

Summary Minutes
Operations & Scheduling Committee/Special Board Of Directors Meeting
Walnut Creek City Hall
3rd Floor Conference Room
1666 North Main Street Walnut Creek, California
Friday, September 6, 2013
8:00 a.m.

Directors: Directors Bob Simmons, Candace Andersen, Jack Weir, Dave Hudson, Gregg Manning, Rob Shroder, Erling Horn

Staff: Rick Ramacier, Anne Muzzini, Kathy Casenave, Bill Churchill, Madeline Chun

Public and Advisory Committee: Ralph Hoffman, Judy Barrientos, Scott Williams

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 8:20a.m. by Director Simmons, Chair of the Operations & Scheduling Committee

1. **Approval of Agenda Items:** Agenda was approved.
2. **Public Comment and/or Communication:** Mr. Hoffman commented on various public transportation activities with which he has been engaged.
3. **Approval of O&S Summary Minutes for August 2, 2013:** The minutes were approved. Director Hudson abstained.
4. **Staff Reports:** The Fixed Route Monthly Report and LINK Monthly Report were presented and reviewed.

With the arrival of Director Horn, a quorum of the full Board of Directors was achieved. The meeting of the O&S Committee was adjourned, and reconvened as a Special Board of Directors meeting at 8:35 a.m.

SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Chair Horn requested that Vice Chair Simmons preside over the meeting.

Paratransit Workshop:

Chair Simmons called up Item 4, Paratransit Workshop. General Manager Rick Ramacier introduced the subject, outlined in their power point presentation. He summarized the history of paratransit service in central Contra Costa County, noting that County Connection's contract with First Transit, Inc. will expire at the end of June 2014. He asked the Board to provide guidance on the following key concepts, which will be included in the next Request for Proposals for paratransit service:

- Efficiency
- Customer Service

He noted that ridership grew steadily from FY 2000-FY2009, but that in recent years LINK ridership has shrunk by an average of 2.5% per year, and that the cost per passenger continues to increase. County demographics indicate that the over 65 age group continues to grow in central Contra Costa; from 2005-2010 this population grew 13%, with growing demand for paratransit service. These dynamics indicate that without modifying the manner in which County Connection provides paratransit service, opportunities may be lost to make the service more responsive and efficient.

[Rob Schroder arrives at 8:40 a.m.]

Funding Sources for Paratransit Service:

Mr. Ramacier outlined the sources for funding paratransit service, noting the following:

- Measure J: 3%- 6% of Measure J funds are used for paratransit. Measure J funds account for 25% of paratransit funding.
- TDA 4.5, STA revenue based, and STA regional paratransit funds comprise 16%, 11% and 7%, respectively, of paratransit funding.
- Use of TDA 4.0 funds was necessitated by ADA service requirements, which originally wasn't anticipated by CCCTA. It comprises 19% of paratransit funding.
- Federal 5307 funds comprise 13% of paratransit funding. Fares comprise 10% of funding for paratransit service.

LINK Trends:

Mr. Ramacier noted the following trends in the provision of paratransit service:

- Growth in ridership until 2009; now shrinking.
- Costs continue to rise. (Serving fewer with same amount of money.) LAVTA has similar trend.
- WestCAT paratransit ridership is flat.
- East County paratransit ridership is growing.

Why the drop in LINK ridership? Possible reasons include:

- Paratransit fare increased in 2009 to \$4.00, prompting some passengers to look for alternatives.
- Robust transportation services for seniors is provided by assisted living and senior housing facilities.
- Seniors driving seniors - tailored service. This is a new cottage industry of seniors providing rides to other seniors with their own vehicles.

Mr. Ramacier noted that HUD, VA funding that are provided to these agencies for their services are not tracked, but appears to exceed FTA funding (which is at \$10B). Mr. Ramacier has advocated that nonprofits submit similar data as FTA grantees. He noted that most social programs can't carry wheelchairs. More organized ones can. 35 assisted living facilities have lift equipped vans. These facilities provide transportation as a marketing tool, since assisted living is a buyer's market. Private entities are unwilling to disclose source of funding. Director Hudson noted that CCCTA provided the vans to these facilities. Director Andersen indicated support for what private facilities do- -CCCTA should complement, not compete with them. Bill Churchill also pointed out these other service providers are important for providing needed services to the community and should be supported; typically they book specific trips throughout the week; e.g., to downtown, to the mall or other popular destinations. Individual customized rides are made available with additional payment. Gregg Manning noted that the availability of these services has not decreased County Connection's cost.

Mobility Management:

Mr. Ramacier explained the concept of mobility management programs. Coordinated paratransit service delivery through mobility management programs is a national trend that is growing. Mr. Ramacier believes that County Connection should work with the other services that exist, to avoid flooding LINK, which affects the availability of TDA 4.0 funding for fixed route service. Instead, he recommends that County Connection take advantage of the organic growth of other entities and associations that provide transportation services to seniors, persons with disabilities and low income individuals, and enter into agreements with them to better coordinate and more effectively provide needed transportation services.

It is staff's view that the development of a Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA), joint contracting among public transit agencies for paratransit services, and the centralized licensing of local taxi companies to provide paratransit services all merit consideration. Director Anderson indicated that the County is studying the licensing of taxis in unincorporated areas of the county, and that County Connection's input would be important.

While the term "Mobility Management" is used in a variety of contexts, key elements include (1) assessing the nature of services offered by entities and those who need them, and (2) supporting these services looking at costs and benefits, and coordinating the options that are available. He noted that the MP&L will consider the final recommendations of the consultant retained by County Connection, Innovative Paradigms, on the development of a Contra Costa County Mobility Management Plan. Measure J requires the Contra Costa Transit Authority to develop a Mobility Management Plan, AND County Connection staff volunteered to take the lead. As a specific example of how it might benefit the coordination of services, Mr. Ramacier recounted that when a homeless shelter was closed, there was a homeless person who required transportation but was not ADA eligible, and could have used fixed route service, if the social services personnel knew about the service. Seven years ago, County Connection had staff to handle those kinds of requests. Centralized public information on transportation programs that is readily made available to the public could help to control the growth in demand for public services.

The concept of Consolidated Transportation Service Agencies (CTSAs) is contained in state legislation known as the Social Services Transportation Improvement Act (AB 120, Statutes of 1979) to provide cost effective social service transportation to the elderly, disabled and persons of low income through centralized management of a host of transportation providers. Mr. Ramacier and Mr. Churchill reviewed examples of Consolidated Transportation Services Agencies:

- Paratransit, Inc., in Sacramento, in operation for 30 years. Paratransit, Inc. provides social services, volunteer programs, and complementary paratransit service for fixed route service throughout Sacramento County.
- Outreach Services in Santa Clara, has provided paratransit services but is not eligible for TDA 4.5 funds. VTA now will use after initially opposing.
- Access Services for Los Angeles County provides paratransit services for 47 transit agencies and non-emergency medical transportation. They are more productive than any other paratransit provider.

Comments from the Board:

Director Horn questions whether a CTSA is able to accommodate customized service, such as door to door service, and what service standards would apply. Mr. Ramacier noted that SacTRD and Paratransit, Inc. have worked this out, and that the ADA standard may become door to door service.

Director Schroder reflected on the shift from the prevailing attitude in the 1990s, when the CCCTA Board was concerned that the ADA obligations would destroy fixed route service. Now, agencies are reluctant to give up control over paratransit.

Director Hudson noted that this is an opportunity, not a threat.

Director Weir observed that one cannot effectively manage what isn't measured. There is a need for a single centralized database of paratransit services in the County to evaluate needs and patterns.

Director Simmons asked if the cost of a paratransit ride is \$40, given that fares provide 10% of the cost, and the fare is at \$4.00. Mr. Churchill indicated that is roughly the cost. Mr. Churchill noted that the centralized licensing of taxis would allow the coordination of ADA trips which may be less costly than a LINK trip. Further, Mr. Churchill noted that assisted living facilities transport within a defined geographical limit, as does CCCTA. A CTSA approach would allow more customization and probably result in a more cost effective service.

Joint Contracting:

Mr. Ramacier advised that there are no known examples of public agencies jointly contracting for paratransit services, but that theoretically this could be more economical and result in better service. Possible complications for CCCTA to pursue this with the other public transit agencies in Contra Costa are that WestCAT's current contract does not expire until June 2017 and is one contract for both fixed and paratransit service. TriDelta's current contract expires in June 2015. LAVTA's current contractor has given notice of termination, which has resulted in LAVTA issuing an RFP immediately. Mr. Ramacier noted that the AC Transit and BART formed the East Bay Consortium, which has a dual governance structure.

Centralized Licensing of Taxis:

Mr. Ramacier noted that there is a surge in "Baby Boomer" demand for transit. There could be an opportunity in developing more effective transportation options by centralizing the licensing of local taxi companies. As an example, Monterey County is similar in population size to Contra Costa; its public transit district has a governance structure similar to CCCTA, and has taken over the responsibility of licensing local taxi operators. This is eligible for federal funds and promotes compliance with FTA and state public transit requirements by subcontractor operators, and improvement in the quality of taxi services. Mr. Ramacier recommended the centralized licensing of taxis be investigated further as a taxi system is an effective mobility management activity. Director Andersen said that this is a timely discussion, noting that State law requires the County to have taxi licensing ordinances, and that the County's internal operations committee will be reviewing a proposed taxi ordinance. Director Simmons expressed interest in this approach.

Opportunities and Challenges:

Mr. Ramacier concluded the staff presentation by noting that there are opportunities and challenges for County Connection's role in providing paratransit services in the future. All of these approaches should be considered: achieving greater coordination with non-public paratransit providers through the mobility management plan or the development of a CTSA; joint contracting of paratransit services; and a centralized County Connection managed taxi licensing program. Most immediately, the RFP for paratransit services should have flexibility for a long term agreement, with the ability for CCCTA to terminate earlier, and proposers should be encouraged to offer creative solutions for improved efficiency and convenience. The inclusion of subcontractors, such as taxi services, should be considered; and

partnership opportunities with other agencies for coordinating trips should be explored. The possibility of compensation for paratransit services by the trip, rather than by the hour, should be evaluated. Also productivity plans submitted by the proposers could be part of the evaluation. The RFP will be discussed with the O&S Committee at its next meeting.

Public Comment:

- Judy Barrientos (ATU) expressed concern with reductions in LINK service that may lead to a reduction in jobs. She appreciated the "smorgasbord" of ideas for paratransit service.
- Ralph Hoffman (Senior Mobility Action Council) invited LAVTA, WestCAT, etc., to their meetings.
- Scott Williams (Keolis) has been a transportation contractor since the 1990s. Regarding the compensation method (rates by hour vs. by trip, he noted that contractors always look at hours, as the cost driver. Keolis has provided taxi services since 1940's. In Orange County, centralized licensing focused on Pomona's ordinance, reduced uncertainty of differing regulatory requirements by cities in Orange County. He favored reciprocity among cities and a consistent regulatory scheme to reduce uncertainty, and thereby reduce costs.

Board Discussion:

- Director Andersen: To address Judy's comment, the consolidated approach will highlight the availability of LINK services. The "Silver Tsunami" will increase ridership, and consolidated management will enhance service effectiveness. With regard to the RFP development, Director Andersen supports a consolidated approach and the ideas presented. She encouraged staff to pursue cooperation with County on taxi licensing.
- Director Manning: Through the years, the fragmentation of fixed and paratransit services has been discussed, but no action taken. The CTSA approach should be managed carefully. He supports the RFP ideas presented by staff.
- Director Horn: Regarding cost on a per trip basis, this could be problematic, given the variety of types of trips that are offered, and variability with regard to duration, mileage, etc.
- Director Schroder: Great informative presentation. He agreed with the RFP ideas presented by staff and suggested that proposers give options for cost for both by the trip and by the hour. There should be flexibility, with parameters, in the RFP. Anything we can do to provide service to transit dependent individuals, especially access to public transit information would be great.
- Director Weir: He can only comment on the high level concepts in the RFP approach. The RFP should reflect the changing landscape of paratransit. It would be important to consult with all stakeholders in the provision of paratransit service. He approved the leadership role that CCCTA is taking in developing a vision for paratransit services in the County, which may take a decade to evolve.
- Director Simmons: He commended staff for its leadership and quality of the presentation. He like the RFP development options presented, and suggested that the RFP allow proposers to provide creative solutions, which will be evaluated. Staff might consider another alternative to the cost per hour approach, such as requesting a quote for trips that are 4 miles and under. Mr. Ramacier noted that in LAVTA's American Logistics experiment, the agency saved 25% in costs, but the service lost its identity and the contractor could not make it work financially.

With the departure of Directors Hudson and Horn, the Special Board of Directors adjourned. The meeting reconvened as the Operations & Scheduling Committee at 10:10 a.m.

Operations & Scheduling Committee:

Further comments from on Mobility Management concepts:

- Director Andersen -Would like a one-stop information center that also coordinates service. Worth exploring joint contracting down the road.
- Director Weir -Take the broadest view of potential stakeholders to maximize and allow the vision to evolve. There is inherent tension between the need for highly skilled professionals and the volunteers who meet people's needs in positive, respectful way.
- Director Manning - CTSA covers everything for the mobility management directive. But who will run it? Usually it's not the one who starts the revolution, but the one who comes after who succeeds. Mr. Ramacier said functions should be coordinated first and the CTSA would evolve thereafter.
- Director Schroder - Pleased with staff and Board's openness, and seeing the benefit and opportunity to increase transit usage through better coordination.
- Director Simmons- Informative presentation and encourages exploring further with City Managers organization and Mayors. He concurred with Director Weir's observation to seek the widest possible stakeholder input and vision. Possibly consider a 3-year contract and ask LAVTA to consider that its contract term end in 2017, with options, to reduce problems with joint contracting approach.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Summary Minutes
Operations & Scheduling Committee
Supervisor Andersen, District 2, Lamorinda Office
3338 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Lafayette, California
October 11, 2013, 8:00 a.m.

Directors: Directors Jack Weir, Candace Andersen, and Dave Hudson

Staff: Rick Ramacier, Bill Churchill, Anne Muzzini, and Laramie Bowron

Public and Advisory Committee: Ralph Hoffman

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Director Andersen

1. **Approval of Agenda Items:** Agenda was approved.
2. **Public Comment and/or Communication:** Mr. Hoffman made comments on re-routing Routes #2, #4, and #25 to increase ridership.
3. **Approval of O&S Summary Minutes:** None
4. **Maintenance:** No Items.
5. **Paratransit and Accessible Services:**
 - a. Paratransit RFP – Draft Scope of Work – Mr. Ramacier and Mr. Churchill presented the draft scope of work of the upcoming paratransit RFP. Mr. Ramacier recommended keeping the discussion at the committee level until more concrete details had been agreed upon. Mr. Churchill highlighted a portion of the draft scope of work that encouraged proposers to include recommendations for improving service quality and efficiency. Director Weir suggested issuing a Request for Information along with the Request for Proposals. The committee gave staff discretion to decide whether to issue an RFI, RFP, or both. Mr. Churchill then discussed a portion of the scope of work that pertained to fueling. He stated that County Connection has been using an offsite fueling station in Martinez in order to meet the agency's DBE requirements. The committee requested more information on the DBE program and supported the draft scope of work.
 - b. Committee Discussion Regarding LINK Employee Comments at Recent Board Meetings – Mr. Churchill presented this verbal item to the committee regarding LINK employees who, at the most recent Board of Directors meeting, had expressed negative comments about having reduced hours. He stated that he had looked into their complaints and explained that they could possibly be in response to efforts by County Connection and the contractor to improve on-time performance. Mr. Churchill also stated that he looked into the specific driver that had made these comments and found that they had lost a certification which is required to handle certain passengers and that this had resulted in fewer hours. He then stated that the other complaints he had found were not supported by evidence.
6. **Planning and Scheduling:**
 - a. Alamo T-1 Proposal and Agreement – Ms. Muzzini updated the committee on the proposed service to the Alamo T-1 district and presented an agreement to operate service. Director Andersen suggested not having door-to-door service but instead having designated stops. Director Andersen also suggested that it be available for a fare to those not paying the fee. Ms. Muzzini stated that the service will evolve over time and clarified that will be available without a fare for all trips that start and/or end in the catchment area. The committee supported the proposal.

- b. Bishop Ranch Service Proposal – Ms. Muzzini presented a service proposal made to Bishop Ranch. This was made because Bishop Ranch wished to add AT&T to the pass program and staff had recommended adding service on the routes to Bishop Ranch as some trips are reaching capacity. Ms. Muzzini stated that talks with Bishop Ranch indicated that they were not interested in increasing costs so any plans to increase service would be put on hold for now. Any possibility of increased service would be delayed until at least Spring 2014.
- 7. Staff Reports**
 - a. FY 2012-13 Year End Report – Mr. Bowron presented the FY13 year-end report and noted the 4% increase in ridership and the increasing service efficiency. Director Weir stated that he wanted this report in the October Board of Directors packet to show the increasing service quality.
 - b. Fixed Route Monthly Report – August 2013 – Ms. Muzzini presented the fixed-route report which was approved without comment.
 - c. LINK Monthly Report – August 2013 - Mr. Ramacier presented the LINK report which was approved without comment.
 - 8. Committee Comments** – None
 - 9. Future Agenda Items** – None discussed.
 - 10. Next Scheduled Meeting** –The next meeting is scheduled for November 8th at 8:30am.
 - 11. Adjournment** – meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by: Laramie Bowron, Manager of Planning