

County Connection

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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

September 28, 2023

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

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, Diaz, Hoffmeister, Hudson, Schroder, Sos, Storer, Tatzin and Wilk. Director Noack was absent.

Staff: Churchill, Sherman, Dixit, Glenn, Hill, Horta, Johnson, Jones, Martinez, McCarthy, Mitchell, and Rees

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:

Andrei Obolenskiy came to introduce himself to the Board as he sits on County Connection Advisory Committee. He voiced that he would like the committee to be more involved and work with the Board of Directors on questions and concerns.

Jordan Morofsky, a citizen from the City of Martinez, voiced his concern about applying for the Regional Transit Card for those with disabilities. Please look into streamlining the process and make it easier for all.

Public Hearing: Clipper Fare Changes and Corresponding Title VI Equity Analysis

Chair Worth opened the public hearing at 9:11 a.m. stating that the purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive public comment on proposed fare changes to increase the discount for Clipper START and Youth Clipper from 20% to 50% and to reduce Express route Clipper fares to match local fares. She turned the meeting over to Melody Rees, Director of Planning, Marketing, & Innovation, and she explained what public outreach was performed. Staff reports were posted on the County Connection website. Legal Notices were published in the East Bay Times. The Notice of Public Hearing was posted on the County Connection website and on all fixed route vehicles. Announcements were posted on social media. And all printed materials and handouts were translated in Spanish, per the County Connection's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan.

As of September 20th, four (4) comments were received related to the proposed fare changes, all of which were in support of one or more elements of the proposal. Two (2) comments were from users of Clipper START who expressed appreciation for the program and the benefits it provides. One (1) comment was in support of the proposed \$2 Adult Express route fare, and another comment expressed general support for more fare discounts. There were no in-person comments and the public hearing closed at 9:15 a.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Hoffmeister moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of July 20, 2023; (b) CCCTA Investment Policy-Quarterly Reporting Requirement for the period-ending June 30, 2023; (c) Independent Accountant's Report on Federal Funding Allocation Data for Federal Transit Administration for

Fiscal Year 2022; and (d) 2024 Administrative Employees Cafeteria Adjustment and Resolution No. 2024-06. Director Sos seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

REPORT OF CHAIR:

Election of CCCTA Officers

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

MOTION: Director Hoffmeister moved approval of Don Tatzin as Chair, Kevin Wilk as Vice Chair and Renata Sos as Secretary. Director Hudson seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

Seating of New CCCTA Officers and Announcement of 2023-2024 Committee Assignments

A&F Next Meeting October 4 at 2 p.m.

Laura Hoffmeister
Sue Noack
Renata Sos

MP&L Next Meeting October 5 at 8:30 a.m.

Candace Andersen
Rob Schroder
Kevin Wilk
Amy Worth

O&S Next Meeting October 4 at 8:15 a.m.

Jim Diaz
Dave Hudson
Robert Storer

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

Recognition of the services of the departing Director of ADA Services Rashida Kamara

Rashida Kamara has done a great job as County Connection's Director of ADA Services. We all wish her well in her next endeavors. General Manager Bill Churchill provided an overview of Rashida's many accomplishments

during her tenure at CCCTA. These comments were followed by accolades from several Board members. Rashida thanked everyone for their comments.

PEPRA Update

General Manager Bill Churchill provided a brief overview of the PEPRA litigation, explaining that in 2022 a final judgment was passed to allow federal grants and an appeal has been filed in the 9th Circuit. In 2024, oral arguments will be heard and the final ruling will be given.

State Budget Update

Bill Churchill informed the Board that \$4 Billion of Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TRICP) funds are available for operational purposes. Funds in the amount of \$1.1 billion are being set aside in “flexible” funding over the next four years, money that transit agencies can use for operations or infrastructure. The legislature had originally proposed this same amount of money be made available over the next three years.

It also allows transit agencies to dip into about \$4 billion in state infrastructure assistance to use this money for operations over the next two years. Most of this \$4 billion was originally set aside for big rail projects like the extension of BART to San Jose’s Diridon station. So, taking some of the \$4 billion and using it for operations, according to advocates, would mean delaying important infrastructure projects, and it could force the state and the Bay Area to miss out on an additional \$6 billion in federal matching funds for the rail extension project. Mr. Churchill will continue to update the Board as things develop.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Administrative & Finance Committee

Regional Measure 3 Allocation Request and Resolution No. 2024-05

Melody Reeb, Director of Planning, Marketing, & Innovation, explained that the Regional Measure 3 (RM 3) raised tolls on the Bay Area’s state-owned bridges starting in 2019. Following the dismissal of legal challenges in January 2023, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) began allocating funds to eligible projects identified in the RM3 Expenditure Plan, which included \$20 million for transit improvements in Contra Costa County with project selection being delegated to the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA).

Staff would like to submit an allocation request for \$5,000,000 in RM3 funds for the replacement of forty (40) 40-foot buses that have reached the end of their useful life. Production of the new buses began in spring, and delivery is expected to be completed this fall. The requested funds would provide local match to a federal grant, and funds cannot be expended until MTC approval of the allocation request, which will be considered at the September 27th Commission meeting and contingent upon approval by the Boards of both County Connection and CCTA.

MOTION: Director Diaz moved adoption of Resolution No. 2024-05 authorizing the General Manager to submit an allocation request to MTC for RM3 funds. Director Hoffmeister seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Diaz, Hoffmeister, Hudson, Schroder, Storer, Sos, Tatzin, Wilk, and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Director Noack

Marketing, Planning and Legislative Committee

Clipper Fare Changes and Corresponding Title VI Equity Analysis and Resolution No. 2024-07

Melody Reeb, Director of Planning, Marketing, & Innovation, gave a summary of the proposed fare changes, including the increased discount for Clipper START and Youth as well as the elimination of Express route surcharges on Clipper. If approved, the proposed fare changes would take effect in January 2024. The Clipper START and Youth fare discounts would remain a pilot program through June 30, 2025. However, the proposed Express route fare changes would be permanent.

When the Board approved the two-year extension of the Clipper START and Youth Clipper discounts in June, staff estimated a net fare revenue loss of about \$50,000 annually, assuming a continuation of the 20% discount. For the proposed increase to a 50% discount and reduction in Express route Clipper fares, staff estimates an additional fare revenue loss of about \$37,000 annually. For the two-year pilot extension of the Clipper START program, MTC will be providing a one-time upfront payment to transit operators based on anticipated fare revenue losses as opposed to quarterly reimbursement payments. County Connection is expected to receive a total of \$28,271 to cover FY 2024 and FY 2025.

MOTION: Director Sos moved adoption of Resolution No. 2024-07 approving the proposed fare changes. Director Worth seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Diaz, Hoffmeister, Hudson, Schroder, Storer, Sos, Tatzin, Wilk, and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Director Noack

Operations & Scheduling Committee

Fiscal Year 2023 Fixed Route Performance Report

Pranjal Dixit, Manager of Planning, explained that FY 2023 was the first full year since the shelter-at-home orders were lifted, mask mandates were relaxed, and schools came back in-person, and ridership has seen a steady increase, aided by systemwide and regionwide fare promotions. Average weekday ridership fluctuated between 20%-40% below normal pre-COVID levels throughout FY 2023. Weekend ridership recovered more quickly than on weekdays and ranged between 20% below to 2% above pre-pandemic ridership.

Bus schedules were changed three times in the 2022-2023 fiscal year to accommodate changes in bell times, BART service, and traffic congestion. In August 2022, schedules were changed to reflect new bell times, several of which were implemented as a result of Senate Bill 328 requiring later start times for high schools. The schedules were also adjusted to align with BART service changes on weekends. In November 2022, routes in Martinez were restructured to realign routes to better serve the demand. In January 2023, schedules were further adjusted to improve on time performance and operator layovers to adjust for increased traffic congestion and changes in travel patterns. Overall, about 0.64% of scheduled trips were missed over the course of FY 2023, which was 65% lower than the previous year.

Overall, on-time performance in FY 2023 was 85%, which was lower than the previous year. However, this was largely a result of changes to the methodology for calculating on-time performance to account for early departures at timepoints starting in July 2022. Additionally, along with the increase in ridership, traffic conditions worsened as the post-pandemic reopening of businesses continued, leading to a decline in on-time performance. This was an information only item.

Fiscal Year 2023 Paratransit Performance Report*

Rosa Noya, Manager of ADA and Special Services, gave a brief background stating that LINK Paratransit service has continued to experience ridership growth through the third year of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Unlike years one and two, LINK has ceased performing alternative services like Meals on Wheels, school lunches and food bank trips. These programs have also experienced a reasonable amount of recovery, although they have all asked LINK to standby.

Staffing issues were further compounded with the loss of Transdev Operations and Safety Manager. As was provided in the Paratransit contract with Transdev, monetary penalties for service failures were imposed. Transdev, being a good partner, used that incentive to cast a wide net in their recruiting efforts. On-time performance although starting at 92.9% of July 2022, dropped to an all-time low of 72.8% in November 2022. In response to this trend, Transdev provided several staff solutions, which resulted in us ending the fiscal year at 94.3%, the best service performance, since Transdev started providing these services.

We now have working relationships with the following, Choice in Aging, One Seat Ride Programs, Livermore Amador Valley Transportation and a Travel Training Company. Staff budgeted \$7,828,061 for the FY 2023 Paratransit Service and spent \$6,927,403 on operating costs. This number could have been higher, but Transdev was charged almost \$300,000 in liquidated damages for areas in which they failed to meet service standards. This was an information only item.

Director Andersen left at 10:37 a.m.

2022-23 BART Bus Bridges Update

Yvette Glenn, Director of Transportation, gave a brief background stating that post-pandemic, County Connection, alongside other transit agencies, continues to face significant labor shortages, which has had an impact on our ability to provide bus bridges for BART. In previous years County Connection was able to provide up to 24 buses per day for bus bridges, however, with labor shortages at an all-time high, County Connection could only guarantee a maximum of 12 buses per day. As a result, the total number of passengers carried on Bus Bridges is down from previous years. Also, to carry the volume of passengers required on the planned Bus Bridge from Rockridge to Orinda both AC Transit and County Connection had to collaborate and work together to provide a sufficient number of buses.

Staff worked closely with BART to support and manage each Bus Bridge, providing field supervision as well to ensure a successful deployment. BART has since requested two additional bridges for October 14-15, 2023, and October 28 -29, 2023. Unscheduled bus bridges result from a vast variety of emergency situations ranging from trees falling on the track, truck and or equipment failure, fires and even at times unauthorized individuals entering the track area. In these situations, staff are required to respond quickly to design and implement a solution. Generally, County Connection can respond within fifteen to twenty minutes with buses on the road mitigating the emergency. Per the agreement, BART covers all costs associated with any bus bridge. This was an information item only.

BOARD COMMUNICATION: None

CLOSED SESSION:

The Board went into closed session at 10:42 a.m. to discuss the following item:

Liability Claims (Government Code Section 54956.95) Claim against Central Contra Costa Transit Authority;
Claimant: Shannon Cross

OPEN SESSION:

The Board came back into open session at 11:17 a.m. No reportable action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Tatzin adjourned the regular Board meeting at 11:18 am.

Minutes prepared by:

Lathina Hill

Asst to the General Manager/Clerk to the Board of Directors

Date: October 9, 2023