



COMMITTEE FOR TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

Wednesday, November 8, 2006

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) was called to order at 1:08 p.m. by Chairperson Morrow in Building A, Auditorium, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Emma Eljas
Linda Gallo
Sandra Gouveia
David Grant
Katie Heatley (Ex-Officio)
Troy Hernandez
Marjorie Jensen
David Julian
Martin Lasich
Aaron Morrow, Chairperson
Barbara Rhodes, First Vice Chairperson
Thomas Slack
Barbara Stahl, Second Vice Chairperson
Randy Tamez

Members Absent

Adam Byrnes, staff aide representing Cindy Chavez (Ex-Officio Board Liaison)
Allen F. Marcillet
Laura Michels

A quorum was present.

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The Committee received introductions from the audience including: Donna Sanchez, Interested Citizen; Terry Applegate, Interested Citizen; Nancy Coss-Fitzwater, Operations Policy and Administrative Manager; Sam Lau, Operations Deputy Director;

Mark Thomas, Technical Training Supervisor; Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer; William Chu, Interested Citizen; Paulette Mulligan, Accessible Services; and David Ledwitz, Accessible Services.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Sandra Gouveia, Interested Citizen, expressed concern related to complaints from San Jose Community College students regarding the lack of bus stop shelters at First and Keyes and Fruitdale and South Bascom Avenues. Ms. Gouveia stated that these two areas provide service to a large number of customers who utilize the services.

Donna Sanchez, Interested Citizen, expressed concern related to safety issues near Quail Hollow Mobile Home Park. Ms. Sanchez stated that there is no cross walk available so individuals need to crossover light rail tracks near Hamilton Street onto Bascom. Ms. Sanchez requested that a yellow strip marking be placed on the ramp curbs to provide assistance for seniors and individuals with visual impairments.

Ms. Sanchez expressed concern that on occasion the bells and lights do not work when the light rail vehicles enter the Tamien Station. Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and Staff Liaison, responded that the complaints are being researched and staff would follow up with the status.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes requested that the safety concerns be agendized for a future CTA Meeting to ensure that the issues are being addressed.

Randy Tamez, Interested Citizen, expressed concern that VTA staff may have violated the Brown Act at the October 13, 2006 CTA Meeting by allowing discussion on an item that was not posted on the agenda. Mr. Tamez stated that extensive discussion was allowed on the Ethics Training and requested that VTA forward the information to the appropriate authority to determine if VTA violated the Brown Act. Mr. Tamez expressed concern that staff allows individuals to present an item that is not properly agendized to the public.

Mr. Tamez requested that staff provide detailed contact information on VTA Board of Directors public mailing address, electronic mail (e-mail) address, and telephone numbers to the Committee.

Chairperson Morrow referenced the discussion at the October 13, 2006 CTA Meeting regarding the bus stop at Space Park and Scott Boulevard and stressed the importance to provide a shelter in the area. Chairperson Morrow recommended that the bus stop shelters be placed on a future agenda to ensure further discussion on the matter and status update to ensure that this stop is better accessible for individuals with disabilities.

4. Board of Directors Report

The Board of Directors Report was deferred.

5. Committee Staff Report

Ms. Williams reported that Mr. Ledwitz provided comments to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Department of Transportation (DOT) Notice of Proposed Rule

Making (NPRM) regarding the Federal Register Notice on the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom and Elderly Individuals Programs last week.

Ms. Williams commented that VTA and Member Julian participated in the Abilities Expo for Northern California held on November 3 – 5, 2006 at Santa Clara Convention Center. Ms. Williams added that conference badges were distributed to individuals who participated in the pre-marking of their mobility devices. Ms. Williams stated that extra conference badges are available for distribution to Committee Members.

Member Slack queried if there were any display booths for visually impaired individuals or was it geared towards individuals with mobility disabilities. Member Julian responded that the Abilities Expo event was one of the lowest attended and there was not much diversity presented at the event. Member Julian stated that the Abilities Expo staff is planning to work collaboratively with him to have more participation at the next Abilities Expo event.

Member Slack expressed concern that the Abilities Expo events do not offer more display booths for visually impaired individuals.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance for the NPRM Subcommittee to have reviewed the public comment information before it was distributed to the FTA NPRM to ensure that adequate Committee input was received.

Member Julian requested that the JARC information be sent to him via regular mail.

Member Slack queried about the JARC information. Ms. Williams responded that the FTA NPRM requested public comment related to the JARC and New Freedom and Elderly Individuals Programs, and the Section 5310 Program Project.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that the Office of the Board Secretary sent the Federal Register Notice - JARC, New Freedom and Elderly Individuals Programs information to the Committee on October 17, 2006 and OUTREACH Paratransit Services responded as an agency. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that the three pieces of pending information were critically important to senior, disabled and low-income services in Santa Clara County.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that the JARC rules have changed dramatically over the years and Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU) expands many aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) so it needs to be looked at carefully.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley commented that the Section 5310 Program Project might fundamentally change the ability to receive vehicles. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that these three pieces are major issues of concern and will certainly impact services in Santa Clara County and California.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that at the last Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Elderly/Disabled Advisory Committee Meeting it was advised that the Section 5310 Program Project has been pushed back six months and Caltrans will be seeking input.

Ms. Williams noted that Mr. Ledwitz would be attending a meeting in Monterey, California on the pending programs and would provide an update to the Committee.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes requested that the update be provided in writing. Mr. Ledwitz responded that a verbal report would be presented at the December 13, 2006 CTA Meeting and the written report at the January 10, 2007 CTA Meeting.

6. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Morrow referenced the Monday, November 6, 2006 San Jose Mercury News on an article on VTA ridership growth to 40,000 per weekday in the Valley and expressed appreciation on the positive information. Chairperson Morrow stated that fixed route services needs to improve since it is the corner stone of VTA's system.

Chairperson Morrow referenced the Committee's previous request to the Marketing Department for information on accessible services expenses. Chairperson Morrow stated that the information is spread out with large gaps in the timeframe. Chairperson Morrow requested that Marketing Department staff provide additional information to the Committee at a future CTA Meeting.

Member Slack requested that either CTA or VTA write a letter to the Abilities Expo to request display booths for the visually impaired. First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that the letter should come from the Chief Executive of the Santa Clara Valley Blind Center. Member Slack suggested that both agencies should write a letter to the Abilities Expo.

7. Minutes of October 11, 2006

Terry Applegate referenced the October 11, 2006 CTA Meeting Minutes, Agenda Item #10., Mobility Device Securement and expressed concern regarding how the Mandatory Securement Policy will be implemented. Ms. Applegate inquired how out of town individuals would know that they need to have their mobility devices pre-marked in order to utilize bus services.

Chairperson Morrow asked how often the CARE Reports would be presented to the Committee. Ms. Williams responded that the CARE Reports would be presented on a quarterly basis.

M/S/C (Gouveia/Tamez) on a vote of 11 Ayes to 0 Noes to 2 Abstentions to approve the Minutes of October 11, 2006. Members Eljas and Julian abstained.

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

8. RIDE Task Force Final Report

Nancy Coss-Fitzwater, Operations Policy and Administrative Manager, provided a brief overview on the Ridership Initiative to Develop Energy-efficiency (RIDE) Task Force Final Report. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater commented that the RIDE Task Force has completed their work and produced a final report. The RIDE Task Force was initiated in June 2005 by a coalition of labor, environmental and community-based groups that were concerned

about the decline in ridership on VTA bus and light rail transit services. The coalition urged the Board of Directors to create a broad-based RIDE Task Force with the mission of exploring new, innovative, and cost-efficient methods of increasing ridership.

Ms. Coss-Fitzwater commented that in September 2005, the Board of Directors authorized the formation of the RIDE Task Force, as proposed by the coalition, and appointed Board Members Nora Campos and Jamie Matthews to serve as Co-Chairs. The Board of Directors appointed the Chairpersons of the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to the Task Force.

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

The Board of Directors requested that the RIDE Task Force's recommendations be compatible with Board adopted policies, including Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2030, the work of the Ad-Hoc Financial Stability Committee, and the Fare Policy, which includes a goal of 20 to 25 percent farebox recovery.

The RIDE Task Force met nine times between October 2005 and August 2006. RIDE Task Force meetings generally consisted of presentations, questions, feedback, and discussion by RIDE Task Force Members and members of the public. In December 2005 the RIDE Task Force meeting was devoted to a facilitated brainstorming session to capture ideas for improving ridership.

Ms. Coss-Fitzwater commented that the RIDE Task Force's accomplishments described in the Final Report are: Fare Affordability and Convenience, Better Information for Riders, Better Access to the System, and Service Improvements. The RIDE Task Force supported implementation of the an 8-Hour Light Rail Excursion Fare pilot program and Summer Blast Pass offering a 3-month discounted pass to youth. The RIDE Task Force encouraged VTA to secure a MTC Lifeline Transportation Grant to subsidize transit fares for low-income persons; to consider reducing fares for low-income, youth, seniors, and disabled persons; to consider reducing the cost of a Day Pass (currently priced at three times a single ride); to consider expanding the ECO Pass program to community colleges; and extending the ECO Pass program to additional regional transit services.

Ms. Coss-Fitzwater commented that the RIDE Task Force supported implementation of VTA website improvements; Real-Time Passenger Information; identify the need for a better trip planning tool and to continue discussions with Google regarding the use of its Transit Trip Planner for VTA; supported Marketing and promotional activities aimed at the transit dependent, such as, youth to instill a transit culture early by focusing on using transit as "the right thing to do"; encouraged VTA to take advantage of traffic congestion and limited parking conditions to promote transit as an alternative; review print and electronic materials to include information to facilitate transit use; and partner with other public and private entities to promote transit.

Ms. Coss-Fitzwater commented that the RIDE Task Force supported increases in the funding available to improve safe and accessible paths of travel for seniors and disabled people at bus stops, transit centers, and light rail platforms; to consider increasing the number of bus stop benches and shelters at higher-use bus stops and transit centers; to continue to work with cities to determine the need for curb cuts, sidewalks, crosswalks,

and pedestrian traffic signals to facilitate safe and accessible paths of travel; and to develop a program to increase the number of bike racks located at high volume transit modes.

Ms. Coss-Fitzwater commented that the RIDE Task Force encouraged VTA to complete the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) and implement market-based service improvements; explore additional opportunities to implement “Rapid” bus service, similar to the Rapid Line 522 service, which has increased ridership in the El Camino Real Corridor by over 15 percent; work with Valley Medical Center and other hospitals throughout the County to address the need for late-night transportation for patients, when transit service is not available; work with San Jose State University staff to better define and justify the transit needs of its students; continue to reallocate resources from low-productivity transit services to improve transit services that are likely to attract greater ridership; and work with connecting transit services to coordinate schedules and connections, and fare structures.

The RIDE Task Force recommended that VTA continue to review and consider the ridership ideas forwarded by the RIDE Task Force as VTA develops and implements transit service improvements and marketing, promotion, and community outreach plans. The RIDE Task Force recommended that as programs are developed, staff should identify costs, benefits, and specific measurable goals to be achieved so that the success of the program can be determined. The RIDE Task Force recommended that staff provide the Board of Directors with annual updates on the status of efforts to improve ridership including a comparison of goals and results.

Ms. Applegate commented that she was a member on the RIDE Task Force until April 2006. Ms. Applegate commented that the intent of the RIDE Task Force was that four organizations work together to develop ideas, proposals, and methods to increase ridership. Ms. Applegate expressed concern that the intent changed with staff’s involvement and it no longer encompassed the real ideas of the Task Force. Ms. Applegate stressed the importance to involve the community and consider their input in the Task Force.

Member Tamez queried about the RIDE Task Force ideas and asked what ideas has VTA committed to look into to provide to the community. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater responded that VTA is extending the 8-Hour Light Rail Excursion Fare pilot program, Summer Blast Pass, Google Transit Trip Planner, Website Improvements, and outreach to community colleges regarding the ECO Pass Program. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater commented that staff would consider the ridership ideas as staff develops and implements VTA’s budget process. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater stated that staff is looking at funding that should be earmarked for bus stop improvements.

Member Tamez queried about transit passes for low-income and the disabled. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater responded that VTA secured a MTC Lifeline Transportation Grant to subsidize transit fares for low-income persons. The Lifeline Transportation Grant is in the amount of \$1 million and would be implemented over three years for low-income individuals who are below two times the poverty limit. VTA is working with two non-profit agencies to implement the program and the funding would be used to purchase the monthly transit passes, which would be available to qualifying low-income individuals.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley commented that OUTREACH is a recipient of Lifeline Grant and stated that there is an obstacle to the implementation of the low-income monthly transit passes since the funding cannot be used to purchase transit passes. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that there may be other opportunities for VTA to reprogram the funding through a public process with MTC and Lifeline, but that type of grant funding cannot be used to purchase transit passes.

Member Tamez expressed concern and asked why VTA does not promote Paratransit Services, noting the wonderful service and how many individuals utilize the services.

Member Slack queried if a scenario was ever discussed related to implementing a hotline for a disabled individual to call if they were stranded without access to transportation in order to receive special transportation services. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater responded, “no”.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that this issue could be addressed with working with hospitals throughout the County for late-night transportation.

Member Gallo queried if VTA has attempted to prioritize the RIDE Task Force recommendation ideas and asked who determines the order of priority. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater responded that the RIDE Task Force decided not to prioritize their report and added that staff was directed to report annually to the Board of Directors.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stressed the importance to have annual updates forwarded to CTA in a timely manner to allow the Committee with the opportunity to provide input.

Member Tamez queried why the RIDE Task Force information was being presented to the CTA Committee. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater responded that all VTA Advisory Committee Chairpersons participated in the RIDE Task Force. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater stated that the report includes information related to better access to the transportation system, sidewalks, signals, benches, shelters, and other information of interest to the CTA Committee.

Chairperson Morrow asked if VTA received any data on the “Simple and Free” program. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater responded that the Marketing Department would have the data on the program and added that the information was referenced in the RIDE Task Force Meeting Minutes.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that there was an article on the program in an American Public Transportation Association (APTA) publication, which included a great amount of statistics.

Member Grant expressed his appreciation to the members of the RIDE Task Force Committee for their diligent work. Member Grant referenced the RIDE Task Force Final Report and queried if there was funding available for bus shelters. Ms. Coss-Fitzwater responded that at this time there is no funding available but this information is valuable to the Board of Directors to let them know where to allocate funding resources.

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

Member Slack provided a brief overview on the Nominating Committee Report for CTA Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson, and Second Vice Chairperson for 2007.

Member Slack noted Randy Tamez, Aaron Morrow, and David Julian's nomination for CTA Chairperson for 2007, and Barbara Rhodes and David Julian's nomination for Second Vice Chairperson for 2007.

10. Technology in Transit

Kathy Rolland, Technology Senior Management Analyst, provided a brief overview on the Technology in Transit. Ms. Rolland commented on the current status of the TransLink Project, noting that TransLink is the new more convenient way to pay for transit in the Bay Area.

Ms. Rolland stated that a customer would be able to ride every transit system from San Jose to Santa Rosa with just one card. The TransLink system is a joint effort of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit, Muni, SamTrans, VTA, and all other Bay Area transit agencies. MTC has funded the TransLink system's development through a combination of federal, state and regional funds. TransLink is managed by the TransLink Consortium, which includes MTC and the major transit agencies in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

Ms. Rolland commented that the TransLink system card is credit card sized and stores value in the form of electronic cash and transit passes. A customer would pay to ride the system by touching it to the card reader installed on buses or at the entrance to transit stations or terminals. The card reader would automatically deduct the correct fare and applies any appropriate discounts including transfers, which makes it convenient for customers related to having the exact change or manage multiple passes and tickets.

The TransLink system is designed to make it easier for customers to pay for transit since TransLink provides several convenient options for obtaining a card and loading value onto the card. Customers are able to order TransLink cards and add value to the cards via online, by phone or by mail, or obtain a card at participating retail locations and transit agency ticket offices. Customers also can add value at self-serve Add Value Machines (AVM) located in transit stations.

The TransLink system has a convenient auto-load feature, which allows customers to set up their cards to reload automatically using a secure funds transfer from a bank account or credit card. (The TransLink card is free for customers who set up auto-load or are charged \$5 without the auto-load feature.) The TransLink system provides financial protection since registered TransLink cards are eligible for card replacement and balance restoration for a small fee in the event of card theft or loss.

Ms. Rolland commented that there are several phases to the TransLink Program, noting that Phase I was the Demonstration Phase and Phase II is the phased in operation available on all AC Transit and Golden Gate Transit routes. They are allowing different groups to use the TransLink card on their transportation system before it is rolled out to address any problems in the TransLink system. The TransLink system would continue rolling out in phases to other transit agencies. BART, Muni and Caltrain are scheduled to begin accepting TransLink in 2007. SamTrans and Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority

(VTA) would start accepting TransLink in 2008, and 19 additional Bay Area transit agencies would allow payment with TransLink by 2010.

Ms. Rolland commented that the TransLink card is available on-line at www.translink.org or calling TDD/TTY 711 or 1-800-735-2929. Ms. Rolland stated that VTA has started to install poles next to the Ticket Vending Machines (TVM) at the light rail stations, which would hold the TransLink equipment. The installation of the TransLink equipment poles is almost complete then the next step is the implementation of the networking at the yards so the TransLink card information could be downloaded into the system.

Ms. Rolland stated that the TransLink system meets the ADA guideline requirements, California Title 24, and other regulations. Ms. Rolland noted that in the beginning VTA hired an accessibility consultant team to participate in the initial design phase of the TransLink system program. The MTC Elderly/Disabled Advisory Committee hired an accessibility consultant to assist in the evaluation of the Phase I – Demonstration Phase of the TransLink system.

At each point of the phases, both MTC and other transit agencies have taken into account accessibility recommendations, which have been implemented into the TransLink system. The AVM's are installed with headphone jacks for hearing impaired individuals and Telecommunication Device (TDD) or Text Telephone (TTY) lines to the TransLink customer service center, TransLink website is compatible with screen readers, and card holder material specifically designed for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Ms. Rolland stated that there are audible tones to inform the customer that the fare was deducted and a lighting system that reflects the fare transaction. Green light means that a regular fare was deducted, yellow light is a discounted fare, and a red light means that a problem occurred.

Ms. Rolland commented that the Regional Transit Connection (RTC) Discount Cards for Seniors/Individuals with Disabilities program is to provide eligible individuals with fare discounts as mandated by state and federal law. Ms. Rolland stated that with a RTC Discount Card seniors and qualifying individuals with disabilities are entitled to a reduced fare on fixed-route bus, rail and ferry systems throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. VTA staff is currently working on implementation of an RTC Discount TransLink card within the next 120 days.

Member Tamez expressed his appreciation for the TransLink system presentation. Member Tamez stressed the importance to have an audible announcement informing that the fare amount was deducted from the TransLink card. Member Tamez stressed the importance to incorporate paratransit services into the TransLink system.

Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that she is a member of the MTC Elderly/Disabled Advisory Committee and stated that the inclusion of paratransit services is not being incorporated at this time since paratransit services would require much programming to address the different payment types.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated that MTC has decided to move the paratransit services item into the secondary phase of the TransLink system in order to determine this piece of

the program. First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that Muni has decided to implement a card that would interact with the TransLink card.

M/S/C (Tamez/Morrow) on a vote of 11 Ayes to 0 Noes to 1 Abstention to support a motion to the VTA Board of Directors to look into including paratransit services into the TransLink Program System. Members Eljas abstained.

Member Jensen asked if the TransLink card had a zero balance would the customer be able to ride the transportation system. Member Jensen asked about the cost of the TransLink system, how much it cost to install one individual pole, and if it is easy to change the program software when fares change. Ms. Rolland responded that a customer could call TransLink customer service or obtain their card balance on the TransLink website. Ms. Rolland stated that staff would follow up with the information on the cost to install one individual pole.

Ms. Rolland stated that the contractor would probably require additional funds to update the program software but updates to accommodate fare changes should not require additional funding. Ms. Rolland continued that the TransLink card would be able to precede to a negative balance to accommodate one ride in the event that the card has a zero balance but when funding is added to the card the negative balance is balanced out.

Member Tamez expressed concern, noting that the TransLink card reader is basically a point of sale machine so it must be accessible for individuals with audio and visual disabilities.

Member Gallo left the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Member Slack queried if the TransLink card had the ability to transfer funds to the transportation card via credit card authorization. Ms. Rolland responded that the TransLink system offers an auto-load feature to automatically transfer funds to the TransLink card.

Member Slack queried if the auto-load feature is available for paratransit services on OUTREACH Services. Ex-Officio Member Heatley responded that paratransit service is scheduled to get on board with the TransLink system in the future but at this time it is a complex issue.

Member Jensen queried if it is possible to have picture identification on the TransLink card. Ms. Rolland responded that the RTC card and ECO Pass do have picture identification on the cards. Ms. Rolland stated that the RTC card would have the TransLink logo on the card and computer chip in the card.

Member Grant asked if security steps are being taken to prevent tampering of the smart cards. Ms. Rolland responded that staff is aware of the issues and a contractor is handling the software issues and staff is aware of the security issues related to the TransLink system and card.

The Agenda was taken out of order.

14. CTA Workplan

Chairperson Morrow provided a brief overview of the CTA Workplan. Chairperson Morrow noted the following standing reports are: Board of Directors' Report, Committee Staff Report, Chairperson' Report, MTC Elderly/Disabled Report (Bi-Monthly),

Securement Task Force Report, Ridership Report, Transit Operations Performance Report (Quarterly), and General Manager's Report (Quarterly).

Chairperson Morrow stated that the Committee should consider working on five issues related to the CTA Workplan and suggested that the Committee review the information for discussion at the December 13, 2006 CTA Meeting. Chairperson Morrow commented that the top five preliminary issues for the CTA Workplan for the Committee to discuss and consider are: Travel Training, Bus Stop Accessibility and Shelters, Emergency Transportation, Senior Transportation and Senior Programs, and Technology, Website, Accessible Signage, and Dynamic Passenger Information System.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance for CTA to work proactively and collaboratively with VTA's other programs to ensure that the Committee is involved and has the opportunity to provide adequate input on the programs.

Member Tamez referenced the CTA Workplan Subcommittee, noting that the Subcommittee identified that Travel Training and Bus Stop Accessibility and Shelters should be considered if funding was available from the Senior/Disabled Program included in the 2000 Measure A Program projects.

Member Tamez suggested that standing reports, such as Board of Directors' Report, Committee Staff Report, and Chairperson' Report be moved to the end of the Committee agenda and the Business Referred to the Committee by the Board of Directors/General Manager be moved to the beginning of the agenda. Member Tamez stressed the importance for the Committee to allocate adequate time to discuss the items that they are to review. Chairperson Morrow responded that the December 13, 2006 CTA Agenda would reflect the suggested changes.

Member Grant stressed the importance for the Mandatory Securement Policy to be on the CTA Workplan to ensure that the Committee continues to work closely on the issues and concerns. Chairperson Morrow responded that the Mandatory Securement Policy is an important item and would be considered for the CTA Workplan.

Member Jensen queried if the Committee could suggest items to be included on the CTA Workplan every month or on a quarterly basis. Chairperson Morrow responded that the CTA Workplan would include long-range goals that the Committee would work to have implemented.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes suggested that Accessible Services and other VTA departments provide a presentation regarding their responsibilities and goals within VTA and how these services would be made accessible.

Chairperson Morrow stated that the Office of the Board Secretary would distribute the top five preliminary issues for the CTA Workplan to the Committee in the appropriate format.

Member Grant suggested that OUTREACH customer service provide the same service hours and days as VTA's customer service. Member Grant noted that OUTREACH customer service hours should be parallel to VTA's customer service, which is 5:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. First Vice Chairperson Rhodes responded that OUTREACH would require additional funding within their budget. First Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that OUTREACH ride scheduling is available 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. everyday.

Member Grant stressed the importance that OUTREACH customer service provides the same hours and days as VTA's customer service to ensure that customers have the opportunity to speak with a live representative to respond to issues and concerns.

11. Operator Training

Mark Thomas, Operations Senior Management Analyst, provided a brief overview of the Operator Training. Mr. Thomas commented that VTA is currently recruiting for Coach Operators and Community Bus Operators.

Mr. Thomas commented that staff has been working to address training and customer service sensitivity issues through the Verification of Transit Training (VTT) program. Coach Operator Trainees have to pass each part of VTA's training program performance standards. VTA's training program is a progressive nine-week training program, which involves many aspects of the responsibilities and duties of a Coach Operator.

Mr. Thomas commented that over 100 Coach Operators have been trained over the last 15-month period on the Mandatory Securement Policy process and procedures both in class and out in the field. Mr. Thomas stated that there is a lot of signage and notices regarding the implementation of the January 1, 2007 Mandatory Securement Policy.

Mr. Thomas continued that VTA staff and Coach Operators attended and participated in the Abilities Expo for Northern California Conference held November 3 – 5, 2006. Mr. Thomas stated that every mobility device at the Abilities Expo event could be secured in the VTA bus vehicle on display for the event.

Member Grant requested that Operations staff re-instruct the Coach Operators that the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) icon allows the PCA to ride fixed route service for free. Member Grant expressed concern and stated that many PCA's have been asked to provide their fare to ride fixed route service.

Member Slack queried if Coach Operator Trainees are required to take a written performance test. Mr. Thomas responded that there are written performance tests given for every Operator Training performance element, which must be passed to performance standards.

Member Julian queried if CTA Members could participate within the Coach Operators Training. Mr. Thomas responded, "yes" and requested that the Committee Members call to discuss their participation within the training program. Mr. Thomas stated that there are rules that need to be adhered to within the training program for all participants, which must be discussed and agreed to before participation within the training program.

Member Eljas queried about the number of Coach Operator Trainees who complete the training program. Mr. Thomas responded that the number varies from class to class, noting that 15 to 16 out of 20 trainees pass the Coach Operator Training Program Course. Mr. Thomas commented that one group consisting of 22 Community Bus Operators would graduate on January 12, 2007. The Operators are trained to drive all VTA bus vehicles plus they would be certified to drive the Community Buses.

Member Jensen queried when all of VTA's vehicles would be implemented with the Automated Annunciator System. Mr. Thomas responded that operators have a schedule

of the required calling of stops that need to be called out in the bus vehicles. Mr. Thomas stated that he is unable to answer when the entire VTA fleet would be implemented with the Automated Annunciator System.

Ms. Applegate queried if the Community Bus Program had the same Mandatory Securement Policy requirement and queried how would staff address the issue if individuals do not have their mobility devices pre-marked before utilizing bus services. Mr. Thomas responded, "yes" and it is included in the training. Ms. Williams stated that the pre-marking is voluntary and one-way to provide assistance to the Operator. Ms. Williams added that the pre-marking and tethers on mobility devices are not mandatory.

Member Grant asked what Operators are trained or instructed to do in the event that a mobility device becomes damaged through the securement equipment. Mr. Thomas responded that the process is to refer the individual to customer service to report the incident through the CARE Report System.

Chairperson Morrow requested that Agenda Item #12., Accessible Services Customer Comment Summary Information Report be agendized at the beginning of the December 13, 2006 CTA Agenda.

First Vice Chairperson Rhodes queried on how staff was planning to address the issues related to the extra time required to secure the mobility devices in the vehicles. Mr. Thomas responded that the Operators are not allowed to pass customers by in the event that they are running behind in schedule. Ms. Williams stated that Mr. Thomas would be available to speak with First Vice Chairperson Rhodes after the meeting.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley requested that the Operator Training Report and other verbal reports be provided in writing since it is difficult for Committee Members to follow the report. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance for the Committee to be provided the opportunity to review all the information that is presented at the meeting.

M/S/C (Tamez/Jensen) that the CTA Committee request that VTA provide written material presentations and not verbal presentations.

12. Accessible Services Customer Comment Summary Information

The Accessible Services Customer Comment Summary Information Report was deferred.

OTHER

13. CTA Transit System Ridership Report

The CTA Transit System Ridership Report was deferred.

15. Announcements

Member Julian announced the Silicon Valley Independent Living Center (SVILC) 30th Anniversary scheduled on Wednesday, December 6, 2006 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. held at 2306 Zanker Road, San Jose.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee of the Whole adjourned the meeting at 3:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle M. Garza, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors