

**Summary Minutes  
Operations & Scheduling Committee  
Wednesday, September 4, 8:00 a.m.**

**Directors:** Robert Storer, Jim Diaz, Dave Hudson  
**Staff:** Bill Churchill, Scott Mitchell, John Sanderson, Andrew Smith, Pranjal Dixit, Kyle Boehm, Laura Carona  
**Public:** None

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

**1. Approval of Agenda**

The Committee approved the agenda.

**2. Public Communication**

None.

**3. Approval of Minutes of July 3, 2024**

The Committee approved the minutes.

**4. Fixed Route Year End Report**

Mr. Dixit reported that County Connection served 2.6 million fixed-route passengers in FY 2024, a 10% increase from FY 2023. Factors contributing to this increase included the continued Monument Free Program, Pass2Class promotions, expanded Clipper START discounts, and the resumption of in-person learning and work.

Mr. Dixit informed the Committee that bus schedules were adjusted four times in the 2023-2024 fiscal year to accommodate changes in school bell times, BART service, and traffic congestion. While increased operator staffing led to a decrease in missed trips, on-time performance declined due to higher ridership and worsening traffic conditions. He also noted that passenger productivity increased by 8.6%, with an average of 14.1 passengers per revenue hour. Director Storer requested that future reports include route-specific ridership and productivity data.

**5. Paratransit Year End Report**

Mr. Sanderson reported that ridership has steadily increased, with revenue hours up 29% and unlinked passenger trips up 14% to over 95,000. He noted that revenue speed declined due to congestion. Mr. Churchill emphasized the importance of prioritizing transit to mitigate congestion.

While Mr. Sanderson discussed the differences between paratransit and fixed-route service, Mr. Churchill provided historical context for the paratransit service requirement and how County Connection exceeds the ADA's requirement to provide paratransit service within three-quarters of a mile of any fixed route service.

Director Diaz requested staff explore potential coordination with the Contra Costa Fire Protection District for non-emergency medical trips to address ambulance shortages.

## **6. Real-Time Signs Update**

Mr. Boehm provided the Committee with a history of real-time signage at County Connection stops and compared the new signs from Urban Solar to existing ones. He explained that the 28 new signs will feature e-paper displays for improved readability, a text-to-speech function for ADA compliance, vandal resistance, and real-time schedule updates every 10 seconds.

He noted that one sign is proposed for the stop with the highest number of boardings in each jurisdiction within the County Connection service area (if that stop averages at least 10 boardings per day). The remaining 18 signs will be distributed to other busy stops throughout the service area, ensuring a spread across routes and streets.

County Connection will procure these signs through the California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) contract for \$250,000, which was already included in the FY 2025 Budget. The Committee approved the staff's request to forward the proposal to the Board for approval.

## **7. Diesel Fuel Tank Replacement**

Mr. Mitchell informed that County Connection's two 25,000-gallon single-wall diesel fuel tanks, installed in 1981, must be replaced or removed by December 31, 2025 per the State Water Resources Control Board's requirement. He noted that while transitioning to zero-emission vehicles, County Connection needs to replace these tanks to continue operating diesel buses and that these tanks also would serve as an emergency fuel source for the County.

Staff recommended purchasing two 25,000-gallon double-wall fuel tanks, piping, pumps, and a fuel monitoring system from Blue1 Energy Equipment using a Sourcwell Contract for \$481,573. County Connection will then issue an IFB for the removal and replacement of the tanks. This two-step approach aims to reduce costs and expedite the tank replacement project. The Committee approved the staff's request to forward the proposal to the Board for approval.

## **8. Electric Bus Update**

Mr. Mitchell reported that County Connection has encountered difficulties with electric bus charging. The WAVE inductive chargers have been unable to communicate with the buses, preventing charging initiation. WAVE has experienced staffing shortages in their technical team, hindering troubleshooting efforts. Additionally, two buses require new batteries, but the original model is no longer available. Staff, along with Gillig, are exploring the possibility of equipping these buses with higher-capacity battery packs (200kW) that can be installed without requiring additional engineering modifications.

## **9. Monthly Ridership Reports**

Mr. Dixit shared that the ridership in July was up about 14.8% compared to a year ago. He also noted that productivity was higher when compared to the previous month and operator counts decreased slightly to 142. He informed that Clipper usage reached its all-time high of 81%.

Mr. Sanderson shared that ridership decreased 6% in July compared to June. He highlighted that productivity increased above the standard of 1.5 passengers per hour and on-time performance rose to 99%. Furthermore, Mr. Sanderson reported that complaints were outnumbered by commendations received.

**10. Committee Comments**

None

**11. Future Agenda Items**

None

**12. Next Scheduled Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for October 2 at 8:00 a.m. at Supervisor Andersen Office located at 309 Diablo Rd, Danville, CA.

**13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by: Pranjali Dixit, Manager of Planning