

# County Connection

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## CCCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

September 17, 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, Farley, Hillis, Hoffmeister, Noack, Rubio and Worth. Director Wilk arrived after the meeting convened. Director Tatzin was absent.

Staff: Churchill, Sherman, Boehm, Glenn, Hill, Horta, Jones, Johnson, Longmire, Martinez, Sanderson 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 August 20, 2026; (b) Investment Report as of June 30, 2026. Director Noack seconded the motion, and it received the following roll call vote of approval:

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

#### REPORT OF CHAIR:

##### Election of CCCTA Officers

**MOTION:** Director Storer moved approval of the Election of CCCTA Officers:

Chair: Laura Hoffmeister

Vice Chair: Tim Farley

Secretary: Sue Noack

Director Rubio seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

##### Seating of New CCCTA Officers and Announcement of 2026-2027 Committee Assignments

Administration & Finance Committee  
Tim Farley, Kerry Hillis and Sue Noack

Marketing, Planning & Legislation Committee  
Candace Andersen, Marisol Rubio, Kevin Wilk and Amy Worth

Operations & Scheduling Committee  
Jim Diaz, Robert Storer and Don Tatzin

## **REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER:**

### State Legislative Update

General Manager Bill Churchill informed the Board that the final budget agreement was reached Monday, August 31st. The most positive outcome was the State will honor its SB 125 commitment to funding transit at the full amount of \$230 million. This does not directly impact County Connection as we have not claimed any funds under this program. Our larger transit partners such as BART, Muni, Caltrain and AC Transit do rely on this revenue to offset their immediate fiscal cliff. Without this revenue, these agencies would be looking at service reductions right now, which would impact County Connection.

Unfortunately, the Tier III programs in the Cap and Invest Regulation did not fare as well. This means staff will have to begin working on eliminating the free fare routes running through the Monument Corridor and Downtown Martinez beginning next fiscal year. Staff is currently working on understanding the full financial ramifications and will be bringing staff reports to the Board as soon as we have a complete picture.

There is one other important nuance in the trailer bill AB/SB 193, which will direct interest earned on the Green House Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) back into the GGRF for future years beginning in FY28. This is important to County Connection, as it is anticipated the GGRF will generate over \$500 million annually making it easier to fund Tier III programs in the future. While we expect a negotiation on how this interest revenue will be spread through the Cap and Invest program, we anticipate it can be used to enhance the Tier III programs in FY 29 such that we may begin to see real revenues again.

Director Wilk arrived at 9:20 a.m.

## **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

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

#### On Call Planning Contract Award Resolution No. 2027-04

Andy Smith, Director of Planning, explained that as agencies reimagine post-pandemic services, seek new opportunities for grants, and transition to zero-emission fleets, staff anticipates several projects over the next few years that will likely require assistance from a consultant. This includes a comprehensive onboard passenger survey to provide statistically valid demographic data that is required by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) every five years, as well as updating the agency's Title VI program.

Staff worked with legal counsel to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) and sample agreement to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements. Following the authorization from this Committee, the RFP was released on June 8, 2026, and a pre-proposal conference was held via teleconference on June 17, 2026. The

following two firms -- Kimley-Horn and Associates and Fehr & Peers -- submitted responsive proposals prior to the July 24, 2026 deadline.

Both firms were invited for an interview and given the opportunity to present more detail on their proposed approaches for the types of projects that staff anticipates undertaking in the next few years.

While both firms brought well-qualified teams and strong proposals, Kimley-Horn was selected based on technical capabilities that align directly with the agency's immediate priorities, which include conducting on-board passenger surveys and updating our Title VI Program and Short Range Transit Plan. They also bring an extensive track record of delivering complex projects for regional partners like the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), and several Bay Area transit agencies.

The contract will include a not-to-exceed amount of \$1,000,000, but there is no obligation for County Connection to spend that amount, since the services will be provided on an as-needed basis. As projects are identified, staff will notify the appropriate Committee, and all work orders will comply with the adopted budget for that year (currently \$150,000 for service planning and development expenses) and grant funding when available.

**MOTION:** Director Worth moved Board approval to adopt Resolution No. 2027-04 authorizing the General Manager to enter into an agreement with Kimley-Horn and Associates for on-call planning services: Director Andersen seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Diaz, Farley, Hillis, Hoffmeister, Noack, Rubio, Storer, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Director Tatzin

Director Hillis left at 9:24 a.m.

#### LINK Paratransit Rider Satisfaction Survey Results\* – Information Only

John Sanderson, Director of ADA & Specialized Services, explained that of LINK's 1,655 registered riders, trip records indicated that 771 had used LINK or One Seat Ride (OSR) service within the previous 12 months and were included in the sampling frame for the survey. Potential respondents were notified by postcard, reminded midway through data collection by an interactive voice response (IVR) message, and offered entry into a raffle as an incentive to participate.

QMR completed 266 interviews of which 228 were administered by telephone interviewers and 38 completed online. 178 (67%) of survey respondents were riders and 88 (33%) were caregivers answering on behalf of riders. The survey was offered in English and Spanish, though only one interview was completed in Spanish. About 30% of survey respondents reported using wheelchairs or scooters at least some of the time, and of the 183 respondents who answered the question "What is your annual household income bracket?" 58% reported annual household incomes under \$30,000.

Respondents' answers to individual questions were ranked on a five-point scale, with the most positive responses assigned five points, and the most negative responses assigned one point. Individual responses were then aggregated to produce an overall or average score for each question. The final margin of error for the survey scores is  $\pm 4.9\%$  at the 95% confidence level.

Awareness of some available programs is low: 41% of respondents were not aware of the My Transit Manager smartphone application, and 59% were unaware of the OSR program. Second, longer-term riders view the service's trajectory positively—of the 47% who have used LINK for five years or more, 54% said the service has improved over that period, 28% said it has stayed about the same, and 11% said it has worsened.

It should also be noted that 80% of those who use the My Transit Manager application reported that it works well for them. Additionally, although any Bay Area paratransit rider is eligible to use the OSR program, only those traveling between the County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, LAVTA, and WestCAT service areas actually do so, and because OSR is integrated seamlessly with LINK service, users may not be aware of OSR as a distinct program. Based on these findings, staff is focusing on strategies to improve service reliability by strengthening customer communication regarding service delays and other disruptions and expanding outreach about the My Transit Manager application and the OSR program.

The 2026 findings provide an important snapshot of current rider experience and will serve as a baseline for future surveys. Staff will continue to review on-time performance with Transdev and expand outreach to riders about the My Transit Manager app and the OSR program. Simultaneously, staff intend to thoroughly investigate the apparent mismatch between customer-perceived on-time pickup rate of 78%, and the 93% rate calculated from trip records.

While there is no current recommendation for Board action, staff expect to bring future recommendations for paratransit rider surveys before the Board on a regular basis.

## **Operating & Scheduling Committee**

### **Battery Electric Bus Update – For Information Only**

Marcel Longmire, Director of Maintenance, explained that in late 2025, Freudenberg e-Power Systems, the parent company of Xalt, ceased operations and closed Xalt. Prior to the closure, County Connection was able to purchase forty (40) XMP 76P battery sub-packs and related components through Gillig at a substantial discount. This purchase was made with the understanding that it would allow the Authority to build an inventory of replacement battery components and help support the existing fleet, given that the original battery upgrade project was no longer feasible.

After receiving the battery sub-packs, staff learned that the units require software programming before they can be installed and utilized on County Connection's coaches. With Xalt no longer available to provide technical support, staff was directed to Renewance, a company that has been managing battery-related support and recall work involving former Xalt products.

Renewance has completed an initial on-site evaluation of County Connection's fleet and is scheduled to return for additional diagnostic work. During their evaluation, it was discovered that Xalt had previously upgraded the battery software on County Connection's coaches. At this time, neither County Connection nor Renewance has access to the proprietary software necessary to communicate with and program the replacement battery sub-packs.

Renewance is currently working to develop a workaround that would allow communication with the coaches and enable the programming of the replacement batteries. Until a solution is identified, the Authority's ability to utilize the newly acquired battery inventory remains limited.

In addition to battery-related issues, the Authority continues to experience intermittent communication failures between the fleet and the WAVE inductive charging system. Coaches may successfully charge for several route cycles and then unexpectedly lose communication with the charger, preventing charging operations from occurring.

Staff has been coordinating with WAVE to schedule an on-site diagnostic visit. However, the ongoing battery issues have complicated troubleshooting efforts, as both systems are closely interconnected.

Staff continues to work closely with Gillig, BAE Systems, Renewance, WAVE, and other partners to identify solutions and restore fleet reliability. While progress has been made in understanding the root causes of the issues, the closure of Xalt has created substantial technical and logistical challenges that continue to impact the Authority's ability to maintain reliable BEB service. Until these core foundational issues can be addressed, staff is reluctant to invest additional funds in the current battery electric bus fleet. Staff will continue to update the committee and Board as developments are made.

Director Hillis returned to the meeting at 9:46 a.m.

Farebox Retrofit Project\*  
Resolution No. 2027-05

Marcel Longmire, Director of Maintenance, gave a brief background stating that County Connection has utilized the current Genfare Transview farebox system for more than 20 years. Staff has done an excellent job maintaining the fareboxes and keeping them operational; however, obtaining replacement parts has become increasingly difficult as the equipment continues to age.

A new Genfare farebox starts at approximately \$20,000 per unit and includes features that are not necessary to County Connection bus operations. Due to the high cost of replacement fareboxes and mismatch in technology, staff began evaluating alternative fare collection solutions. One of the primary challenges in identifying a replacement system is the Authority's requirement that any solution be compatible with, or include, a secure vault collection system.

During the evaluation process, staff connected with Diamond Manufacturing, a company that manufactures manual fareboxes that operate using a simple dump-lever mechanism. While Diamond Manufacturing does not currently offer a vault collection system to accompany its fareboxes, the company presented a potential solution specifically designed to address County Connection's needs.

The proposed modification would utilize the Authority's existing Genfare Transview fareboxes by removing the electronic upper portion of the unit and replacing it with a manual Diamond Manufacturing attachment. This modification would allow fares to be deposited directly into the Authority's existing vault system, preserving infrastructure that remains fully operational.

Diamond Manufacturing currently serves transit agencies throughout all 50 U.S. States, as well as customers in Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and Guam. The company has demonstrated a long-term commitment to supporting its products and customers, providing confidence in the availability of future parts and technical support. Staff believes this solution provides a cost-effective and sustainable approach to addressing the Authority's fare collection needs while maximizing the value of existing assets and avoiding the substantial expense associated with procuring an entirely new farebox and vault system.

**MOTION:** Director Farley moved Board approval to adopt Resolution No. 2027-05, authorizing the General Manager or designee to execute procurement documents with Diamond Manufacturing to purchase 150 DMOO Retrofit Kits in an amount not to exceed \$367,375. Director Hillis seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

Aye: Directors Andersen, Diaz, Farley, Hillis, Hoffmeister, Noack, Rubio, Storer, Wilk and Worth

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Director Tatzin

Andy Smith, Director of Planning, informed the Board that the annual performance report for fixed routes provides a summary of key performance indicators and recent trends from July 2025 through June 2026. Overall, the total number of fixed-route passengers decreased slightly by 0.5% from FY 2025 to FY 2026. Total weekday ridership was down 0.4% and weekend ridership was up 0.5% over FY 2025. Farebox revenue increased substantially by 14.1% to \$4.01M, lifting the farebox recovery ratio to 9.9%. Additionally, safety metrics improved with less than one accident per 100,000 miles.

Strong recruitment efforts stabilized operator staffing, driving a 13.6% reduction in missed trips from 1,879 in FY 2025 to 1,624 in FY 2026 which represents 0.62% of the total scheduled trips. Simultaneously, on-time performance rose to 80.6%, supported by schedule adjustments and active Transit Signal Priority (TSP) projects in Walnut Creek and Concord.

From August 2025 through June 2026, County Connection implemented service changes across four bid periods to improve reliability, regional connectivity, and operational efficiency. The Fall Bid starting in August 2025 focused on enhancing connections at the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station under the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) TRANSFER Plan, adjusting departure and running times on local and express routes to improve on-time performance and operator breaks, and updating several school route schedules to align with new bell times. In November 2025, the Winter Bid introduced schedule adjustments on Route 99X to improve train connections at the Martinez Amtrak station alongside minor school route bell adjustments.

The Spring Bid in March 2026 featured a major realignment and frequency increase on Route 4 funded by an Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) grant, schedule modifications to weekend routes to combat traffic congestion and improve BART transfers, bus reallocations to relieve school overcrowding, and bus stop consolidations in Martinez. Finally, the Summer Bid in June 2026 addressed severe afternoon congestion by modifying local and express route schedules, consolidating select express trips, interlining operator assignments across eleven routes to maximize driver recovery time, and adding new bus stops in Concord and Martinez.

Clipper usage among fare-paying passengers continued to grow, driven by the rollout of Clipper 2.0, which enables riders to pay with a credit or debit card while benefiting from interagency transfer discounts. Enhanced discounts through the Clipper START and Clipper Youth programs, alongside broader adoption of the Clipper mobile app, also drove increased usage. Overall, Clipper adoption among fare-paying riders averaged 82.6%, surpassing the pre-COVID baseline of 76.4%.

#### Year End Paratransit Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2026 – Information Only

Rosa Noya, Manager of Accessible Services, explained that in FY26, LINK continued to provide reliable ADA paratransit service while operating fewer revenue miles and hours than in FY25. Vehicle Revenue Miles decreased 5.3% and Vehicle Revenue Hours decreased 6.9%. LINK Deadhead Miles increased by 16.7%, while Deadhead Hours decreased by 2.9%, from FY25 to FY26.

LINK Ridership declined modestly during FY26. Unlinked Passenger Trips decreased 4.6%, while Passenger Miles Traveled remained nearly unchanged, declining just 0.3%. At the same time, average passenger trip length increased 5.1%, from 12.14 to 12.76 miles. ADA eligibility activity also increased, with 680 determinations completed compared with 618 in FY25, while denials remained low.

LINK Paratransit total program costs decreased by approximately 3.2%, from \$8.51 million in FY25 to \$8.24 million in FY26. This reduction was largely driven by a 4.8% decrease in direct contract costs, which more than offset an increase in other non-contract program costs. Although total costs declined, the cost per revenue hour increased from \$139.26 to \$144.80, or approximately 4.0%. Total cost per passenger trip increased from \$81.86 to \$83.06. Fare revenue increased by 11.7%, from approximately \$558,000 in FY25 to \$623,000 in FY26.

Overall service quality remained strong across several key performance areas. On-time performance was 93.3%, exceeding the 92% contractual standard, while productivity improved from 1.5 to 1.7 passengers per revenue hour. Capacity denials remained at zero, and lift availability was maintained at 100%. Employee turnover also improved, declining from 36% to 24%. Safety performance slightly decreased, with the preventable accident rate at 0.8 accidents per 100,000 miles, above the contractual standard of no more than 0.5.

Customer complaints increased from 1.3 to 2.6 per 1,000 trips, exceeding the standard of fewer than 2.0. Although FY26 complaints exceeded the contractual standard overall, performance improved considerably following elevated complaint levels early in the fiscal year. Complaint rates declined during the second half of the year, including two consecutive months (January and February 2026) below the 2.0 per 1,000-trip standard, indicating improved service consistency compared with the earlier months of FY26.

For FY26, staff budgeted approximately \$9.5 million for LINK operations, \$2.0 million for LAVTA Dial-a-Ride, and \$896,309 for other associated costs. Based on preliminary, unaudited year-end figures, actual LINK costs were approximately 13% below budget, while LAVTA costs were approximately 9% below budget. Lower LAVTA ridership and service levels, however, contributed to increases in costs per trip and cost per revenue hour.

The OSR program, including partner costs, was budgeted at approximately \$1.2 million. Preliminary, unaudited FY26 costs totaled approximately \$1.6 million, exceeding the budgeted amount. These variances have been incorporated into the FY27 financial outlook.

#### **Closed Session:**

The Board went into Closed Session at 10:02 a.m.

Public Employee Performance Evaluation; Conference with Labor Negotiator  
(pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957 and 54957.6)

Designated Representative: General Manager

Position: Legal Counsel

Public Employee Performance Evaluation: Conference with Labor Negotiator  
(pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957, 54957.6)

Agency Designated Representative: Board Chair

Position: General Manager

Following the Closed Session, the Board may consider potential actions to amend the Employment Agreement of the General Manager

#### **Open Session:**

The Board came back into Open Session at 10:47 a.m.

Report of Action(s) taken during the Closed Session – the Board completed the evaluations of Legal Counsel and General Manager

Consideration of Proposed Legal Services Rate Adjustment  
Resolution No. 2027-06

MOTION: Director Noack moved Board approval to adopt Resolution No. 2027-06 authorizing the following rate adjustments:

|  | <b>Remainder of<br/>FY 2027</b>  | <b>FY 2028</b>                | <b>FY 2029</b>                |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|  | <i>Effective October 1, 2026</i> | <i>Effective July 1, 2027</i> | <i>Effective July 1, 2028</i> |

|                |       |       |       |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Partner        | \$525 | \$540 | \$556 |
| Senior Counsel | \$504 | \$519 | \$534 |
| Associate      | \$453 | \$466 | \$480 |
| Paralegal      | \$272 | \$280 | \$288 |
| Law Clerk      | \$334 | \$344 | \$354 |

Director Rubio seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

The Chair summarized the proposed terms of the amendment to the Employment Agreement of the General Manager.

**MOTION:** Director Noack moved Board approval to adopt Resolution No. 2027-07 authorizing an increase in the compensation of the General Manager from \$271,090 to \$281,934, effective July 1, 2026, and a twelve-month extension to the term of the General Manager's Employment Agreement. Director Wilk seconded the motion, and it received the following vote of approval:

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

## **BOARD COMMUNICATION:**

**ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Storer adjourned the regular Board meeting at 10:49 a.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Lathina Hill

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

Date: October 5, 2026