

County Connection

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Agenda Item No. 4.a.

CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

March 20, 2014

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

Chair Simmons called the regular meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 9 a.m. Board Members present were Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Hudson, Manning, Schroder, Storer and Weir. Directors Hoffmeister, Tatzin and Worth arrived after the meeting convened.

Staff: Ramacier, Chun, Abdelrahman, Barnes, Barrientos, Bowron, Brown, Burdick, Casenave, Churchill, Dean, Hill, Jefferson, Martinez, Mitchell, Moran, Muzzini, Porter, Rettig, Robinson, Thompson and Vassallo

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:

Rethamae Abdelrahman, a County Connection bus operator for 29 years, expressed how some of the passengers are disrespectful to drivers and would like management to prevent these passengers from riding the buses.

(Director Worth arrived.)

Judy Barrientos, ATU Local 1605 President, addressed the Board regarding the bus operators that are being disrespected and harassed by passengers. The operators would like to see some action taken and to feel that their concerns are being heard and cared about. She also addressed the Board regarding the timing devices on the buses which she believes are still not accurate and cause confusion for the operators and the passengers.

Said Saadat, a bus operator with County Connection, spoke to the Board about problem passengers that are disrespecting operators and fellow passengers. He felt that management should help to ensure the safety of all.

Chair Bob Simmons, thanked the speakers for coming. On behalf of the Board he expressed appreciation to their comments, noting that some of these issues need to be presented to management first, since the Board is a policy making body. He expressed regret that bus operators are sometimes subjected to bad language and negative attitudes from the public, and asked Rick Ramacier, General Manager to comment.

Rick Ramacier expressed his concern for the drivers and passengers. He noted that bus operators must report these occurrences, so that management can investigate, document the claims and provide a plan of action. He stated that he is always open to meeting with employees with any and all of their concerns. He advised that additional training will be provided to the drivers to help deal with these issues. Additional road supervision will also be provided.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Storer moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of February 20, 2014; (b) Amendment to the Recognition of Retiring or Departing County Connection Employees Policy, Resolution No. 2014-014. Director Manning seconded the motion and it received the following vote of approval.

Aye: Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Hudson, Manning, Schroder, Simmons, Storer, Weir and Worth
No: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Directors Hoffmeister and Tatzin

REPORT OF CHAIR

(Director Schroder left the meeting.)

Chair Simmons stated that County Connection has received an award from the Contra Costa Mental Health Department for its free mid-day service for seniors. It was an honor to accept this award on behalf of the Board, and he thanked the Board members for authorizing this service for seniors.

Chair Simmons also reported on the APTA Legislative Conference that he attended in Washington, DC., along with three other Board members

. Overall, he found the conference interesting, but the outlook for positive Congressional action for public transportation is not good. He will seek better coordination with the regional transportation agencies, and suggested that Chairs of the boards for the suburban operators (ECCTA, Westcat and LAVTA) meet periodically.

Directors Dessayer, Storer, and Worth offered additional comments on the Legislative Conference, reiterating that it is unlikely that anything of great impact will happen this year, and that no new capital funding is anticipated. Director Worth noted that the impending insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund is of serious concern, and that the partnership between MTC and the transit agencies has been effective in approaching Congressional members.

(Directors Hoffmeister and Tatzin arrived.)

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

General Manager Rick Ramacier updated the Board on implementation of the service plan changes recommended in the Adaptive Service Plan. County Connection is currently holding public hearings in the Martinez and Walnut Creek areas. The public comments received seem to reflect more concern in Martinez and more support in Walnut Creek. County Connection is receiving a lot of feedback both in person at the hearings as well as in emails via the website.

Recognition of Employees with 30 Years of Service

Kenneth Walters, has been a bus operator for 30 years. He is very humble, honest, and has a stellar safety record.

Recognition of Retiring Employees

Derrick Hamilton has been an employee in the maintenance department for almost 32 years. He has been a positive and upbeat employee the entire time. He enjoyed his job so much that he has 16 years of perfect attendance. He will be greatly missed.

Update on Meetings with Contra Costa Transit Authority RTPCs regarding County Connection Mobility Management Plan

The General Manager reported that he has addressed three of the 4 Boards, SWAT, TRANSPAC, and TRANSPLAN and will meet with WCCTAC later this month. The consensus is to identify the best ideas in the e Mobility Plan for CCTA to take the lead on to move forward.

Rick Ramacier mentioned that the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Pacheco Transit Hub will be April 1 at 10am if any Board members would like to attend.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

Support AB1720 (Bloom) & AB2445 (Chau)

Director Worth stated that the MP& L Committee recommends the support of two bills, AB1720 (Bloom) & AB2445 (Chau). AB1720 is similar to a bill that County Connection has supported in the past, to extend the exemption on axle weight limits for transit agencies until January 2016. Kristina Vassallo explained that since the first bill was passed in 1974, a lot of additional equipment requirements for buses, such as safety and ADA requirements, has caused buses to exceed the axle weight limit. Supporting this bill will allow the State to conduct a study to come up with new limitations.

MOTION: Director Worth moved approval of supporting AB1720(Bloom). Director Hoffmeister seconded the motion and it received the following vote of approval.

Aye: Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Hoffmeister, Hudson, Manning, Simmons, Storer, Tatzin, Weir and Worth
No: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Director Schroder

Kristina Vassallo went on to explain AB2445 (Chau), which would allow fees for transportation services provided under agreements between community colleges and transit agencies to be approved by students on a campus by campus level. Board support is requested so that the General Manager can explore options for using college parking fees to subsidize public transportation fees.

MOTION: Director Worth moved approval of supporting AB2445 (Chau) . Director Tatzin seconded the motion and it received the following vote of approval.

Aye: Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Hoffmeister, Hudson, Manning, Simmons, Storer, Tatzin, Weir and Worth
No: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Director Schroder

Operations & Scheduling Committee

Adoption of Transit Access Improvement Project

Director Weir stated that the O & S Committee has reviewed the results of a comprehensive study to identify opportunities for Access Improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists to access bus stops. Andrew Kluter and Laramie Bowron explained how the study was conducted and how the information

can be useful in identifying and prioritizing improvements. The study reviewed bus ridership data, the socio-economic composition of riders, and how they are they using public transit. Several directors commented on the study. It was noted that the information should be shared with cities and the County so that the recommendations can be considered when a development or road improvement project is proposed. It is a useful tool for working with cities and developers.

MOTION: Director Weir moved approval of County Connection Transit Access Improvement Project. Director Hudson seconded the motion and it received the following vote of approval.

Aye: Directors Andersen, Dessayer, Hoffmeister, Hudson, Manning, Simmons, Storer, Tatzin, Weir and Worth
No: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Director Schroder

BOARD COMMUNICATION:

Director Hudson commented on the public comments regarding race as a factor with disrespectful passengers. His wife has been in transportation for over 46 years and she experiences just as much disrespectful people in the public as anyone else. It's not always about race as it is just people in general being rude and disrespectful.

Director Manning stated that the negative experiences on the buses impact both the drivers and the passengers. The victims are typically secondary to the rights of the perpetrators; punishment should be swift but is not. He also has talked to some seniors about County Connection's free ride for seniors, and he has received all positive feedback and they hope that the program continues.

Director Weir offered his empathy towards the drivers and their negative experiences.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Simmons adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Minutes prepared by

Lathina Hill
Assistant to the General Manager

Date