County Connection
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CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

May 21, 2026

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/CONFIRM QUORUM

Chair Robert Storer 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, Tatzin, Wilk and Worth. Directors Farley, Hoffmeister and Noack were absent.

Staff: Churchill, Sherman, Boehm, Glenn, Hill, Horta, Jones, Johnson, Longmire, Martinez and Smith

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: None

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: Director Andersen moved approval of the Consent Calendar, consisting of the following items: (a) Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of April 16, 2026. Director Worth seconded the motion, and it received the following roll call vote of approval:

Aye:	Directors Andersen, Diaz, Hillis, Rubio, Storer Tatin, Wilk and Worth
No:	None
Abstain:	Director Wilk
Absent:	Directors Farley, Hoffmeister and Noack

REPORT OF CHAIR:

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:

Proposed CARB Amendments

General Manager Bill Churchill explained that last fall at the end of the legislative season the Senate and Assembly reached a compromise to extend the Cap and Trade program. The compromise renamed the program to Cap and Invest and extended it to 2046, the Cap and Trade program was set to expire in 2030. The compromise included a significant restructuring of the funding program into three separate Tiers where tier I is funded first and tier three is funded last, depending the volume of emission sales. There are three pots of funding in tier three that fund transportation programs,

Transit and Intercity Rail Capitol Program or	TIRCP
Low Carbon Transit Operations Program or	LCTOP
Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities	AHSC

County Connection receives about $1.5 million a year from the LCTOP funding pot that pays for the free fares on the Monument and Martinez free fare routes as well as some of the operational expenses for route 99X that serves many of the County's social services program, including the homeless shelter just down the Street.

County Connection has done very well in the TIRCP fund pot as well. These are capital dollars and we have been awarded $14.4 million for the I-680 Express Bus project and $15.9 million for the Solar Array panels to go over the bus yard.

It's also important to know that the AHSC program funds the $4 million for the new added frequent service to the route 4.

In April CARB proposed a set of amendments to the Cap and Invest program with three goals in mind:

The first goal is to make California more affordable.
The second is to prevent corporate leakage.
And the third is to entice tech company startup in California.

The make California more affordable will divert funds to Utility companies such that they can increase the number and size of the climate credit to rate payer bills.

The second, prevent corporate leakage will grant refineries and other heavy polluters with greater emissions allowances reducing the number of emission credits they have to purchase in the Cap and invest program.

Collectively this represents a diversion of 2 billion dollars from the program which will completely defund the Cap and Invest Tier III transit programs. Not only will it eliminate the funding for our free routes we are told it will claw back funding from our awarded TIRCP grants. Bill Churchill will continue to update the Board on developments at the next meeting.

<u>A New Surface Transportation Authorization Bill Build America 250 ACT:</u>

Bill Churchill explained that the current Surface Transportation ACT known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will expire on September 30th. All federal transportation dollars will cease to flow unless congress passes a new Surface Transportation Act by October 1st or passes a continuing resolution for the existing IIJA. At last month's Board meeting the group of staff and Board members that attended the APTA legislative conference reported that we do not expect congress to pass a new authorization this year. There have been several proposed release dates that have come and gone without any language. However, unexpectedly on Sunday evening, language for a new Surface Transportation was released called the Build America 250 Act. We have only had a few days to examine it and unfortunately it is set for markup at T&I Committee today.

At first glance, the legislation is a mixed bag representing both positive and negative components. From a financial perspective it provides less funding than the current Authorization. The IIJA provides $660 billion, while the Build America Act provided $590 billion representing a $70 billion reduction in overall funding. However, it appears some of the transit programs have realized funding increases.

Some troubling provisions of the legislation is the elimination of low or no emission bus funding, which will make compliance with California ICT that much more challenging moving forward. The legislation also adds a crime prevention program requiring recipients to use at least 1% of their funds on crime prevention projects. Another odd provision creates a fare evasion enforcement penalty where the Secretary could withhold 10% of 5307 funds if fare evasion is not appropriately addressed. Bill Churchill will continue to provide updates.

<u>Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC)</u>

Bill Churchill explained that last month he reported to the Board that the Joint Legislative Audit Committee had planned to release the result of an audit of six east bay transit agencies including AC Transit, County Connection, LAVTA, TriDelta, Union City Transit and WestCAT on Manday May 18th. He had intended to provide the Board with a copy of the report. Unfortunately, the document has not yet been completed and a new release date of May 28th has been provided. Staff now plans to share the report with the Board at the June Board meeting.

Recognition of Departing Employee

Sayed Miry-Bus Operator 38 years

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration & Finance Committee

Clipper BayPass Amendment No. 2*
Resolution No. 2026-26
Andrew M. Smith, Director of Planning & Marketing, explained that MTC has proposed a second amendment to the existing Clipper BayPass Agreement that extends the end date for Phase 2 of the pilot from 2027 to 2030 and includes a few other minor edits that are inconsequential to County Connection. There is, however, one additional provision of note regarding the fare reimbursements.

The Clipper BayPass program has thus far been entirely funded by MTC, with the fares for rides taken by Clipper BayPass holders reimbursed by MTC at the adult Clipper card rate ($2.00/passenger in the case of County Connection). The amendment reduces the reimbursement rate for Clipper BayPass holders that would otherwise qualify for the Clipper START program (an income-based program that provides 50%-off single-ride discounts). The Clipper START program is also funded by MTC, with reimbursements paid to the transit operators commensurate with the reduced fare ($1.00/passenger in the case of County Connection), however the amendment does not provide an equivalent reimbursement for rides taken by these reduced-fare Clipper BayPass holders.

County Connection staff informed MTC staff that we could not agree to any unreimbursed fare discounts, and the amendment was modified to exclude County Connection from that portion of the Clipper BayPass program.

Director Rubio left at 9:48 a.m.

There will be no fiscal impact to County Connection. Funds collected from participating employers will be distributed to transit operators based on ridership and lost fare revenue. If the pass is overutilized and foregone revenue exceeds what is paid by participants, MTC has set aside $5 million in State Transit Assistance (STA) Regional Program funds to fund the extension and to address the existing budget gap.

MOTION: Director Worth moved adoption of Resolution No. 2026-26, authorizing the General Manager to execute Amendment No. 2 to the Clipper BayPass Pilot Program Participation Agreement. Director Wilk seconded the motion, and it received the following roll call vote of approval:

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

Review of Updates to FY27 Budget

Amber Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, explained that there have been a few updates and refinements made to the operating budget since the last version was reviewed by the Board of Directors in April:

•Recognition of grant revenue and associated operating expenses related to an Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Grant award in partnership with the City of Walnut Creek and Resources for Community Development (RCD). This grant will provide up to $4.15 million over the next five years to increase service levels on the Route 4. The FY 2027 budget estimates $760 thousand in revenue with offsetting expenses for the first year of this grant. These revenues are reflected in the Special Service Revenue category. Offsetting expenses are reflected in Wages and Benefits.

•Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) released updated estimates for the budget year, resulting in a 2.5% increase ($60 thousand) in Measure J Sales Tax revenue.

•General liability, vehicle, and workers' comp insurance expenses have been reduced by approximately $150 thousand based on current estimates

The version of the draft budget presented last month was for a single year, FY 2027. The updated version of the draft budget includes the operating and capital forecast through FY 2032.

The Authority is projected to have sufficient Operating and Capital Reserves through FY 2028. These reserves are considered sufficient when at least 25% of operating costs are reserved. In FY 2029, reserves begin to dip below the 25% threshold and are projected to go negative in FY 2030. As costs continue to outpace revenues, and zero emission vehicles and infrastructure demand a higher portion of TDA capital, additional revenue sources will need to be secured to keep the Authority in a financially stable position.

Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

Paratransit Riders Survey

John Sanderson, Director of ADA & Specialized Services, gave a brief background stating that since 2010, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has managed a regional transit passenger survey program for fixed-route services operating within the nine-county Bay Area. The purpose of the survey is to collect data that is used by MTC to support regional planning efforts and to fulfill Title VI requirements. Surveys are conducted by MTC for each operator roughly every five to seven years. Additionally, County Connection also conducts separate onboard surveys to obtain community input when implementing major service changes or to assess pilot programs.

However, County Connection's and MTC's passenger surveys have been limited to fixed-route bus passengers and have not included County Connection LINK paratransit passengers. LINK passengers using the My Transit Manager smartphone app are prompted to rate each ride and all passenger feedback from LINK passengers is tracked, analyzed, and reported in the LINK monthly service summary, along with other metrics such as ridership, on-time performance, and cost per passenger. Nevertheless, the lack of targeted passenger surveys greatly increases the difficulty of accurately gauging overall LINK passenger sentiment.

Since LAVTA Wheels Dial-A-Ride, County Connection LINK paratransit, and One-Seat Ride (OSR) service are all provided under the same contract, which is overseen by County Connection staff, the results of LAVTA's survey raise important questions about passengers' perceptions of and sentiment towards both LINK and OSR. Therefore, County Connection should conduct a formal survey of LINK and OSR paratransit passengers – preferably in time for the survey results to inform the scope of work for the next paratransit service procurement, which will take place in the next fiscal year.

An important differentiator between a paratransit passenger survey and a fixed-route bus passenger survey is that the name, contact information, and ride history of every LINK and OSR passenger is already known and readily available, whereas that is not the case for fixed route passengers. The availability of these details creates two distinct advantages for conducting a survey. Since each passenger's name and contact information are already in hand, the survey can be conducted via telephone or direct mail without the need to expend resources compiling a list of potential respondents. And, since each passenger's trip history is known and updated in real-time, survey interviews can focus on specific trips that the passenger has taken recently. Passenger survey data about specific recent trips can then be used to plan future communications and service delivery much more efficiently and effectively.

Youth Ride Free Rollout Plan

Ryan Jones, Manager of Marketing & Communications, explained that in the program's first year, Youth Ride Free generated approximately 25,000 recorded youth trips across County Connection over the two-month period—a 1,600% increase in participation compared to the previous summer's youth program, Contra Costa Transportation Authority's (CCTA) Summer Youth Pass, which they discontinued later that year. Building on this success, County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, and WestCAT will bring back Youth Ride Free for summer 2026. Funding for County Connection's 2026 Youth Ride Free program is being provided by Measure J contributions from TRANSPAC and SWAT. CCTA has also offered to help provide countywide promotional support.

County Connection staff has developed a marketing plan to roll out Youth Ride Free, building on last year's strategy, while fine tuning successful engagement approaches such as the Youth Ride Free Leaderboard that allowed students to track their rides and compete for weekly prizes. In the weeks since the Board's approval of a 2026 Youth Ride Free summer program, staff has been coordinating with Tri Delta Transit, WestCAT, and CCTA to develop promotional, broad countywide messaging of the program.

Staff will give an update next month on how the program is going thus far.

BOARD COMMUNICATION:

Director Hillis told staff that they should ask all of us Board members for our help in any way possible to help in accomplishing CCCTA's vision.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Storer adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes prepared by:
Lathina Hill — Date: June 8, 2026
Asst to the General Manager/Clerk to the Board of Directors