

Committee for Transit Accessibility

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

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 1:06 p.m. by Chairperson Morrow 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	Member	Present	
Emma Eljas	Member	Present	
Christina Fernandez	Staff Aide to Ex-Officio Board Liaison Reed	Present	
Linda Gallo	Member	Present	
Sandra Gouveia	Second Vice Chairperson	Present	
David Grant	Member	Present	
Katie Heatley	Ex-Officio Member	Present	
Troy Hernandez	Member	Present	
Marjorie Jensen	Member	Present	
David Julian	First Vice Chairperson	Absent	
Connie Langford	Member	Absent	
Martin Lasich	Member	Present	
Laura Michels	Member	Absent	
Mike Montague	Member	Present	
Aaron Morrow	Chairperson	Present	
Shawna Nourzaie	Member	Present	

Larry Saltman	Member	Present	
Dilip Shah	Member	Present	
Thomas Slack	Member	Present	
Barbara Stahl	Member	Present	
William Zhu	Member	Present	

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Captain Bob Schiller, Protective Services; Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager; Gail Collins, Special Projects Senior Transportation Planner; Sandra Weymouth, Policy and Administration Manager; Ann Carey, Executive Assistant to the General Manager; Walter Schinkle, South County Advocate; Diem Mehta, Interested Citizen; John Ristow, Chief CMA Officer; Joonie Tolosa, Operations Analysis Manager; David Ledwitz, Management Analyst; Ali Hudda, Deputy Director of Accounting; Stephen Flynn, Senior Management Analyst; Jennie Loft, Public Information Officer; and Deborah Harrington, Board Secretary.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Walter Schinkle, Interested Citizen, expressed concern regarding community bus safety issues. Mr. Schinkle stressed the importance to retrain bus operators to comply with VTA’s Securement Policy and safety rules. Chairperson Morrow requested staff speak to Mr. Schinkle after the meeting regarding the issue.

Mike Montague, Interested Citizen, expressed concern regarding the placement level of the system map and schedules at the shelters, noting customers in wheelchairs are unable to view the information. Mr. Montague referenced the station platforms retrofit project, noting signage still exists in the vehicles directing mobility impaired individuals to board VTA’s light rail system by using ramps or lifts. Mr. Montague requested these issues be addressed in a timely manner.

Williams Zhu, Interested Citizen, referenced Line 23 where an operator was engaging in an extensive conversation with a passenger was not concentrating on his driving. Mr. Zhu stressed the importance for drivers to perform their duties and comply with safety rules. Chairperson Morrow requested staff speak with Mr. Zhu regarding the issue.

Dilip Shah, Interested Citizen, stated many disabled individuals visit Valley Medical Center (VMC) and suggested Line 61 and 62 travel into VMC to provide necessary transportation services for VTA’s customers.

David Grant, Interested Citizen, queried if a driver could refuse to pickup a passenger with a walker if two wheelchairs are on a bus and requested the item be agendized on a future agenda for discussion. Chairperson Morrow noted the item would be agendized for the next CTA meeting.

Mr. Grant stressed the importance for drivers to contact Operations Control Center (OCC), noting their vehicle has a full load of passengers and request another vehicle be

dispatched. Chairperson Morrow noted the item would be agendaized for the next CTA meeting.

Thomas Slack, Interested Citizen, suggested staff provide a status update on each public presentation issue and concern at the next CTA meeting.

Member Nourzaie arrived at the meeting and took her seat at 1:20 p.m.

4. Minutes of February 11, 2009

M/S/C (Stahl/Gouveia) on a vote of 15 Ayes, 0 Noes, and 1 Abstention to approve the Minutes of February 11, 2009. Member Grant abstained.

5. Chief Operating Officer's Report

John Ristow, Chief CMA Officer, indicated the Chief Operating Officer's Report was contained in the CTA Agenda packet. Mr. Ristow reported on the Federal Economic Stimulus Bill American Recovery and Reinvestment Act 2009, noting the bill was approved on February 17, 2009 for \$787 billion.

Mr. Ristow presented on the "Federal Economic Stimulus Bill – Federal Bill: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act 2009," highlighting: Mass Transit Formula Grants Process Illustration; Multi-Modal Discretionary Process Illustration; Highways and Bridges Process illustration; Transit Fund Distribution; California Distribution for the current law; Current State Law Total Estimated Amounts to Santa Clara County; and VTA's Board Advocacy List.

VTA receives formula federal grants from the Mass Transit Formula Grants (MTFG). MTC is the receiving agent of \$340 million and will determine what transit agency and project will receive funding. MTC determined that approximately \$47.3 million will be allocated to VTA for Transit Rehabilitation but VTA will not receive funding for Regional Transit Projects.

Mr. Ristow reported \$2.57 billion is available to California for Highways and Bridges, where Caltrans will receive \$1.799 billion and the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) will receive \$771 million.

Santa Clara County will receive approximately \$12 million for Highway and Road Expansion Projects, which includes the Ramp Meters on Interstate 280 and \$26.5 million for City and County Road Rehabilitation Projects. VTA Transit Capital Rehabilitation Projects will receive approximately \$47.3 million, which includes VTA Hybrid 40' Bus Replacements and VTA Hybrid Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Vehicles.

Member Gouveia expressed concern that the bill does not include paratransit projects.

Member Shah stressed the importance to purchase additional community buses and charge a fare to provide service to the community by traveling deeper into routes.

Member Slack asked how many jobs the Federal Economic Stimulus Bill will create within the Bay Area. Mr. Ristow responded staff will report back to the Committee with the information.

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

Mr. Ristow noted the bill has the ability to create thousands of jobs within Santa Clara County.

Chairperson Morrow requested staff provide the list of the bus manufacture bidders to the Committee.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee received the Chief Operating Officer's Report.

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

6. Protective Services Overview

Captain Robert Schiller, Protective Services, reported VTA's security resources provide customers with a safe transit system. VTA has contracts with both the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office and a private security service vendor for unarmed and armed security officers. VTA employs fifteen deputies, two sergeants, and one captain from the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office provides VTA with patrol deputies, crime investigation detectives, and plain clothes officers.

Captain Schiller reported VTA's Operations Control Center (OCC) staffs a 24 hour per day, 7 days per week monitoring system, which provides information to both sheriff officers and private security service officers of safety issues.

The unarmed private security officers work stationary posts at VTA's operating divisions and are posted at high use transit centers. The armed private security officers are mobile and available to assist at various light rail stations and transit centers. The armed private security officers are also assigned to VTA's Downtown Customer Service Center and with revenue collections.

Captain Schiller noted that paying to ride VTA's light rail system is based on the honor system. Fare inspectors ensure fare compliance on VTA's system and report criminal occurrences. He reported the fare evasion rate was 5.9 percent for January 2009.

VTA provides annual reports to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) each year regarding Part 1 and Part 2 crimes. Part 1 crimes are the more serious crimes and include homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and theft. Part 2 crimes include vandalism, drug abuse, drunk driving, and other crimes.

Captain Schiller stated there were no reported homicides or forcible rapes on VTA's transit system during calendar year 2008 but there were 21 robberies and 3 attempted robberies. The ages of the victims of the crimes ranged from 11 years old to 79 years old. There were four victims of robberies aged 60 years old or older and two of the victims were disabled. The robberies occurred on or near buses, light rail trains, and stations. Captain Schiller stated aggravated assaults involve the use of a weapon, noting four aggravated assaults were reported within VTA's service system during calendar year 2008.

Second Vice Chairperson Eljas stressed the importance to provide a safe environment for the senior and disabled population who utilize VTA's transit system.

Member Grant referenced an incident on Line #54 where the driver approached a passenger and insisted the passenger provide their name to the driver. Member Grant expressed concern and queried if the actions represent an assault incident. Captain Schiller responded staff would conduct an investigation and interview all parties involved in the incident. The case would then be forwarded to the district attorney to determine if it is a law violation.

Chairperson Morrow stressed the importance for drivers to be kind, courteous, and provide good customer service to the community.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee received the Protective Services Overview.

7. Transit Operations Performance Report: 2009 Second Quarter (July 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008)

Joonie Tolosa, Operations Analysis Manager, reported total overall system ridership has increased by 8 percent despite a decrease in fuel prices, noting bus ridership increased 8.4 percent and light rail ridership increased 6.7 percent as compared to last year.

Mr. Tolosa stated daily service reliability performance in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 second quarter was 99.71 percent, which is the highest fiscal-year-to-date in VTA history. Bus miles between major mechanical schedule losses improved 7.2 percent compared to last year. Light rail miles between major mechanical schedule losses increased by 38.9 percent compared to last year. Light rail on time performance remained stable at 88.9 percent and bus on time performance decreased from 89.6 to 87.8 percent.

Mr. Tolosa noted VTA's farebox recovery ratio during the first six months of FY 2009 was 14.3 percent. Through the first six months of FY 2009, paratransit ridership increased 3 percent. The net operating cost for Paratransit (Outreach) during the first six months of FY 2009 was \$13.4 million, which is up 2 percent compared to last fiscal year.

Member Stahl referenced a situation where a student contacted VTA's Customer Service regarding Route 81 and the Information Service Representative (ISR) was unable to identify the route or provide directions to the customer. Member Stahl stressed the importance to train the ISRs to relay accurate information to customers.

Chairperson Morrow expressed his appreciation to OUTREACH Paratransit Services on their diligent efforts to reduce paratransit costs.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee received the Transit Operations Performance Report: 2009 Second Quarter (July 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008).

8. Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) Update: March

Jennie Loft, Public Information Officer, and Stephen Flynn, Senior Management Analyst, provided a brief overview VTA's Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) update. Ms. Loft reported on the second ACE meeting held on Wednesday, February 25, 2009 where relevant sections of VTA's Organizational and Financial Assessment, the California Bureau of State Audits Report, process scope, best practices, and Advisory Committee framework were reviewed and discussed by the ACE subcommittee. The next ACE meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2009.

Member Grant expressed concern that CTA has not received regular updates on the ACE subcommittee meetings or receives the ACE Subcommittee meeting information packets. Ms. Loft responded CTA's ACE Subcommittee members are responsible to provide updates to the CTA Committee.

Member Fernandez, Staff Aide to Ex-Officio Board Liaison Reed, left the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

Chairperson Morrow noted the CTA ACE Subcommittee is comprised of five CTA members who are available to provide updates to the Committee.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley, CTA ACE Subcommittee member, stated the ACE Subcommittee packet information can be distributed to the CTA Committee.

Chairperson Morrow stressed the importance to merge together into one agenda item the ACE Update and the CTA ACE Subcommittee report. Chairperson Morrow expressed concern and queried when the revised Draft CTA Mission Statement would be agendized for discussion.

James Unites, Deputy Director, Operations and Staff Liaison, responded the revised Draft CTA Mission Statement is scheduled for May 13, 2009 CTA Meeting.

Chairperson Morrow expressed concern that CTA has not had the opportunity to revise their Draft Mission Statement, noting the delay has the potential to develop several problems within the ACE process.

The CTA Committee stressed the importance to approve the revised Draft CTA Mission Statement. Chairperson Morrow read the proposed modification of the Draft CTA Mission Statement into the record: "The Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) advises the Board of Directors and staff on transportation options and all matters under VTA's purview pertaining to equal access, accessibility, availability, and affordability to public transportation to meet the mobility needs for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and economically disadvantaged persons."

Deborah Harrington, Board Secretary, advised the Committee to postpone action on the proposed modification of the Draft CTA Mission Statement. Ms. Harrington stated the ACE Update is an information item and it would be prudent to agendize the proposed modification of the Draft CTA Mission Statement to the April 8, 2009 CTA Meeting in order to be in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Chairperson Morrow concurred with Ms. Harrington and deferred the proposed modification of the Draft CTA Mission Statement to the April 8, 2009 CTA Meeting.

The Committee referenced the note at the beginning of the CTA Agenda where it states: "NOTE: MEMBERS MAY TAKE ACTION ON ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA" and expressed concern that the Committee would not be allowed to make a motion to modify the Draft CTA Mission Statement.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance to forward the CTA ACE Subcommittee meeting information to the CTA Members at the April 8, 2009 CTA Meeting.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee received the March Advisory Committee Enhancement Update.

9. Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) Subcommittee

The Committee stressed the importance to reexamine the intent of the CTA Report provided to the Transit Planning and Operations (TP&O) Committee, noting CTA plays a vital role as an Advisory Committee to the Board of Directors. Chairperson Morrow responded he is working to address this concern with TPO Chairperson Greg Sellers.

Member Grant queried why VTA opted to utilize internal staff instead of hiring a consultant to work on the ACE process. Ann Carey, Executive Assistant to the General Manager, responded the ACE Subcommittees role and responsibility is to provide regular updates to the full Committees, noting a facilitator was hired to work with the ACE Task Force.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stated the facilitator plays an important role within the ACE Task Force. Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance for the CTA ACE Subcommittee to work collaboratively with staff to process and streamline issues.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley stressed the importance for the Committee to reexamine their official name and consider changing Transit to Transportation.

Member Stahl requested the Committee's official name be agendized at the April 8, 2009 CTA Meeting for discussion.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee received the report from the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) Subcommittee.

10. Committee Work Plan

James Unites, Deputy Director, Operations and Staff Liaison, provided an update on additions to the Committee Workplan including proposed modification of Draft CTA Mission Statement.

Chairperson Morrow requested staff develop a report using key indicators on travel patterns with individuals with disabilities. Mr. Unites responded item #9 is listed on the Committee Work Plan as a future agenda item within the next three months.

Member Grant queried when the farebox tracking information would be presented to the Committee. Mr. Unites responded item #5 is listed on the Committee Work Plan as a future agenda item. Mr. Unites stated staff will confirm when the next report will be presented to the Committee.

Second Vice Chairperson Eljas referenced Member Shah's request under Public Presentations regarding Line #s 25, 61, and 62 traveling to Valley Medical Center. Mr. Unites responded staff had previously provided the Committee with a report regarding the lines, noting it would not be feasible for Line #s 61 and 62 to travel to VMC.

Mr. Unites referenced Public Presentations, noting the speaker's comments will be grouped together and staff will provide a status report back to the Committee.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee Work Plan was received.

11. Motion Tracking Report

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Motion Tracking report was received.

REPORTS

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

On Order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee deferred the City of San Jose Disability Advisory Commission (DAC) Report.

13. Board of Directors Report

There was no Board of Directors Report.

14. Committee Staff Report

James Unites, Deputy Director, Operations and Staff Liaison, announced VTA will purchase 23 Toyota Prius for the Paratransit fleet with grant funding. Mr. Unites stated VTA is currently working on its Budget process for FY 2010 and FY 2011, noting the economical challenges facing VTA.

Mr. Unites reported the State budget has eliminated all operating assistance funding derived from the State Transit Assistance (STA) program allocated to transit agencies. VTA will lose approximately \$6 million this fiscal year and \$12 million for both FY 2010 and 2011.

Mr. Unites noted a 6 percent decrease in sales tax projections for FY 2009, a 5 percent decrease for FY 2010, and 3 percent decrease for FY 2011. VTA will have a deficit of \$28 million in FY 2010 and \$50 million in FY 2011.

Staff is currently working on its budget process and will provide an update at the April 16, 2009 Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee Meeting and April 24, 2009 Board of Directors Workshop Meeting. The recommended budget is scheduled for review in May 2009 at community meetings and VTA's Advisory Committee Meetings then the final recommended budget will be forwarded for consideration at the June 4, 2009 Board of Directors Regular Meeting.

On Order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee Staff Report was received.

15. Chairperson's Report

There was no Chairperson's Report.

OTHER

16. Announcements

There were no Announcements.

17. ADJOURNMENT

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle M. Garza, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors