicles as they approach signalized intersections in the cities of Concord and Walnut Creek. The provision of priority treatment will be informed by the status, such as schedule and passenger load, of the transit vehicle. If the transit vehicle is behind schedule and has a high passenger load, priority treatment will be provided. On the other hand, if the transit vehicle is running on-schedule or early then priority treatment will not be provided

A total of six proposals were submitted for this pilot project. The selected panel elected to interview four firms and unanimously agreed to award the contract to Global Traffic Technologies (GTT). The project team is expected to finalize the project scope and schedule in the coming weeks and County Connection staff is anticipating installing the TSP equipment on 20 fixed route vehicles.

Although the project is being funded by MTC through the IDEA grant with a budget totaling \$1,320,792. County Connection will continue to provide updates on IT and planning services on an ongoing basis.

Report from the Advisory Committee

Marji McWee, Chair of the Advisory Committee informed the Board that since she last met with them, we have welcomed Amina Bret-Mounet and she is a strong new voice and she will be an asset to the committee. With the support of staff, we are building a team and its effectiveness by reaching out to directors to encourage continued recruitment efforts. Using the consent calendar to free-up time in our meetings for ideation and discussions. Developing a member orientation program to improve our advisory capacity. Learned about the budget process and the impact of current geopolitical/economic issues on operating factors. Received updates on the Board's current initiatives and the agency's fiscal and operating environment. Started a dialogue about key rider/demand-side considerations and ideas for addressing them. She is pleased to see the direction that our committee is going.

BOARD COMMUNICATION: None

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Hudson adjourned the regular Board meeting at 11:06 am.

Minutes prepared by



Lathina Hill

Assistant to the General Manager

Date: April 13, 2022