



## COMMITTEE FOR TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Building A, Auditorium  
Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)  
3331 North First Street  
San Jose, California

### SUMMARY MINUTES

**1. CALLED TO ORDER at 1:08 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL: Members Present:** Grant, Heatley (Ex-Officio), Hernandez, Jensen, Lasich, Law, Morrow, Rhodes, Slack, Stahl, and Tamez.

**Members Absent:** Eljas, Gallo, Gouveia, Julian, and Michels.

**A quorum was not present and a Committee of the Whole was declared.**

**2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS**

**The Committee of the Whole received** introductions from the audience including: Joonie Tolosa, Operations Senior Management Analyst; David Ledwitz, Accessible Services Management Analyst; Jake Avidon, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) representative; Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager; Bernice Alaniz, Marketing and Public Affairs Deputy Director; Grace Salandanan, Fiscal Resources Manager; Susan Stark, Controller; Julia Jones, Senior Management Analyst; Sam Lau, Operations Deputy Director; and Dan Smith, Chief Operations Officer.

**3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

David Grant, Interested Citizen, **asked** if installation of securement straps on a mobility device are necessary for an individual to ride the bus. **Staff responded** that the temporary “blue” or permanent “yellow” securement straps are not required for an individual can ride the bus. **Staff added** that operators have temporary securement straps available on the buses.

Aaron Morrow, Interested Citizen, **asked** if a mobility device user could ride the bus if the low-floor vehicle outside securement floor mount was not working properly. Staff responded, “yes”, noting that VTA’s Securement Policy states that if the equipment is not working properly the customer would be able to travel on the bus.

Martin Lasich, Interested Citizen, **stressed the importance** for operators to call out bus stops. **Staff responded** that the annunciator system concern would be forwarded to appropriate staff for a response.

Member Law arrived at the meeting at 1:11 p.m.

4. **Minutes of December 13, 2007**

**The Committee of the Whole deferred** the Minutes of December 13, 2006.

**The Agenda was taken out of order.**

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

7. **TransLink Program Overview**

**The Committee of the Whole received** a report on the TransLink ® Program Overview, highlighting: that the TransLink ® system is a joint effort of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit, Muni, SamTrans, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), and all other Bay Area transit agencies. Phase II will provide TransLink Service on all AC Transit and Golden Gate Transit routes to address any problems in the TransLink ® system prior to its roll out at other transit agencies. BART, Muni, and Caltrain are scheduled to be revenue ready in 2007, SamTrans and VTA in 2008, and all other Bay Area transit agencies by the end of 2010.

**The Committee of the Whole received** additional information about how the TransLink Program works, benefits for transit riders and transit agencies; the possibility of expanding TransLink ® to paratransit; the roles of MTC and the transit agencies; and the current program status. TransLink ® is the Bay Area's new regional transit fare payment system. It will enable transit riders to board any bus, light rail vehicle, train, or ferry in the nine county region and pay a fare using a single reloadable TransLink ® smart card. TransLink ® automatically calculates discount fares for transfers and/or eligible youth, senior, and disabled riders. Eligible individuals would receive combined TransLink ®/Regional Transit Card (RTC) Discount Cards through the RTC Discount Card Program.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on several options for loading value to the TransLink ® smart cards, such as online at [www.translink.org](http://www.translink.org); calling TransLink ® customer service center at 1-877-878-8883; by mail; visiting TransLink ® retailers; Add Value Machines (AVM's) located in transit stations; and by signing up with the Autoload option, which automatically replenishes value.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on several features of the TransLink ® Program that should assist individuals with disabilities: the smart card does not need to be oriented in a specific way when paying a fare; AVM's have audio capability; TransLink ® customer service center is accessible via a Telecommunication Device (TDD) or Text Telephone (TTY) line; TransLink ® brochures are available in accessible formats; and RTC TransLink ® cardholders would receive customer materials related to senior/disabled individuals.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on the possibility of expanding TransLink ® to paratransit, highlighting: that the MTC and the transit agencies decided

against deploying TransLink ® to paratransit systems because it would not achieve the goal of a regional paratransit fare payment method since there are wide variations in paratransit fare collection systems within the Bay Area.

**The Committee of the Whole stressed the importance** for senior/disabled individuals to receive and have access to communications related to the TransLink ® Program.

**The Committee of the Whole stressed the importance** for senior/disabled individuals to receive the same benefits associated with the TransLink ® Program.

**The Committee of the Whole encouraged** MTC to work collaboratively with the nine county region transit agencies to apply MTC's Transit Coordination Implementation Plan.

5. **FYTD 2007 First Quarter Transit Operations Performance Report (July 1, 2006 – September 30, 2006)**

**The Committee of the Whole received** a report on the FYTD 2007 First Quarter Transit Operations Performance Report (July 1, 2006 – September 30, 2006), highlighting: bus and light rail system ridership increased by 10.9 percent the first three months of FY 2007; cost of labor for the first quarter of FY 2007 increased .5 percent; FYTD 2007 operating expenses increased 11.8 percent; system total operating hours increased 1.7 percent; fare revenue increased 5 percent due to increased ridership; farebox recovery ratio improved .7 percent.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on the Key Performance Indicators, highlighting: unscheduled absenteeism for bus operators decreased by 6.3 percent while light rail operators decreased by 12 percent; bus maintenance unscheduled absenteeism remained the same at 7.5 percent while light rail maintenance increased by 30.7 percent; and light rail way, power, and signal maintenance decreased 16.9 percent.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on Paratransit Services, highlighting: paratransit ridership increased by 6.3 percent from 233,201 to 247,809 in FY 2007; and net operating cost increased 3.6 percent but the net cost per paratransit passenger trip decreased 2.6 percent from \$25.88 to \$25.22.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on Contracted and Inter-Agency Services, highlighting: VTA partnered with Monterey-Salinas Transit (MTS) to introduce the Monterey-San Jose Express in August 28, 2006, which is a pilot program funded by a federal Jobs Access Reverse Commute grant, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, and VTA; and ridership increased on Caltrain, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE), Dumbarton Express, Highway 17 Express, Monterey/San Jose Express, and ACE Shuttle, while light rail shuttle ridership of contracted services decreased.

**The Committee of the Whole requested** that Operations staff contact the Committee regarding additional information on the Key Performance Indicators increase in unscheduled absenteeism.

8. **Fiscal Year 2006 National Transit Database (NTD) Report**

**The Committee of the Whole received** a report on the Fiscal Year 2006 National Transit Database (NTD) Report, highlighting: the NTD data information is a preliminary report currently under review by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and VTA; and NTD Reporting requirements are established by the FTA and do not comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). VTA is required to adhere to FTA reporting requirements to include VTA staff and overhead costs in the paratransit service section within the NTD Report and the FTA approves VTA's allocation methods. VTA reviews its allocation methods on an annual basis.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on the NTD schedules that pertain to paratransit services, such as Operating Expenses, Revenue Vehicle Inventory, and Service Non-Rail reports, highlighting: per NTD guidelines, Vehicle Operations 010 Total refers to all activities associated with dispatching and operating the vehicles in revenue service, which includes clerical and administrative support. Vehicle Maintenance 041 Total refers to the activities associated with ensuring revenue vehicles and services vehicles are in operating condition, which includes cleaning, fueling, inspecting, and repairing vehicles. Non-Vehicle Maintenance 042 Total refers to activities associated with insuring buildings, grounds, and equipment, which includes passenger stations and shelters, fare collection equipment, and track structures to ensure that they are in operating condition. General Administration 160 Total refers to activities associated with supporting the provision of transit service. Total Modal Expenses refers to all expenses related to Operating Expenses.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on the Expense Object Class, highlighting: Line 02 - Other Salaries and Wages (02) includes the labor costs of operations administration that is allocated to the paratransit activities, which includes the General and Administrative Allocation; Line 03 - Fringe Benefits (502) includes benefits identified to other salaries and wages; Line 04 - Services (503) identifies services provided by outside organizations, such as NovaCare and Orthopaedic Hospital; Line 07 - Other Materials and Supplies (99) includes personal computer hardware, software, and parts and materials allocated to paratransit activities; Line 08 - Utilities (505) refers to the allocated portion of the utilities pertaining to paratransit activities; Line 09 - Casualty and Liability Costs (506) refers to the allocated portion of property and general liability insurance costs; Line 11 - In Report (01) Purchased Transportation (508) refers to the invoice of OUTREACH to VTA including the revenue reported; Line 13 - Miscellaneous Expenses (509) includes books, subscriptions, office expenses, legal notices, publications, education and training, membership dues, transportation, travel and postage allocated to paratransit activities; Line 14 - Expenses Transfers (510) refers to the labor costs of VTA staff when directly involved with paratransit activities. The numbers presented in these schedules have been certified by the independent audit firm of Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Company, LLP and are reported according to federal guidelines contained in the NTD FTA 2006 Reporting Manual.

**The Committee of the Whole inquired** about the types of costs included in the direct and indirect costs allocated to paratransit activities. **Staff responded** that direct costs refer to staff directly allocating time to paratransit issues primarily from Accessible Services. Indirect costs refer to General and Administrative (G&A) costs and/or overhead costs, which includes all administrative type costs within VTA.

**The Committee of the Whole inquired** about the \$27 million allocated for Purchased Transportation. **Staff responded** that the \$27 million is the amount of funds paid to OUTREACH to provide paratransit services. Funds other than the \$27 million are partially from other administrative costs of VTA including Accessible Service staff.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on the G&A cost identified for the \$27.4 million in FY 2006 for Operations allocated between the various transportation modes based on total direct cost of each of the following modes: 68.5 percent for bus, 19 percent for light rail, 11.3 percent for paratransit services, and 1.2 percent for shuttle program services.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on the overall G&A and/or overhead cost for VTA in FY 2006 was approximately \$50.8 million, which was split between Operations and Capital Projects. Operations received \$27.4 million, which was allocated between the four transit modes based on the total costs of each program. Paratransit services received 11.3 percent of the \$27.4 million in FY 2006 for Operations.

**The Committee of the Whole inquired** about the \$32 million in paratransit services expenditures for FY 2006. **Staff responded** that \$27.6 million was for OUTREACH paratransit services, \$660,000 was allocated to paratransit contracted services in FY 2006, \$500,000 was allocated to Accessible Services labor and fringe benefits, \$200,000 allocated to the Operations department for direct labor, which are all direct costs, and approximately \$3.1 million was allocated for total G&A indirect costs for other VTA departments.

**The Committee of the Whole expressed appreciation and thanked** staff for their presentation and for being open and candid with the NTD Report information provided to the Committee.

**The Committee of the Whole asked** if staff would provide information to the Committee after the NTD Report is finalized. **Staff responded** yes.

6. **Section 5310, Job Access Reverse Commute and New Freedom Program Developments**

**The Committee of the Whole received** an update on Section 5310, Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC), and new Freedom Program Developments, highlighting: recent changes to the Section 5310 and the JARC Social Service Transportation Programs, which are funded by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) federal transportation authorization legislation signed into law in August 2005; SAFETEA-LU provides funding for a New Freedom Program to support new transportation services for persons with disabilities that are beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and SAFETEA-LU authorization bill includes \$52.6 billion for federal transit programs, which represents a 46 percent increase over prior authorization funding and imposes new requirements for the Section 5310 and JARC programs.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information on the Section 5310, JARC, and New Freedom Program, highlighting: Section 5310 program provides financial capital assistance for transportation services designed to meet the special transportation needs of

seniors and individuals with disabilities; JARC program provides funding for local services that offer job access and reverse commute options to assist low-income individuals who live in urban areas and work in suburban locations. The JARC program has been changed from a discretionary earmark funding to a competitive formula Section 5316 program; and the New Freedom program is a competitive formula Section 5317 program created to enhance public transportation services for individuals with disabilities that are new and beyond the ADA.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information that the FTA is currently preparing to public new guidance for the Section 5310, Section 5316, and Section 5317 programs, which are expected to be released in March 2007. The new requirements of the programs will derive from a community-coordinated plan. As a result the Section 5310 grant application process will be delayed this year by four to six months pending the publication of the new guidance.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information that the MTC is responsible for the region's community coordination plan and has engaged a consultant team to meet with representatives of interested parties from the Bay Area's nine counties to draft the coordination plan. This effort will include assessing available resources, identifying needs, specify strategies to address gaps in service for target populations, and list priorities for project implementation.

**The Committee of the Whole suggested** that VTA conduct workshops to assist the agencies in preparing the grant applications. **Staff suggested** that one-on-one personalized consultations be arranged with the agencies.

9. **Operator Training**

**The Committee of the Whole deferred** a report on Operator Training.

10. **VTA Securement Task Force Meeting**

**The Committee of the Whole received** an update from VTA Securement Task Force Meeting, highlighting: that staff is continuing to meet with agencies and/or organizations to provide information on the Mandatory Securement Policy; and VTA continues to pre-mark and install tethers on mobility devices for customers.

**The Committee of the Whole received** information that VTA ambassadors were stationed at light rail platforms and other bus facilities to assist customers with information and answer questions prior to the implementation of the Mandatory Securement Policy.

**The Committee of the Whole expressed concern** that drivers are not providing accurate information on the Mandatory Securement Policy, not assisting customers to secure their mobility devices, passing up riders at bus stops, and Customer Service Representatives (ISR's) not assisting customers with complaints or providing good customer service.

**The Committee of the Whole stressed the importance** for individuals to provide relevant information to customer service when reporting an incident, such as the operator badge number, line route, day and time of the incident to ensure that the incident is addressed.

**Staff stated** that Accessible Services staff would follow through with Customer Service to determine if the complaint was logged into the CARE Report System and why there was no call back to the customer.

**The Committee of the Whole referenced** the Securement Task Force and **asked** what other monitor methods have been implemented to observe the Mandatory Securement Policy process. **Staff responded** that the process is observed through the CARE Report System, comments from the community, and through feedback from operations field reports to ensure that issues are addressed.

**11. Board of Directors Report**

**The Committee of the Whole deferred** the Board of Directors Report.

**12. Committee Staff Report**

**Committee Staff Report:** **Heard a report**, highlighting: that the NelsonNygaard Consulting services group and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) are working collaboratively on a study regarding Senior/Disabled Transportation Issues. **Staff noted** that NelsonNygaard is scheduled to provide a presentation to the Committee at the February 7, 2007 CTA Meeting.

**The Committee of the Whole suggested** that the Committee prepare a list of Senior/Disabled Transportation needs prior to the study session.

**13. Chairperson's Report**

**Chairperson's Report:** **Expressed appreciation and thanked** the Committee for their attendance and participation at the meeting. **Encouraged** the Committee to forward ideas on future Committee Agenda items.

**OTHER**

**14. CTA Transit System Ridership Report**

**The Committee of the Whole deferred** the CTA Transit System Ridership Report.

**15. Announcements**

**The Committee of the Whole clarified** that the New Freedom Program relates to transportation access for disabled individuals with employment. **Staff added** that additional information is available on the internet regarding the New Freedom Program.

**16. ADJOURNED at 3:01 p.m.**