

# County Connection

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## CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

March 20, 2025

#### CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

Chair Kevin Wilk called the regular meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 9:00 a.m. Board Members present were Directors Andersen, Diaz, Hillis, Rubio, Storer, Tatzin and Worth. Director Hoffmeister arrived after the meeting convened. Directors Howard and Noack were absent.

Staff: Churchill, Sherman, Boehm, Dixit, Glenn, Hill, Horta, Jones, Martinez, Mitchell, Sanderson and Smith

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:** None

#### 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, 2025; (b) Cap and Trade Grant (LCTOP)-FY2024-25; (c) Receive Investment Report as of December 31, 2024; (d) Investment Policy Statements for Section 115 Trust OPEB and Pension Funds. Director Rubio seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye:            Directors Andersen, Diaz, Hillis, Rubio, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth  
No:             None  
Abstain:       None  
Absent:        Directors Hoffmeister, Howard and Noack

Director Hoffmeister arrived at 9:04 a.m.

#### REPORT OF CHAIR:

##### Recognition of the 2024 Board Chair's Award

Director Wilk awarded the 2024 Board Chair's Award to the entire staff that helped out with the BART Bus Bridge.

#### REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

##### Recognition of the 2024 General Manager's Award

General Manager Bill Churchill presented the 2024 General Manager's Award to David Martinez.

##### Community Project Funding Request

County Connection staff applied for a Community Project Funding Request for a Hydrogen Powered Generator Set through Congressman DeSaulnier's office last year. This was a component of our federal lobbying efforts when we went to DC last April. The Congressman approved our request and submitted it to Congress for final approval. Unfortunately, Congress denied our request, which effectively puts the generator project on hold as we have no other funding source for the project. This may be a blessing in disguise as we have a 6.1 million dollar discretionary grant waiting to be obligated by the FTA to build a hydrogen fuel station. The hydrogen generator can't work without the fuel station so they really are companion projects. We have recently learned this grant will go through an additional review process with the Office of the Secretary of Transportation and evaluated from the perspective of how it fits in with a host of Executive Orders as well as a Secretarial Order from the new secretary of transportation where one of the main tenets is to reject funding requests for climate action projects. As such, staff is not hopeful at the moment this grant will be funded.

Additionally, staff learned yesterday that Gillig has put its hydrogen Fuel Cell powered bus project on hold for a minimum of two years, mainly due to many transit agencies canceling their orders for hydrogen fuel cell buses. You may recall staff initially intended to begin work on developing and building our hydrogen fuel station later this year to be ready for our new hydrogen fuel cell buses that we would receive late next year or early 2027. The General Manager will keep the Board apprised of any developments.

## **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee**

#### FY2026 Marketing Plan

Ryan Jones, Manager of Marketing & Communication, explained that the Marketing Plan for FY 2026 is intended to build upon our current marketing efforts. The plan outlines a strategy to connect with more customers within our service area, as well as those who travel to central Contra Costa County, and build upon our relationships with regional transit partners. The committee came up with three areas to focus on:

- Develop Online Engagement and Content
- Build a Personal Connection: Outreach and Events
- Enhance Youth & Family Programming

Staff plans to focus on enhancing online audience engagement through videos and motion graphics to create a more dynamic and informative communication style. This approach will build on our current online messaging, moving beyond stagnant posts about service interruptions, schedule changes, and events, using more eye-catching multimedia content intended to better resonate with our passengers.

Staff will continue to utilize Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, and Bluesky; and for our younger audiences, TikTok to promote our services. Additionally, staff will use more paid advertisements through Google Ads, which help amplify our online reach by targeting specific demographics and regions. This strategic approach will not only enhance and focus our online presence but also build a stronger community connection.

Staff will continue to plan Mobile Lobby and community events, aiming to forge stronger personal connections between County Connection and community organizations working with the communities we serve. Having recognized this as a gap in our current marketing strategy, we will develop portfolios for customer-facing staff in marketing and customer service to act as liaisons. These portfolios will include businesses and non-profits that serve our communities, ensuring effective communication of relevant services and promotions.

To improve engagement, we will create stand-alone online events via Zoom, scheduled throughout the year for parents and students to learn about discounted transit passes and youth promotional cards. Additionally, we plan to establish a parent advocacy program that empowers volunteers to promote youth transit passes within their

communities. By leveraging their networks, we can effectively spread information about our transit options. Participants will receive incentives, such as gift cards or promotional items, in exchange for their assistance. This grassroots approach aims to enhance awareness and foster greater community engagement, ultimately benefiting families and students who rely on our services.

**MOTION:** Director Worth moved approval of the FY2026 Marketing Plan. Director Hoffmeister seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Diaz, Hillis, Hoffmeister, Rubio, Storer, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth  
No: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Directors Howard and Noack

## **Operations & Scheduling Committee**

### TIRCP Solar Project Update-Information Only

Kyle Boehm, Grants Administrator, gave a brief background stating that in July 2024, County Connection applied for a \$15,950,000 grant under the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) to fund the Solar Supported Zero Emission Vehicle Fleet and Service Modernization Project (Solar Project). The grant application requested funding for the installation of solar panels over the County Connection bus yard, with the intent to charge and support the purchase of additional zero emission vehicles over the next five years and beyond. The Solar Project will reduce County Connection's reliance on grid power for the fueling of the future zero emission fleet and will enhance the facility's resistance against future power grid disruptions.

In October 2024, County Connection was notified by CalSTA that the Solar Project was selected as one of the 27 projects receiving a total of \$1.3 billion in TIRCP Cycle 7 awards.

In the time since the announcement of the award, CalSTA, Caltrans, and County Connection began the award process. After completing staff and legal review, Caltrans will review and approve the Master Award Agreement, which will then be presented to the Board of Directors. Based on Caltrans's anticipated timeline for their review, staff is planning on bringing the Master Award Agreement to the Administration and Finance Committee and the Board of Directors in May for their approval.

In coordination and preparation for the project, staff is also moving ahead with contracting with an engineering firm to serve as County Connection's on-call engineer. Staff anticipates bringing this contract to the Administration and Finance Committee and Board of Directors in April. The selected firm will assist in the design and construction support of the Solar Panel project, in addition to potential future projects involving proposed hydrogen fueling stations, hydrogen fuel cell generators, and other zero-emission vehicle projects.

### Automated Driving Systems (ADS) Demonstration Project Update – Verbal Update

John Sanderson, Director of Accessible Services, provided an overview of the ADS pilot project in Martinez. While the project MOU between County Connection, CCTA, and May Mobility considered Autonomous Vehicle Operators (AVOs) as County Connection's in-kind match, concerns about Auto Liability insurance coverage arose before the project's launch, and still have not been satisfactorily resolved. Although the insurance coverage provided by May Mobility appears to cover all aspects of the project, including the AVOs when in performance of their duties, full documentation of that coverage has not yet been provided by May Mobility. A minor fender bender in January highlighted this liability issue, and due to the lack of resolution regarding May Mobility's insurance coverage, the AVOs have been pulled from service on the ADS pilot and temporarily reassigned to

providing paratransit service. Mr. Sanderson added that CCTA has agreed to cover any additional insurance costs once a permanent insurance coverage solution is determined.

**BOARD COMMUNICATION:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Wilk adjourned the regular Board meeting at 9:59 a.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Lathina Hill

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

Date: April 7, 2025