

County Connection

2477 Arnold Industrial Way Concord, CA 94520-5326 (925) 676-7500 countyconnection.com

CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

July 21, 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, Noack, Schroder, Storer, Tatzin and Wilk. Directors Hudson and McCluer were absent.

Staff: Churchill, Sherman, Dixit, Glenn, Horta, Johnson, Kamara, Longmire, McCarthy, Mitchell, Noya, Reeb and Rettig

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Hoffmeister moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 16, 2022; (b) Resolution No. 2023-001, 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; (c) CCCTA Investment Policy-Quarterly Reporting Requirement; (d) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal for FFY2023-2025 and Resolution No. 2023-003. Director Storer seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

REPORT OF CHAIR:

Report of Nominating Committee for Election of CCCTA Officers

Vice Chair Worth informed the Board that the nominating committee consists of current chair Dave Hudson and the last 2 Chairs, Director Haydon and Director Andersen. She noted that in accordance with the customary Board rotation of officers, the nominees for the next year will likely be Amy Worth as Chair, Don Tatzin as Vice Chair and Kevin Wilk as Secretary.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

August Committee & Board Meeting

General Manager, Bill Churchill informed the Board that normally we do not have committee meetings or a Board meeting the month of August, but this year we must have a Board meeting so we can pass a resolution regarding continuing to hold virtual meetings for Board and committee meetings. The special Board meeting will be scheduled for August 18, 2022 at 9 a.m. All committee meetings will be cancelled for August 2022.

COVID-19 Update

General Manager, Bill Churchill informed the Board that since March 2022, our employee COVID-19 positive cases decreased significantly. Then starting in June, our positive cases jumped to 14 and in the beginning of July we had 9 positive cases. Currently our numbers have dropped dramatically, and we are staying steady at this time. He will continue to update the Board as new information is available.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration & Finance Committee

October Free Rides Promotion

Melody Reebbs gave a brief background on the item stating that in September 2021, County Connection offered a month of free rides on all routes as part of a regional “Return to Transit” marketing effort to encourage transit use. There was a nearly immediate boost in ridership as a result of the promotion, with an overall increase of about 17% compared to the prior month. However, a subsequent rise in COVID cases resulted in ridership declines over the following few months. As ridership begins to recover again and with federal stimulus funds still being available, staff proposes offering another month of free rides in order to encourage additional transit use, especially as employees return to the office. This effort to make transit more accessible aligns well with the goals of the Blue-Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force and the principles adopted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for the distribution of federal stimulus funds.

Based on the promotion that was offered last September, staff estimates that ridership would increase about 30% compared to last October as a result of free fares, in addition to more employees returning to office work. Ridership in October 2021 was close to 170,000. Assuming an average fare of \$2 and a 30% increase in ridership, the estimated fare revenue loss would be about \$442,000. County Connection would apply federal stimulus funds to this promotion.

MOTION: Director Noack moved for authorization to provide free rides and the use of federal funds to cover passenger fares during the month of October 2022. Director Hoffmeister seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Directors Hudson and McCluer

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

Pass2Class Promotion

Melody Reebbs gave a brief background on the Pass2Class program, which was formerly known as SchoolPool and Southwest Student Transit Ticket Program and provides free bus passes for students. Prior to 2019, students would receive 20-ride punch cards that could be used at any time. Since the elimination of most paper products

as a form of payment on County Connection buses, 511 Contra Costa adopted a different type of pass that instead provides unlimited rides for a set period of time.

For the 2022/2023 school year, 511 Contra Costa will fund the purchase of unlimited ride passes that will be valid for two months from August 1st through September 30th. Applications opened on July 7th, and 511 Contra Costa expects to begin distributing the passes starting July 22nd. The pass will be valid on all County Connection fixed route services. This was an information only item.

FY 2022-2023 Short Range Transit Plan Update

Pranjal Dixit explained that County Connection will undertake passenger surveys with a purpose of collecting demographic and trip origin/destination data used to support future local and regional transit planning efforts. The survey will include questions related to demographic information, travel pattern/choice information and service quality. Additionally, questions related to current and future remote working will be included as part of the survey to better understand post-pandemic commute patterns for improved service planning. The survey will be conducted both onboard the buses and online. The onboard survey is aimed to capture the travel patterns of our existing riders, while the online survey will help reach a wider audience to capture former riders who have not yet returned to transit as well as potential new riders in the region.

The survey is planned to be conducted for a period of 3-4 weeks in August to coincide with the start of the new school year. The survey will be available in English and Spanish for both the onboard and online versions. This was an information only item.

Operations & Scheduling Committee

Steam Room Lift Replacement Construction and Resolution No. 2023-002

Scott Mitchell explained that at the May 19, 2022 Board Meeting, staff received approval from the Board for the purchase of a platform lift for the Maintenance Building steam room off the Sourcewell Contract. But now a separate construction project is required for the removal and disposal of the existing lift and installation of the new platform lift.

County Connection issued an Invitation for Bid (IFB) for the lift installation in May of 2022. The IFB was advertised on County Connection's website and in the Contra Costa Times. At the bid opening on June 15, 2022, one bid was received from Makai Solutions for \$70,953.00. While only one bid was received, staff determined the bid price was fair and reasonable by comparing the bid to bids received by other contracting entities and applying inflationary factors to those previous bids. The removal and replacement of the steam room lift will not exceed \$70,953.00. County Connection has Prop IB Facilities Grant funds available for this project.

MOTION: Director Storer moved adoption of Resolution No. 2023-002 authorizing the General Manager to award the contract to Makai Solutions to remove and replace the steam room lift. Director Haydon seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Directors Hudson and McCluer

Travel Training Program and Resolution No. 2023-004

Rashida Kamara gave a brief background by stating that currently, residents of Central Contra Costa have access to one travel training program. This specific program is geared towards people with disabilities and is provided by the Independent Living Resources of Solano & Contra Costa Counties (ILRSCC). Findings from the Contra Costa Accessible Transportation Strategic (ATS) Plan point to the need for transit agencies and non-profit organizations to champion an existing travel training program with the intent to expand to other geographic areas. County Connection, in partnership with the ILRSCC, can accomplish this by expanding existing services to both people with disabilities and seniors living in Central County service area.

The established need in Contra Costa County for travel training programs for seniors and people with disabilities, along with the impact on ridership associated with COVID-19, provide a great opportunity to start a program that will enhance access to transportation resources in the area, for these two groups. County Connection was awarded \$79,124 of Measure J Line 20a funds over a two-year period to provide the travel training program. All associated expenses will be covered by the grant

MOTION: Director Haydon moved adoption of Resolution No. 2023-004, authorizing the General Manager enter into an agreement with ILRSCC for the course of two years to start in July 2022 in the amount of \$79,124.2023-002. Director Storer seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Directors Hudson and McCluer

Fall Bid Update

Pranjal Dixit explained that ridership grew through the Spring, and showed strong year-over-year growth, boosted by declining Covid cases. However, ridership has seen large swings in the last couple of months due to school closures during Spring break, and Easter and Memorial Day holidays. As of May, weekday regular routes were down 44% from pre-Covid baseline levels, school routes were down 31%, express routes were down 66%, and weekend routes were down around 31%.

The Fall bid will be implemented on August 7th. Along with the analysis of current schedule and ridership levels, staff's decisions were also guided by changes in BART schedules and school bell times.

BART will be implementing schedule changes in September that include shifts to weekday and weekend trips. Particularly, the Sunday schedule, which operates on a lower frequency compared to Saturday, has been modified to have similar trip start times as Saturdays.

The changes for Fall bid include shifting weekend trips on one route to facilitate seamless connection with BART's new schedule and shifting school trips on seven routes to match the new school bell time schedule for the upcoming school year. Due to Senate Bill 328, many schools had to change their bell schedules for the fall, which resulted in several schools now having differing end times depending on the day of the week. To accommodate those changes, schedules were modified to at least meet the latest afternoon bell time. Finally, in response to changing traffic conditions, additional time has been built into the schedule on four routes to improve on-time performance and reliability. This was for information only.

Report from the Advisory Committee

Marji McWee gave a brief presentation on the Advisory Committee and how they have started strategic level conversations with staff to understand CCCTA's current philosophy on route design and fleet composition. We conveyed what we are hearing from the public:

- Constituents often observe that they won't use County Connection because it is inconvenient, requires circuitous routes, and they are waiting too long for the next bus—unless the rider is going to BART. Taking a short distance trip across the county often takes hours to complete.
- COVID aside, many would be more inclined to take the bus, if the agency used shuttles with frequent headways on direct routes that served today's most visited intra-county destinations.
- In recent years, the county has developed many districts including high-density housing, commercial/retail, and large healthcare campuses. These districts include the transit villages, but others are in outlying areas far from the BART stations.
- With all this development, the increasing population is becoming more concentrated. Meanwhile, the county's demographics are shifting—some is attributable to the pandemic, while other trends are part of the natural/social factors. More vehicles are on the road again and many traffic routes and patterns have evolved. On the other hand, the agency's current routes reflect the COVID reductions in service which overlaid the existing design which had been built upon earlier patterns and conditions. We're now in a changed environment.
- People who are traveling to/from these intra-county destinations want to go on the most direct route, which is usually most easily achieved by automobile. In contrast, taking a bus typically adds extra wait and travel time while it swings by a BART station or a transit center. The bus often lays over there, and many riders must transfer to another route to continue their trip. Waiting for that next bus usually requires more time. Most time-pressured people won't give up the extra hours required to travel this way--especially when the same trip in a car would take less than 30 minutes door-to-door.

She will continue to update the Board as new members join and new topics come up.

BOARD COMMUNICATION: None

CLOSED SESSION:

Conference with Labor Negotiator (pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957.6)

Employee Organization: Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 1605, AFL-CIO, Bus Operators
Teamsters Local 856 and Machinists Lodge 190

OPEN SESSION:

Report of Action(s) taken during the Closed Session

Vice Chair Worth reported that the Board received a briefing from its labor negotiator, Pat Glenn. There was no reportable action.

ADJOURNMENT: Vice Chair Worth adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:49 am.

Minutes prepared by:

Lathina Hill

Assistant to the General Manager

Date: September 6, 2022