

County Connection

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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

December 16, 2021

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, Hoffmeister, Noack, Sos, Storer, Wilk and Worth. Directors Schroder and Tatzin arrived after the meeting convened.

Staff: Ramacier, Chun, Sherman, Churchill, Glenn, Hill, Horta, Johnson, Kamara, Longmire, Martinez, McCarthy, Mitchell, Reeb and Rettig

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Directors Schroder and Tatzin arrived at 9:03 a.m.

Erling Horn, previously served as a Board Member for County Connection. He wanted to attend the meeting to give Rick Ramacier his well wishes on his upcoming retirement.

A public comment was also emailed in from Lisa Bobadilla: On behalf of the Transportation Division at the City of San Ramon, we want to express our appreciation and gratitude to Rick Ramacier for his years of service to County Connection and its member agencies, particularly the City of San Ramon. We're proud of the success of transit service to San Ramon, particularly to the Bishop Ranch Business Park as well as the Dougherty Valley area. We thank Rick for his efforts to ensure the Dougherty Valley area was and continues to be served by County Connection. Rick's extensive knowledge of transit issues at the state and federal level will be missed. We wish Rick all the best in his new endeavors! And, we look forward to our continued working relationship with Bill, Ruby and the team at County Connection. We extend our congratulations to Bill and Ruby for their recent promotions! It's well deserved. Thank you!

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Noack moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of December 16, 2021; (b) Resolution No. 2022-016 Update CalTip Appointments, (c) Resolution No. 2022-014, Approve Designation of Treasurer and Auditor, and Changes in Authorized Signatories for Union Bank; (d) Resolution No. 2022-018, Finding 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 Haydon seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

REPORT OF CHAIR:

Proclamation of Appreciation in Honor of Rick Ramacier and Resolution No. 2022-017

Chair Dave Hudson read the Proclamation and all of the Directors thanked Rick Ramacier for his years of service. A clip from a video made by County Connection's employees was played, showing their appreciation and well wishes for Rick Ramacier's retirement.

MOTION: Director Noack moved Resolution No. 2022-17, Proclamation of Appreciation in Honor of Rick Ramacier. Director Haydon seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

Introduction of County Connection's new Director of Maintenance Marcel Longmire

Rick Ramacier introduced Marcel Longmire to the Board, and all welcomed him to County Connection.

State of the condition of County Connection upon the departure of the General Manager

Rick Ramacier stated that County Connection has gone through its ups and downs thorough the years and we are in a good place right now. He believes that he is leaving County Connection in very capable hands with Bill Churchill as the new General Manager.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration & Finance Committee

Preliminary Review of Potential Impacts of PEPRA-13(c) conflict to County Connection

Rick Ramacier stated that the most immediate risk is to our FY22 ARP funds. Staff, at the request of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), have applied for these funds recently. However, we have yet to begin the FY23 budgeting work on how we would use these funds. Thus, a hold up of these funds could be endured for some yet to be determined time. However, there is a federal deadline as to when these funds must be spent. To cover any significant delay in receiving our ARP funds, we can use funding from TDA reserves.

We are in line to receive FY22 and FY23 grants that can be used to help pay the cost of our paratransit operating and maintenance contract, because this is competitively bid. Between the two grants, we are set to receive about \$3 million in such support, provided the Unites States Department of Labor (USDOL) does not hold them up. This would represent about 20% of our paratransit operating budget revenue in each of FY22 and FY23. Again, this could be covered by TDA reserves in the short term.

Perhaps the biggest project at risk in the immediate timeframe is our 40 bus replacement project. This project is projected to cost \$36 million and change. We are due to receive \$29 million in federal grants. If we do not receive

this funding or if it delayed beyond six months or so, the project will be in great jeopardy. We do not have anywhere near enough reserve funding to cover this potential federal funding loss.

If we do not replace these 40 buses soon, they will become very unreliable and overly expensive to maintain. They are also older diesel technology buses. Furthermore, staff is contemplating asking the Board to consider a purchase of up to 20 Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) buses as part of this project when it comes to the Board sometime next year. If these buses cannot be replaced, we will fall behind on our effort to comply with the state mandate to move to Zero Emission Based (ZEB) buses, and eventually our fleet total will greatly shrink. This will force massive service cuts, as we won't have the vehicles to provide the related service.

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

Meeting with Mt. Diablo Unified School District and Transportation Authorities

Bill Churchill gave a brief background stating that County Connection staff was invited to a meeting on November 3rd with the Mayors of Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, Pittsburg and Walnut Creek. Also, in attendance was Mr. Haile from Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and Dr. Clark, the Superintendent from the Mount Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD). The purpose of the meeting was to explore potential traffic congestion mitigation solutions to offset the profound bottlenecks that occur around many MDUSD schools at bell times.

Mr. Churchill pointed out that unlike the relationships with many other school districts within the service area, there has not been any significant sharing of information between MDUSD and CCTA staff in a couple of decades. Since County Connection staff does not have a clear picture of where students originate and the schools they attend, it has been challenging to design the routes to maximize student transit use. Dr. Clark agreed that improving the staff's relationship between the two entities and the sharing of data could have a direct impact on transporting more students in buses and, as a result, reducing congestion. Dr. Clark committed to assigning a transportation coordinator from MDUSD to begin meeting with County Connection staff as well as provide origin and destination data to look for opportunities to improve public transportation for students. Staff will continue to update the Board as this relationship develops.

PEPRA & Federal Section 13(c)

Rick Ramacier gave a brief background stating that since the state enacted PERS based pension reform in 2013 (PEPRA), the Amalgamated Transit Union International (ATU) has argued that this reform interferes with their rights to bargain for wages and benefits under federal Section 13(c) of the federal transportation authorizations. Eventually the USDOL decided not to hold up anymore California transit federal grant applications. However, in 2019, the ATU International filed a new lawsuit against USDOL arguing that only Sac RT and MST had "won" the original lawsuit and therefore USDOL is wrong in not holding up other California transit operator federal grant applications with respect to PEPRA and Section 13(c).

Governor Newsom sent a letter to President Biden's Chief of Staff, the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Labor expressing his strong opposition to this apparent shift in thinking from USDOL as well as his outright opposition and concern that USDOL might deny California up to \$12 billion in federal public transit funding. Senators Diane Feinstein and Alex Padilla wrote a similar letter to the same people. Both letters state their strong belief that USDOL is wrong in its new interpretation of PEPRA and how it may or may not impact Section 13(c) rights. Staff will continue to update the Board on this issue.

Operations & Scheduling Committee

Release of Request for Proposal for County Connection and LAVTA Joint Paratransit Procurement

Rashida Kamara gave a brief background stating that in April of 2021, County Connection, in collaboration with Livermore Amador Valley Transportation (LAVTA), initiated a pilot project to provide paratransit services for both transit agencies using a single contractor. The purpose of the pilot was to explore the potential of streamlining services across a larger region with the goal of reducing expenses and improving customer service. In order to ensure the goals of the pilot were met, a special ad hoc committee made up of board members of both transit agencies was formed. The next ad hoc committee meeting is scheduled to take place on December 6th, when staff anticipates they will review the success of the pilot by evaluating service quality, cost savings, and rider satisfaction.

Staff from both agencies meet weekly to discuss the efficacy of the program using metrics such as on time performance, customer satisfaction, and shared resources. Despite low ridership numbers due to COVID-19, metrics under this pilot have either met or exceed the standard performance criteria for both authorities. Staff from both agencies have learned to successfully collaborate in resolving challenges and effectively holding the contractor to a high standard of service. As a result, staff from both agencies recommend moving forward with a joint paratransit procurement.

MOTION: Director Storer moved approval of the Release of Request for Proposal for County Connection and LAVTA Joint Paratransit Procurement. Director Noack seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

Report from the Advisory Committee

Appointment of Jim Yu to Advisory Committee Representing Town of Moraga

MOTION: Director Sos moved appointment of Jim Yu to the Advisory Committee Representing Town of Moraga. Director Storer seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

BOARD COMMUNICATION: None

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Hudson adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:21 am.

Minutes prepared by



Lathina Hill
Assistant to the General Manager

Date: January 10, 2022