



COMMITTEE FOR TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

Wednesday, October 11, 2006

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) was called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Chairperson Morrow in Building A, Auditorium, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Catherine Stephanie, staff aide representing Cindy Chavez (Ex-Officio Board Liaison)
Linda Gallo
Sandra Gouveia
David Grant
Katie Heatley (Ex-Officio)
Troy Hernandez
Marjorie Jensen
Martin Lasich
Allen F. Marcillet
Laura Michels
Aaron Morrow, Chairperson
Barbara Rhodes, First Vice Chairperson
Thomas Slack
Barbara Stahl, Second Vice Chairperson
Randy Tamez

Members Absent

Emma Eljas
David Julian

A quorum was present.

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The Committee received introductions from the audience including: Jim Lawson, Government Affairs Manager; Connie Langford, City of San Jose Senior Council;

Carol Silveria, Interested Citizen; Evelynn Tran, Senior Assistant Counsel; Nancy Coss-Fitzwater, Operations Policy and Administrative Manager; Julia Jones, VTA Accessible Services; Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager; David Terrazas, VTA Marketing and Customer Service Manager; and David Lasich, VTA Facilities and Maintenance.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

4. Board of Directors Report

Catherine Stephanie, staff aide representing Cindy Chavez (Ex-Officio Board Liaison) reported that at the October 5, 2006 Board of Directors Meeting, the Board recognized Paulette Mulligan, VTA Accessible Services, as employee of the Month for October 2006.

Member Lasich took his seat at 1:07 p.m.

5. Committee Staff Report

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and Staff Liaison, reported that the 2006 American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Conference was successful.

Ms. Williams introduced Evelynn Tran, Senior Assistant Counsel, who provided a brief report on the Ethics Training.

Ms. Tran commented that a law went into effect this year that requires local agency officials of legislative bodies to take two hours of Ethics Training. As defined by the statute, the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) is required to participate in the Ethics Training before the end of this year. If a member continues to participate and hold a seat on a legislative body then the member is required to take the training every two years.

Ms. Tran stated that the VTA has arranged two training sessions through the Santa Clara County Counsels Office for the Ethics Training, which will be held on Wednesday, October 25, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. and Thursday, October 26, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. The training sessions will be held at the County Government Building, Board of Supervisors Chambers, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose. Ms. Tran noted that an Ethics Training session sign up sheet was available and being distributed to the members.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance for VTA to provide the Committee with the entire year to participate in the Ethics Training sessions. Ms. Tran responded that VTA staff is working to provide the training to the Committee members as well as reviewing other options with other government agencies to coordinate the training sessions.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes queried if members were able to participate in the training sessions by telephone or on-line. First Vice Chairperson Rhodes reported that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is scheduled to conduct an Ethics Training session on December 11, 2006.

Ms. Tran responded that in accordance with the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) and the Attorney General's Office requires proof of Ethics Training certification from the Committee members. Ms. Tran indicated that staff is looking into on-line training through the Institute of Local Governments. The on-line self-study requires the member to print the materials, read the information, and print a copy of the test to complete, then mail the completed test to be processed. If the test is passed, the certification is sent back to the individual.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes queried if VTA would pay the cost for the on-line self-study training session. Jim Lawson, Government Affairs Manager, responded, "yes" that VTA would pay the cost.

Member Slack queried how Committee members would be notified regarding confirmation of their participation in the Ethics Training session. Ms. Tran responded that she has sent a notification to the members regarding the reservation for the training session.

Chairperson Morrow queried if a member participated in the County of Santa Clara's Ethics Training session would it satisfy the requirements. Ms. Tran responded, "yes", noting that the member needs to submit the certification to VTA's Office of the Board Secretary to be recorded.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley queried if there was a shortage of staff to conduct the training or if the training could be conducted instead of a CTA Meeting. Ex-Officio Member Heatley asked what would prohibit combining the training session with the CTA Meeting. Ms. Tran responded that staff would look into this type of option since it would involve obtaining a provider who has gone through the certification with the Attorney General's Office and FPPC.

Member Tamez referenced the electronic mail (e-mail) regarding the Ethics Training for local agency officials who are eligible to receive reimbursements for expenses and asked if members refused the travel reimbursement would they no longer be recognized as officials. Ms. Tran responded that if VTA provides reimbursement to any member then all the members are required to participate in the Ethics Training.

Member Tamez requested that staff distribute the statue related to how individuals are determined and recognized as officials. Ms. Tran indicated that she would distribute the Statue as requested.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes asked why an individual would have to take a test for the certification for the on-line training session. Ms. Tran responded that the on-line self-study training session from the Institute of Local Governments requires the test for the certification and that she is not aware of the requirements from other providers for on-line Ethics Training.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley emphasized the need for Ethics Training instructors to be aware of accessibility issues and that the material is in an appropriate accessible format for individuals with disabilities. Ms. Williams responded that staff is aware and is currently working to address these issues.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance of ensuring that on-line training material is not in Portable Data Format (PDF) to ensure that visually impaired individuals are able to access the information.

Member Slack expressed concern that visually impaired individuals will miss vital information if it is presented in a power point presentation. Ms. Tran responded that she has been working collaboratively with Santa Clara County Counsel regarding accessibility issues as it relates to individuals with disabilities and the Ethics Training sessions. The Santa Clara County Counsel will convert the Ethics Training power point presentation to an electronic format and that information will be forwarded to the members who require electronic and large print format for the training session.

Member Slack queried if members receive the training session information electronically are they required to attend the training. Ms. Tran responded, "yes" that the training must be presented by an attorney in order to receive the certification.

Member Slack stressed the importance that the presentation be tailored to accommodate individuals with visual impairments.

6. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Morrow commented that Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) is requesting a public comment period related to these Section 5310 Program Project Committee.

Ms. Williams stated that the FTA requires comment from the public on how to better inform the public regarding the 5310 Local Review Program Project process.

Chairperson Morrow encouraged members to participate and provide comment on the 5310 Local Review Program Project process. Chairperson Morrow stated that the public comment period closes on November 6, 2006 and requested that staff distribute the information to the Committee as reference. Chairperson Morrow encouraged the members to send their comments via electronic mail (e-mail) and added that additional information regarding the scheduling of the FTA Section 5310 Program Project Committee meeting would be forthcoming.

Member Tamez queried about the 5310 Local Review Program Project and if this is a new process. Chairperson Morrow responded that this request is for new information regarding a different process.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes and Member Tamez requested that the Committee receive the entire documentation as reference. Member Gouveia suggested that a link to the information be sent to the Committee for review. Ms. Williams responded that staff would send the link to the Committee.

Chairperson Morrow reported that the 2006 APTA Conference was a positive experience and assisted in providing an overall better understanding of the transit system in the United States. Chairperson Morrow reported that he was able to attend an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) roundtable event pertaining to court cases presented by attorneys from Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA). The attorney representatives from DART and RGRTA provided an overview on the litigation in the late 1990's and the changes after

the litigation. The goal is to have more discussions and roundtable sessions at future APTA Conferences related to paratransit since it is becoming a bigger issue around the country.

Chairperson Morrow reported that CTA Workplan Subcommittee comprised of Ex-Officio Member Heatley, Member Tamez, and himself met to identify projects or programs that the Committee would like to see implemented in next year's budget for Accessible Services.

Chairperson Morrow reported that the CTA Workplan Subcommittee identified the need for additional bus shelters and suggested that the CTA Workplan for next year's budget for Accessible Services be agendaized for a future CTA meeting to obtain Committee members' comments.

Member Tamez reported that the CTA Workplan Subcommittee identified the three following areas of concern: bus shelters; paying for travel and mobility training; and funding for individuals who utilize paratransit, but either do not have the funds to pay for the service, or are deemed ineligible for the service. Chairperson Morrow recommended that the CTA Workplan for next year's budget for Accessible Services be agendaized for the November 8, 2006 CTA Meeting.

Member Grant suggested that OUTREACH customer service provide the same service hours as VTA's customer service and the funding be provided by the budget for Accessible Services. Member Grant noted that OUTREACH customer service hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. while VTA's customer service hours are 5:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Chairperson Morrow responded that this suggestion could be considered as part of the areas of concern.

7. Minutes of September 13, 2006

Member Grant referenced the September 13, 2006 CTA Meeting Minutes, Page 13 of 14, noting Member Grant requested staff provide information regarding how many shelters VTA has implemented from customer requests without Clear Channel. Member Grant queried how many bus stops have been implemented based on customer requests and not Clear Channel. Member Grant requested that Accessible Services provide the information to the Committee.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes referenced the correspondence regarding the bus shelters at Space Park and Scott and stressed the importance to provide a shelter and garbage can for individuals who utilize transit service. Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager, responded that staff performed an initial review and determined that the ridership was low but staff is reassessing the matter. Mr. Capps stated that there are physical restraints but staff has contacted the shelter provider to determine if there is something to address the restraint issue on this specific site.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance to have a shelter on both sides of the street. Mr. Capps responded that there are many restraints that may prevent the construction of the shelters but stated that the situation is currently being reassessed.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance to encourage individuals with disabilities who currently use paratransit to use fixed route by providing certain amenities to assist the customers by making transportation more user friendly.

Member Grant stated that the Space Park and Scott bus stops provide service to a large number of customers. Member Grant referenced bus shelters located at Central Expressway and Walsh and queried if the Walsh bus shelter could be moved to the Space Park and Scott bus stop since it is not actively utilized at Walsh.

Member Grant commented that the Space Park and Scott bus stops accommodate three bus routes and warrant a bus shelter to accommodate the large number of customers who utilize the services.

Chairperson Morrow called for point of order and noted the extensive discussion on the bus stop shelters. Chairperson Morrow suggested that the bus stop shelters be placed on a future agenda if the Committee would like to pursue further discussion on the matter.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley clarified that the bus stop shelters should have been discussed during the Chairperson's Report related to the CTA Workplan Subcommittee. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that she has submitted to Ms. Williams the 25 frequent locations for transit service and OUTREACH's top six sites for weekday ridership.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance of the correlation between OUTREACH clients who may be able to utilize fixed route but do not due to the absence of bus shelters. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that OUTREACH has data that may be beneficial in influencing ridership statistics and offered VTA information on OUTREACH's ridership transit patterns.

Member Grant left the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

M/S/C (Tamez/Marcillet) to approve the Minutes of September 13, 2006 as amended.

BUSINESS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS/GENERAL MANAGER

8. Nominating Committee for CTA Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson, and Second Vice Chairperson for 2007

Chairperson Morrow asked for volunteers to serve on a Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will accept names of CTA Members who wish to be considered as candidates for the positions, which will be forwarded to the Committee for consideration.

Chairperson Morrow appointed Members Grant, Hernandez, Slack and Second Vice Chairperson Stahl to the Nominating Committee for CTA Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson, and Second Vice Chairperson for 2007.

9. Measure A

Jim Lawson, Government Affairs Manager, provided a brief overview on the 2000 Measure A. Mr. Lawson commented on the funding that might be available through the 2000 Measure A, noting that Santa Clara County is a self-help county by

providing tax revenues to build transportation infrastructure for transit and roadways. Mr. Lawson commented that the County of Santa Clara's first experience with the self-help tax revenues was in 1984 followed by a 1996 Measure, which was recently completed; then again in 2000, the voters supported the 2000 Measure A with the intention to collect tax revenues in May 2006.

Mr. Lawson commented that the 2000 Measure A was approved by the voters by 70.6 percent and achieved a 2/3-majority vote, which was allowable under the law at that time. The VTA Board of Directors placed the 2000 Measure A on the ballot. The 2000 Measure A was placed on the ballot with specific transit related projects and could not be used for highway or other related projects. Therefore, as a result there are constraints to only use the projects that were mentioned on the ballot measure.

NOTE: M/S/C MEANS MOTION SECONDED AND CARRIED AND, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Lawson continued that 18-months ago the VTA Board of Directors began a process regarding the projects that would be included in the 2000 Measure A Program since it had become apparent that there were other project needs. The VTA Board of Directors identified that there was a need for senior and disabled services and programmed a total of \$97 million over the life of the 2000 Measure A Program as a line item in the Revenue and Expenditure Plan. The Senior/Disabled Services Program projects would be utilized for senior and disabled services, but the services were not defined. The source of the funds would be allocated from additional revenues over and above the existing 2000 Measure A.

Mr. Lawson stated that the \$97 million, which is in inflated dollars and equates to an equivalent of \$2 million annually today. As VTA proceeds forward with the implementation of the 2000 Measure A Program projects, the Board will be looking at ways to close the revenue gap and secure the funding that would include the Senior/Disabled Services Program projects as well as the roadway and service improvements.

Mr. Lawson commented that among the methodologies to be used is an attempt for an additional sales tax measure on the 2008 ballot, assistance for the current infrastructure bonds, transit related development, and other state and local funds as they are identified.

Mr. Lawson stated that the funding for the 2000 Measure A Program for the Senior/Disabled Services Program and the roadway and service improvements is not available at this time but the goal is that it will be available in the future. Mr. Lawson suggested that CTA look at ways to identify and rate projects to forward to the Board of Directors for consideration.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley queried if the funding for the projects is solely for capital projects or would there be flexibility for operating projects. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance for the CTA Workplan Subcommittee to be aware of the restrictions and what type of projects would be acceptable to receive funding for the Senior/Disabled Services Program. Mr. Lawson responded that the source of the funding has not been identified at this time but if VTA placed a measure on the 2008 ballot it would require a 2/3 majority vote to pass and the funding could be used for services,

operations, and up to and including roadway issues because since 2000 legislation was passed that would allow VTA to place these services on the 2008 ballot.

Member Slack queried if the funding would be utilized for only new programs or could funding be utilized for existing programs, such as OUTREACH. Mr. Lawson responded that the additional funding could be available for senior and disabled programs but the program projects were not defined. The VTA Board of Directors would be looking to the CTA Committee for recommendations as to how the funding would be allocated.

Second Vice Chairperson Stahl queried if staff was requesting that the Committee provide a list of the possible projects. Mr. Lawson responded that at this time it is appropriate to look at a method to identify projects, extend outreach to the community, and set the groundwork and foundation to identify projects.

Member Tamez suggested that local social service agencies be solicited for input regarding their primary needs and noted that the CTA Workplan Subcommittee has identified four projects. Member Tamez stressed the importance for the CTA Workplan Subcommittee to meet on a regular basis to continue to solicit projects so when the funding becomes available then the Committee would have a comprehensive project list available for consideration.

Chairperson Morrow suggested that the CTA Workplan Subcommittee discuss the meeting schedule off-line and invited fellow Committee Members to participate in the CTA Workplan Subcommittee.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley referenced a ten-year County and City of San Jose study that applies to senior transportation, paratransit, fixed route, and all types of issues and each city has an element or plan that applies to the study. Ex-Officio Member Heatley suggested that the CTA Workplan Subcommittee could work with the study information since the project needs are compiled then the Subcommittee could build on that information foundation.

Mr. Lawson stated that this is exactly the type of process that the Committee needs to go through to identify the project sources.

Member Slack queried if the CTA Workplan Subcommittee was the only participant working to identify the project sources. Mr. Lawson responded that the CTA Committee is the only participant working to identify the project sources, which will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for consideration but suggested that the Subcommittee may present the information to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) or Policy Advisory Committee (PAC).

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance to improve fixed route services. Chairperson Morrow responded that the CTA Workplan Subcommittee would work to identify all the issues and concerns that need to be addressed to improve transit services.

Mr. Lawson stated that VTA is working to address transportation issues with the limited resources available.

Member Slack asked who were the members of the CTA Workplan Subcommittee. Chairperson Morrow responded that Member Tamez, Ex-Officio Member Heatley,

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes, and he are the members of the CTA Workplan Subcommittee.

Member Slack asked if seats were available on the CTA Workplan Subcommittee and if he could receive information on the Subcommittee meeting schedule. Chairperson Morrow responded that seats are still available on the Subcommittee and that the meeting schedule would be sent to him.

The Agenda was taken out of order.

Chairperson Morrow commented that Agenda Item # 10., Mobility Device Securement would be moved towards the end of the Agenda.

11. Accessible Services Customer Comment Summary Information

Celeste Oda, Accessible Services Representative, and David Terrazas, Marketing and Customer Service Manager, provided a brief overview on the Accessible Services Customer Comment Summary Information. Ms. Oda commented that at prior CTA Meetings, the Committee has asked for information about the number and types of Accessible Service customer comments and complaints VTA receives and processes through the Customers Are Resources for Excellence (CARE) complaint resolution database. Accessible Services and Customer Services prepared a summary information tracking form about the customer comments and complaints VTA Customer Service staff received from persons with disabilities or their representatives between June 1 and September 19, 2006.

Ms. Oda stated that the tracking form notes the date when the comment and/or complaint are received, the date that staff reviews the information summary CARE report, the status, and the resolution. In the past comments and complaints would be forwarded to the Marketing Customer Service Department where the information would be reviewed and distributed through out the agency for a resolution. Ms. Oda stated that Accessible Services has stepped in the process and is tracking all the comments and/or complaints. A report is distributed weekly to all top management and Marketing Customer Service, which have been working out well.

Member Slack queried about the average turnaround time from a comment and/or complaint to a resolution. Ms. Oda responded that it averages between two to three weeks. Mr. Terrazas stated that depending on the nature of the complaint received it could be three days. Mr. Terrazas noted that different complaints that require further research could require a longer period of time for a resolution.

Member Slack stated that he was impressed by the turnaround from a complaint to a resolution and thanked staff for their diligent work to address concerns in a timely manner.

Member Tamez stressed the importance for Information Service Representative (ISR's) to call back customers regarding the status or complaint resolution. Member Tamez requested that staff provide information to the Committee regarding the ISR's calling customers back with information on the complaint resolution. Mr. Terrazas responded that any customer who requests an ISR call back receives a call back with the intent to have the ISR call back the customer within two business days.

Member Tamez referenced ISR's providing comments to the customers and stressed the importance to retrain ISR's to accept customer information without providing their comments. Mr. Terrazas apologized for any editorializing from the ISR's and stated that the ISR's should be entering the information into the CARE report, staff will review and process the information, and respond to the customer with a call back.

Mr. Terrazas stated that staff will have additional training throughout the year as well as training with Accessible Services. Mr. Terrazas commented that VTA's Customer Service receives telephone calls, comments via the website, and in person comments, which total over 100,000 contacts each month. These comments and/or complaints are processed by the Marketing and Customer Service Management Analysis who forwards the comments to each division to be addressed. Mr. Terrazas stated that VTA's Customer Service is open from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and Customer Service is closed on Sunday and most holidays.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes noted that Chairperson Morrow would be leaving the meeting and noted that it was his birthday. The Committee extended well wishes to Chairperson Morrow on his birthday.

Chairperson Morrow left the meeting at 2:05 p.m.,

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes presided over the remainder of the meeting.

Second Vice Chairperson Stahl queried about how general comments and/or complaints are processed. Mr. Terrazas responded that all comments and/or complaints are processed in the Customer Service Department but if they are received by another department or division then the information is routed to Customer Service.

Member Slack queried about the 100,000 contacts Customer Service receives each month. Mr. Terrazas responded that Customer Service receives over 100,000 calls into the service center but less than a percent of those calls are actual concerns that require follow-up. Mr. Terrazas stated that most of the calls are requests for transportation schedule and service information as well as trip planning information.

Member Slack queried about the number of customer complaints VTA receives in one month. Mr. Terrazas responded that total annually customer complaints equals less than one percent so it would estimate to 300 customer complaints per month.

Member Slack queried if Customer Service was staffed to address the calls or was the department overwhelmed. Mr. Terrazas responded that Customer Service is staffed to address the calls and VTA as an entire organization is committed to respond to issues and concerns. Mr. Terrazas stated that calls are routed to each department and division to be addressed.

Member Marcillet expressed his appreciation and thanked staff for their diligent work to have a system and process in place to address and respond to issues and concerns. Member Marcillet asked if the goal was to respond to the complaints or if the goal was to reach zero complaints. Ms. Williams responded that as a result of the review of CARE reports there has been operator retraining due to some of the issues and concerns.

Member Marcillet asked if VTA's goal is to identify and correct issues to have resolutions. Ms. Williams responded, "yes".

Mr. Terrazas stressed the importance for staff to receive information and comments from the public regarding issues and concerns to ensure that they are addressed.

Member Tamez requested that the Committee receive information on the types of complaints received by Customer Service. Mr. Terrazas responded that the attachment in the Committee Agenda Packet has information regarding the types of identified items of concern. Mr. Terrazas stated that he would work with Ms. Williams to provide the Committee with the information requested.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes requested that an update on VTA's website be agendaized for the November 8, 2006 CTA Meeting.

Member Slack requested that the Committee agendaize the type of customer complaint request for the November 8, 2006 CTA Meeting to ensure that the Committee receives a formal report on the major categories of complaints. Ms. Williams restated that the Committee requested information on major categories of complaints related to individuals with disabilities.

Member Tamez requested information on the number of complaints received by individuals with disabilities. Mr. Terrazas restated that the Committee requested information on the total number of calls received by customers who self identify themselves as individuals with disabilities and the percentage of each of the type of categories.

10. Mobility Device Securement

Doug Cross, Independent Consultant, provided a brief overview on the Mobility Device Securement. Mr. Cross commented that he was hired to address the sensitivity portion of the mobility device securement training and to make recommendations to improve operator training.

Mr. Cross has extensive experience as the Accessible Services Manager at Alameda – Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) and Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) as well as a Paratransit Operations Manager on fixed route services. Mr. Cross specializes in transit accessibility and paratransit and has 25 years of experience in operation policies, service design, public involvement, and governmental relations. Mr. Cross stated that he Chairs the Wheelchair Users Issues and Subcommittee of the American Public Transit Association (APTA), Advisory Board Member of the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for Wheelchair and Transportation Safety, Member of the Wheelchair and Transportation of America National Standards Institute, and Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America.

Mr. Cross commented that the goal is to assist the vehicle operators, Personal Care Attendants (PCA), and mobility device users to perform securement on the bus vehicles in a safe, quick, convenient, and easy manner. Mr. Cross stated that the hook style securement was the industry standard before the four-point tie down system was developed and is now the norm. The four-point tie down systems has evolved to utilize a hook instead of the lap belt, which makes it more convenient for securement. The hook type securement made it more difficult with many of the newer types of mobility devices.

Mr. Cross referenced other transit programs where mobility devices are pre-marked for securement to address concerns regarding the proper point to secure mobility devices in the bus vehicles. Customers would be able to have their mobility devices pre-taped at key strategic positions so then the bus operators know exactly where to secure the mobility device. Appointments are made with the customers to have the mobility devices pre-marked with a yellow and blue color scheme tapes at the proper point for securement then tethers are installed on the mobility devices.

Second Vice Chairperson Stahl queried if the pre-marking would take place on the bus vehicles. Mr. Cross responded, "no" that customers would make an appointment to come in and have staff pre-mark their mobility devices and noted that the process would be difficult to conduct on the bus vehicles.

Mr. Cross stated that the reason for the two color schemes is to ensure that there is no confusion regarding where the mobility devices are to be secured and to ensure that the securement is conducted correctly. Mr. Cross commented that the best effort concept is to utilize a tie down tether on mobility devices and is in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulation. The best long-term solution regarding securement is for individuals to purchase mobility devices with the newer style securement eyelets and loops but until that time the only way to bridge the gap is with the mobility device pre-marking and tether approach.

Member Grant took his seat at 2:30 p.m.

Second Vice Chairperson Stahl queried if the mobility device user is required to go to the office to have their mobility device pre-marked and have the tethers installed before they are able to board a bus. Mr. Cross responded that it is not a prerequisite but that it would be beneficial to make an appointment for the pre-marking and installation of the tethers on an individual's mobility device before boarding a bus vehicle.

Mr. Cross noted that part of the operators sensitivity training will be to not deny customers to ride the bus but are required to provide the customers with the information regarding the mobility device securement policy.

Second Vice Chairperson Stahl inquired if there was a cost for the pre-marking on the mobility devices. Mr. Cross responded that the pre-marking is free of cost to the customer.

Ms. Jones stated that VTA offers pre-marking and installation of the tethers on mobility devices during the Regional Transit Card (RTC) presentations conducted within the community. Staff will be available to assist customers with this service currently through the month of December 2006. Staff is currently working on brochures and announcements to get the information out to the community to encourage individuals to come in and have their mobility devices pre-marked.

Mr. Cross noted that there would be an on-going educational brochure that will be available and distributed to various venues to get the information out to the community regarding the pre-marking.

Member Slack stressed the importance to have legislation regarding the mobility device securement. Mr. Cross responded that there are voluntary industry standards for the four-point tie downs that are not contained or referred to in the ADA regulations. The

ADA regulations have a broader and general standard related to the tie downs in bus vehicles. The ADA does not contain any language on securement points or the design of mobility devices but it notes the definition of what a wheelchair is or scooter.

Mr. Cross stated that he is working on a national study on the status of wheelchairs and transportation by the National Easter Seals Society Project Action Program, which is funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The study is underway and the intent is to target the issue regarding legislation related to mobility device securement standards.

Mr. Cross commented on the idea of making the WC19 wheelchair model the standard mandatory wheelchair in California but this would be a difficult approach to get into the political process. Mr. Cross stated that there are many approaches being worked on but it is going to be multi idea approach that will take time. He encouraged the Committee to be active in the process.

Member Slack stressed the importance for the Committee to participate and provide assistance to pass a resolution. Mr. Cross responded that it is early in the process but noted that the Committee's participation would be valuable.

Member Grant expressed concern regarding the operator training related to the mobility device securement policy. Ms. Jones responded that staff has been working to address training and customer service sensitivity issues through the Verification of Transit Training (VTT) program to ensure that the operators are trained on the new process and procedures.

Ms. Jones stated that corrective measures would be taken when operators do not perform their duties and responsibilities. Ms. Jones noted that corrective measures follow a progressive discipline process and these issues will be addressed.

Member Grant queried if there was a tracking in place to determine what drivers are continually having problems performing their duties and responsibilities. Ms. Jones responded that the driver tracking system is the CARE System when the customers call in and make a complaint.

Member Michels left the meeting at 2:44 p.m.

Ms. Williams stated that when a driver receives a series of complaints is a progressive discipline policy process for the operators. Staff is not aware of the problems unless the customers make a complaint and have it tracked in the CARE System.

Member Grant queried about what threshold level is considered unacceptable. Mr. Terrazas responded that complaints would be referred to the Operations Department for follow-up. Ms. Williams stated that she is not aware if there is an established threshold of incidents and noted that staff would have to get back to the Committee with the information.

Member Grant and First Vice Chairperson Rhodes queried if staff could look into having a policy instituted regarding an established threshold of incidents that is considered unacceptable.

Member Tamez requested that the Mobility Device Securement be agendaized for a future CTA meeting for further Committee discussion.

Member Tamez suggested that the Marketing Department develop something to place on the bus vehicles and light rail to inform customers to call customer service to report complaints and/or incidents related to the drivers.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance to address the complaints related to the role out of this new policy program by the types of the complaints. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance to have an intervention early in the process to address the issues and concerns.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley queried about the policy as it relates to VTA's fleet structure. Mr. Cross responded that the policy of the mobility device pre-marking and tether program is to ensure that the program is available to the customers on a voluntary basis. Mr. Cross stressed the importance to have a large amount of education and training regarding the mobility device securement policy.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance to ensure that individuals are aware of the information as it relates to the program policy. Ms. Williams responded that staff has already been working to address concerns and staff does not anticipate many different issues except those issues related to the mandatory securement policy.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance to be aware of additional issues that need to be factored into the matter since it will impact and drive paratransit costs. Mr. Cross responded that the mandatory securement policy will be implemented on January 2007 and the paratransit and transit system will have to deal with this fact the best way that they can.

12. FY 2006 Preliminary Annual Transit Operations Performance Report (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006)

Joonie Tolosa, Operations Senior Management Analyst, provided a brief overview on the FY 2006 Preliminary Annual Transit Operations Performance Report (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006). Mr. Tolosa commented that the report summarizes the FY 2006 preliminary annual performance of VTA Transit Operations and that this is the first year-over-year ridership increase since FY 2001.

Both Bus and Light Rail ridership for FY 2006 has increased compared to the previous fiscal year with total ridership increasing by 5.8 percent and Light Rail ridership continues to be strong with 22.1 percent improvement in total boardings in FY 2006.

Mr. Tolosa commented that factors that can be attributed to the increase include the introduction of Bus Rapid Line 522, Vasona Light Rail, and various marketing events in Downtown San Jose, such as the Grand Prix Event.

The preliminary total transit operating expense for FY 2006 increased 6.8 percent to \$245.1 million due to wage increase contractual obligations.

Mr. Tolosa commented that the estimated fare revenue collected was \$34.3 million, up 7.1 percent compared to FY 2005 and the increase was primarily due to increased ridership and increased average fare revenue.

Paratransit ridership increased by 7.5 percent from 912,668 in FY 2005 to 981,098 in FY 2006. Mr. Tolosa stated that FY 2006 was the first complete year that VTA provided free transportation for eligibility interviews and appeals. The VTA Eligibility Ride Program recorded 8,854 one-way trips, which were 7,620 more than FY 2005.

The FY 2006 net operating cost for paratransit was \$25,042,639, or 7.0 percent higher than the net operating cost recorded during FY 2005. The increase is due to increased ridership, the 3 percent increase in the contractual rate paid to service providers, and the cost of fuel.

Mr. Tolosa commented that the FY 2006 net cost per Paratransit passenger trip was \$25.53 and is 0.5 percent less than the \$25.65 net cost per trip recorded in FY 2005; despite the net operating cost increase of 7.0 percent.

Member Grant queried about the numbers reported on the operating costs per hour, noting that the numbers are totally different than the numbers provided to the Committee Members via electronic mail (e-mail). Mr. Tolosa responded that the FY 2006 numbers are based on the National Transit Database (NTD) reports. Mr. Tolosa stated that the Committee's request was for a comparison of the operating cost per hour to Bay Area transit. The FY 2006 report for the NTD has not been finalized since VTA is currently in the process of reporting the information to the NTD. Mr. Tolosa stated that the numbers being reported are for FY 2006.

Member Grant stated that the numbers provided in the report are \$158 and the numbers reported in the e-mail are \$134, which is a \$24 difference. Mr. Tolosa responded that the numbers are based on the NTD and the information in the report is used for internal reports presented to the Committee. Mr. Tolosa stated that the way VTA reports to the NTD is not exactly the same way it is reported in the internal reports.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that the reporting should be reported the same to the NTD and to the Committee. Mr. Tolosa responded that the NTD and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have different requirements on how VTA reports information and how VTA decides to measure its performance.

Member Grant queried about the numbers provided in the report. Mr. Tolosa responded that the numbers are based on cost per hour and the numerator is the cost, which is the same in both reports. Mr. Tolosa stated that the numerator, which is the cost per hour is the same but the denominator that is provided is different in the way it is presented to the NTD. The NTD requests the actual hours are provided and VTA is required to provide the information using a formula based on the requirements of the NTD.

Member Jensen and Tamez left the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and the quorum was lost and a Committee of the Whole was declared.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance for the information to be the same and not have two sets of different numbers that are stating the same information but stating it differently. Mr. Tolosa responded that the NTD changes its policies and VTA has decided that this is the methodology that VTA is going to report the information to the Committees and the Board of Directors. The method VTA reports to the NTD is separate.

13. RIDE Task Force Final Report

The RIDE Task Force Final Report was deferred.

14. Operator Training

The Operator Training was deferred.

OTHER

15. CTA Transit System Ridership Report

The CTA Transit System Ridership Report was deferred.

16. CTA Workplan

The CTA Workplan was deferred.

17. Announcements

Second Vice Chairperson Stahl expressed appreciation and thanked staff for their diligent work to clean up a bus stop.

Member Gouveia announced that this was Member Marcillet last meeting representing Community Options on CTA. Jeanette Law would serve as the representative on Community Options next term on CTA. The Committee Members extended well wishes to Member Marcillet.

18. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee of the Whole adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle M. Garza, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors