

Committee for Transit Accessibility

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

MINUTES

NOTE: MEMBERS MAY TAKE ACTION ON ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA.

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Julian in Building A, Auditorium, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

1. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Lori Arnberg	CTA Member	Present	
Linda Gallo	CTA Member	Absent	
David Grant	CTA Member	Present	
Marjorie Jensen	CTA Member	Present	
Connie Langford	CTA Member	Present	
Laura Michels	CTA Member	Present	
Shawna Nourzaie	CTA Member	Present	1:07 PM
Larry Saltman	CTA Member	Present	
Emma Eljas	CTA Second Vice Chair	Present	
Sandra Gouveia	CTA Member	Present	
Troy Hernandez	CTA Member	Present	
David Julian	CTA First Vice Chair	Present	
Martin Lasich	CTA Member	Absent	

Mike Montague	CTA Member	Present	
Aaron Morrow	CTA Chairperson	Absent	
Dilip Shah	CTA Member	Present	
Thomas Slack	CTA Member	Present	
William Zhu	CTA Member	Present	
Barbara Stahl	CTA Member	Present	
Anthony Drummond	CTA Ex Officio Member	Present	
Katie Heatley	CTA Ex-Officio Member	Present	

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Ali Hudda, Deputy Director of Accounting; Sandra Weymouth, Policy and Administration Manager; Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer; Joe Smith, Chief Financial Officer; Jim Unites, Deputy Director, Operations; Ann Carey, Executive Assistant to the General Manager; Michael Hursh, Deputy Director, Operations; and Patrick Griffin, Customer Service Supervisor.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Marjorie Jensen, Interested Citizen, expressed concern on the rising price of gasoline and questioned if there was any discussion on fare increases.

Barbara Stahl, Interested Citizen, expressed concern, regarding bus service routes not being increased and suggested that it would increase ridership.

Connie Langford, Interested Citizen, commented that Michael Burns, General Manager, wrote an excellent article for the San Jose Mercury News regarding the proposed cuts in transportation.

Emma Eljas, Interested Citizen, noted that there was a New York Times article about the increase ridership in public transportation due to the rising cost in gas..

4. Minutes of May 7, 2008

Member Grant expressed concern regarding the minutes. Member Grant noted his comments on the Measure A item should read BART subsidy and not BART subsidiary, and his comments on the Chairpersons Report should read ADA Accessibility Bus Stop Improvement Program and not Media Accessibility. Member Grant requested that the minutes be amended to reflect the changes.

M/S/C (Langford/Slack) to approve the Minutes of May 7, 2008 as amended.

5. Chief Operating Officer's Report - June 2008

Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer, provided an update highlighting the Light Rail Platform Retrofit Project, noting that Phase 3 would be completed with the opening of Capitol Station, and the next phase would begin with the closure of the Almaden and Oakridge stations. Mr. Smith announced that the Ohlone-Chynoweth Station closure is being delayed to address the heavy Light Rail usage expected for the annual American Festival on the Fourth of July.

Mr. Smith indicated the Capitol Transit Center construction at the passenger waiting area should be completed on June 16, 2008.

Mr. Smith announced special Light Rail service for the American Festival. Service will be increased and bus shuttle service implemented to transport passengers to and from the station.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Committee received a report from the Chief Operating Officer.

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

6. VTA Home Page and Google Trip Planner

Patrick Griffin, Manager of Public Affairs and Customer Information, provided information about the VTA Home Page and Google's Trip Planning Service. Mr. Griffin noted that all of VTA's accessibility issues on the home page have been resolved. Mr. Griffin indicated that there were still some minor accessibility problems with the trip planner and noted that Google had been contacted. Mr. Griffin commented that Google had not yet responded and suggested that the committee, as the public, contact Google directly to request that they fix the glitches.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Committee received the Google Trip Planner update.

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

7. **Advanced Farebox System (AFS) Needs Assessment**

David Sausjord, Revenue Services Manager, provided the committee with a brief overview of the plan for the new fare boxes and introduced Trevor Findley, Senior Engineer, of Booz Allen Hamilton consulting firm.

Mr. Findley provided information on the research process noting that VTA staff, Outreach, Ecopass and peer agencies had been consulted for feedback on what is currently being used and what VTA needs.

Mr. Findley indicated that some enhanced technologies that are being proposed are, validating bill accepters, improved audio/video output, magnetic ticket capabilities, enhanced transaction reporting and smaller equipment. Mr. Findley noted that he would like to get feedback from the CTA regarding any accessibility issues or information. Mr. Findley provided a time line and indicated that the VTA's plan to select and install the fareboxes was 12 to 18 months.

Member Slack suggested that the fareboxes for the buses and Light Rail be reasonably similar.

Member Stahl expressed appreciation for the plan moving forward and suggested that a card be used that would deduct funds and stated it would be valuable and would save time.

Member Michels expressed concern with the issue of visually impaired riders who don't have smart cards or a pass and can't locate the equipment to put money or a card into. She noted that drivers won't handle money and it is a huge issue that needs to be addressed.

Member Langford expressed concern about making the feature secure to prevent identity theft.

Member Grant asked if tracking ridership was a possibility as a way to gather information to provide better services for disabled passengers.

Member Slack suggested that new payment methods be designed that are easily identifiable by the visually impaired, and asked if a prototype could be installed and tested by blind or disabled individuals to determine if they are comfortable with it.

Member Jensen requested that the prototype be brought to CTA to test before they go through the expense of installing them all.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Committee received the Advanced Farebox System report.

8. **VTA Transformation Program - Paratransit Scorecard**

Ann Carey, Executive Assistant to the General Manager, provided detail on activities being performed by the transformation program with respect to paratransit activities. Ms. Carey gave a brief update on the status of the four recommendations made by the Hay Group Report.

Member Grant asked if a Contract Administrator could be brought in to handle Outreach as a way to streamline processes and reduce costs.

Member Michels noted that the item regarding the paratransit audit was misinforming and should be better explained to reflect that audits are currently being conducted and are not being held off until 2011.

Member Stahl commented that Outreach is a life saver to the many people who utilize the service and suggested that VTA management acknowledge this.

Member Grant questioned if accounts could still be overdrawn by \$15. He noted that when the policy was created that equaled five rides, but with the increase in cost, five rides would now be \$17.50. Mr. Grant questioned if this has been an issue.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley noted that it was a VTA policy to allow customers to ride and any changes would have to be implemented by the Board.

Member Slack questioned if customers overdrawing their accounts was a frequent occurrence.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley commented that the issue does come up but there are also other programs in place which assist lower income riders.

Member Grant made a motion to recommend the Board of Directors amend the \$15 policy to make it for five rides and not a fixed number. He noted that if it's a Board policy that needs to be adopted he'd like to send it to the Board for consideration.

M/S/C (Grant/Slack) to recommend to the Board of Directors to amend the \$15 policy for 5 rides not a fixed number because when the amount was originally \$3.00 that was equal to 5 rides. It should be just that you could withdraw your balance up to 5 rides. If it's a Board policy for them to adopt, I'd like to send that up for at least their consideration.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Committee received the VTA Transportation Program - Paratransit Scorecard.

9. Emergency Preparedness

Michael Hursh, Deputy Director Operations, provided a presentation on VTA's Safety procedures for a major or minor incident or emergency. Mr. Hursh noted that VTA is a part of the National Incident Management System along with the public and private agencies across the nation that all utilize the same terminology. Mr. Hursh noted that VTA employees are sent to conferences yearly to stay current on the latest techniques for emergency management.

Member Stahl thanked Mr. Hursh for the presentation and asked if it had been given to all of the Light Rail and bus operators.

Member Slack noted that one of the hazards that should be considered is that there may be a source of instant radiation and people need to know what to do. Member Slack suggested mock exercises where not only employees of the city are trained but citizens in the community get involved also. Member Slack also suggested public seminars to educate residents so they have some knowledge of what they need to do.

Member Stahl mentioned that in the last emergency VTA and Outreach could not communicate and asked if that problem had been resolved.

Member Langford suggested the use of text messaging on cell phones in the event of an emergency when calling features are not available.

Member Michels asked if the road alerts were battery operated and if they'd be in use to alert people in the event of an emergency.

Member Zhu questioned what services VTA will provide in an emergency and how they ensure that the emergency truck is working properly.

Member Grant questioned if bus operators are required to report to work in the event of an emergency.

Member Grant questioned if Outreach can still communicate with their drivers if the phone systems are unavailable.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Committee received the Emergency Preparedness presentation.

10. Public Presentations at Board Meetings

On Order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Public Presentations at Board Meetings was deferred.

11. Mobility Options Program Update

On Order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Mobility Options Program Update was deferred.

12. CTA Motion Tracking Report

Member Grant expressed concern with the motion that was made at the May 7, 2008 CTA meeting regarding the bylaws, noting that the motion as recorded was incorrect.

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and CTA Staff Liaison, indicated that staff would research the issue and amend it if necessary.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the CTA Motion Tracking Report was deferred.

13. CTA WorkPlan

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and CTA Staff Liaison, indicated that the Work Plan was updated to take care of the CTA bylaws item, but the item will be revisited to review the motion. Ms. Williams noted that the Disaster Preparedness item and the Google Trip Planner were moved to the completed section.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the committee received the CTA Work Plan update.

14. Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities into VTA.

There was no report on the Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities into VTA.

REPORTS

15. FYTD 2008 Third Quarter Transit Operations Performance Report (July 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008)

Joonie Tolosa, Operations Analysis Manager, gave an update on the 2008 Third Quarter Transit Operations Performance Report.

Member Slack noted that the impact to operating expenses to Outreach and fixed route due to the dramatic increase in the cost of fuel was not visible in the report. He questioned how VTA was absorbing it.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley noted that Outreach's fuel costs have been steady for the past five years but that it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain.

Member Grant expressed concern regarding the omission of the Paratransit table that usually accompanies the Board Memo, and noted that he would like the committee to receive the full report.

Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer, addressed the issue of fuel costs and noted that VTA purchases gas at a lower rate through a consortium with other agencies in the County. Mr. Smith indicated that VTA is in the process of installing gasoline tanks into two facilities which will service Community buses, Outreach Vehicles, and other non revenue service vehicles.

Member Grant questioned why there was a higher rate of recertification requests denied by Outreach.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley responded that there was an increase in applications for the discount bus card and not all of the applicants were eligible.

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the Committee received the FYTD 2008 Third Quarter Transit Operations Performance Report.

16. City of San Jose Disability Advisory Commission (DAC) Report

There was no City of San Jose Disability Advisory Commission (DAC) Report.

17. Board of Directors Report

There was no Board of Directors Report.

18. Committee Staff Report

There was no Committee Staff Report.

19. Chairperson's Report

There was no Chairperson's Report.

OTHER

20. Announcements

There were no Announcements.

21. ADJOURN

On order of Vice Chairperson Julian, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.