

Committee for Transit Accessibility

Wednesday, July 8, 2009

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) was called to order at 1:04 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	CTA Member	Present	
Linda Gallo	CTA Member	Present	
David Grant	CTA Member	Present	
Marjorie Jensen	CTA Member	Absent	
Connie Langford	CTA Member	Absent	
Laura Michels	CTA Member	Absent	
Shawna Nourzaie	CTA Member	Present	
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	Absent	
Martin Lasich	CTA Member	Present	
Mike Montague	CTA Member	Present	
Aaron Morrow	CTA Chairperson	Present	
Dilip Shah	CTA Member	Present	
Thomas Slack	CTA Member	Absent	
William Zhu	CTA Member	Present	
Barbara Stahl	CTA Member	Present	
Christina Fernandez	Staff Aide to Ex-Officio Board Liaison Reed	Absent	
Katie Heatley	CTA Ex-Officio Member	Present	

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer; Sandra Weymouth, Policy and Administration Manager; Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager; Kevin Welch, Paratransit, Inc.; Jolene Bradford, Paratransit, Inc.; David Ledwitz, Management Analyst; Dino Guevarra, Sales and Promotions Supervisor; Greta Helm, Chief of External Affairs;

Jennie Loft, Public Information Officer; Dorothy Reyes, Customer Service Supervisor; and Walter Schinke, South County Advocate.

3. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**

Walter Schinke, Interested Citizen, requested the new schedule for community bus routes in Gilroy. He indicated the bus stop on Santa Teresa Boulevard and Great Oaks, which services the Veterans Clinic, is not accessible and requested VTA coordinate with the City of Gilroy to make the necessary changes.

4. **Minutes of May 13, 2009**

M/S/C (**Gouveia/Montague**) on a vote of 15 Ayes and 1 Abstention to approve the Minutes of May 13, 2009. Member Gallo abstained.

5. **Chief Operating Officer's Monthly Report**

Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer, indicated the Chief Operating Officer's Report was contained in the CTA Agenda packet and highlighted the following:

- VTA's participation in the California Highway Patrol Mature Driver Safety Program Seminar and the Safety Career Day at O.B. Whaley Elementary
- Increased presence of Fare Inspectors on the light rail resulting in the reduction of fare evasion rates for passengers checked
- May ridership for the light rail shuttle, Highway 17 Express, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) Shuttle, and Monterey-San Jose Express
- Deferment of the Quarterly Legislative report to the August meeting due to scheduling conflicts

Member Stahl questioned why reports are read when they are contained in the packet. Mr. Smith indicated it was previously requested. Chairperson Morrow noted the committee would like to continue receiving the verbal reports but would like staff to present different information.

Chairperson Morrow questioned the progress of contract talks with employee bargaining unions. Mr. Smith indicated tentative agreements were reached with several of the unions but he was not at liberty to discuss Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) negotiations.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley suggested the demand of staff needed at meetings be reviewed and possibly be streamlined. Mr. Smith indicated staff is present at meetings who are qualified to answer questions that may arise.

Member Gouveia indicated she has been receiving her Agenda packet after the CTA meeting. Mr. Morrow requested staff to address the issue with her offline.

Member Grant questioned if the issue of assigning low-floor buses to routes which have a higher population of riders with mobility limitations could be revisited noting the problem was still occurring on Line 81.

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

Jim Unites, Staff Liaison, indicated certain lines are identified as needing low-floor coaches and noted the buses in procurement all have low floors which will help address the issue.

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. Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) Subcommittee Report

Jenny Loft, Public Information Officer, provided a brief report from the Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) subcommittee indicating the goals, ideas and strategies being discussed and pursued. She indicated several ideas were discussed regarding the restructuring of committees. The group expressed interest in periodically holding joint meetings and workshops in lieu of regular scheduled committee meetings.

Member Stahl questioned the possibility of committees meeting as a whole and providing input on issues. Ms. Loft indicated there was commitment from the group to do more information sharing.

Member Grant questioned how the issue of getting advisory committees more involved in the process at the beginning was being addressed. Ms. Loft indicated Chairpersons will be presenting the Board Workplan to committees to allow members to see what is on the horizon.

Member Eljas commented on the need to continue collaboration to affect change.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee received the ACE Subcommittee Report.

7. Advisory Committee Enhancement Update

Jenny Loft, Public Information Officer announced the next meeting is scheduled for July 22nd, and an additional meeting tentatively scheduled for July 29th if needed. The outcomes and suggestions will be presented to the Administration and Finance Committee in August.

Chairperson Morrow indicated he will not be available for the July 29th meeting.

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

The Agenda was taken out of order.

9. Work Plan Update

Jim Unites, Staff Liaison, indicated several updates to the Workplan including the Legislative Report, Farebox Update, Mobility Options Travel Training Program and the

addition of Light Rail Between Car Barriers which addresses the difficulty visually impaired passengers have identifying the space between light rail cars.

Chairperson Morrow requested analysis of the top 15 stops in the system for disabled passengers. Member Eljas requested drivers passing up passengers in wheelchairs be addressed. Mr. Unites indicated the items would be addressed together and placed on the September Agenda.

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

REPORTS

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

Member Eljas provided a brief report on the City of San Jose Disability Advisory Commission meeting noting it is seeking a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator. She noted the committee received a report on the accessibility of Community sports fields in San Jose.

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

11. Board of Directors Report

There was no Board of Director's Report.

12. Committee Staff Report

There was no Committee Staff Report.

13. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Morrow indicated the Committee received a letter from Joseph Smith, Chief Financial Officer, regarding paratransit contractor costs. Chairperson Morrow requested the Committee be provided with the following: 1) All VTA public budget documents be transparent to clearly identify contractor's costs in dollars so the public can see the actual allocation cost to each contract and the size of the allocated pool overall; 2) A total line item detail and direct cost of the accessible services budget and staff that are allocated to the paratransit contact, and explanation of the percentage and method used, the distribution of the remaining 28 percent labor cost and 28 percent fringe, and indicate staff time on the mobility options grant and where it is allocated on the FY 09-10 budget; and, 3) Report back to CTA how much can be saved by eliminating the accessible services department.

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

8. Mobility Options Program Information

Jim Unites, CTA Staff Liaison, provided background information and a presentation outlining the Mobility Options and Travel Training Program, New Freedom Grant,

various contractors selected, and the marketing and outreach efforts planned. A tour of the mobility options training bus was also provided for the Committee as part of the presentation. Mr. Unites indicated the need for training noting the skills and tools provided to elderly and disabled populations fulfill the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and encourage independence and self sufficiency.

Mr. Unites introduced Kevin Welch, Project Director, and Jolene Bradford, Program Manager, from Paratransit, Inc. Sharon Hudson, Associate Director, Vista Center for the Blind, was also present. The agencies serve as the contractors who provide travel training services for persons with disabilities and seniors.

Chairperson Morrow expressed his concern with the Mobility Options Task Force and the participation of CTA members. He also expressed concern with the dismantling of the CTA travel training subcommittee noting members were informed the staff could no longer support it.

Member Grant questioned how staff would ensure CTA is a part of the process going forward. Mr. Unites indicated a task force was created as requested by former Transit Planning Operations (TPO) Chairperson, Dolly Sandoval that was comprised of VTA staff, CTA members, and outside agencies and indicated the group met quarterly throughout 2008 and 2009.

Member Grant questioned how CTA gets on-board going forward with the direction of the program having already been decided.

Chairperson Morrow expressed concern with CTA members not being given proper notice of meeting schedules and the lack of participation by outside agencies.

Mr. Unites indicated there needs to be a collaborative group with CTA, VTA, and the travel training groups in line with what the Board has asked to be done.

Chairperson Morrow requested time be given at CTA meetings to discuss the Mobility Options Program. Mr. Unites indicated it could be done if it is desired by the Committee.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley suggested the Mobility Options Task Force meet the same day and location as the CTA monthly meeting to allow more involvement from CTA members. She suggested staff provide the rules and processes of the task force to help decide logistics.

Member Grant requested a copy of the agreement with VTA and the contractors to see the scope of work and the details. Mr. Unites indicated that would be provided.

Chairperson Morrow questioned if the person responsible for the travel training portion attended training. Mr. Unites indicated Julia Jones, Senior Management Analyst, had not attended training but works in accessible services and is qualified to fill the role.

Member Grant expressed concern with staff not supporting the CTA travel training subcommittee, but taking time to participate with the Mobility Options Task Force.

Member Stahl expressed concern with staff not consulting CTA.

Chairperson Morrow questioned how participants are found for the program. Mr. Unites indicated outreach ideas need to be crafted and will be worked on by the group.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley suggested the brochure be printed in black and white and in accessible format and distributed in different languages to the community.

Member Eljas suggested having travel trainers who speak different languages.

Member Langford left her seat at 2:45 pm.

Mr. Welch indicated the funding for interpreters is expensive, and requests to have family members translate or community agencies provide translators has proven to be beneficial and less costly. Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager, indicated VTA staff is also utilized to provide translation services when needed.

Member Grant questioned if the bus would be used for travel training or just demonstration. Ms. Bradford commented on the ease of using an out of service bus to train so there would be no other passengers.

Chairperson Morrow requested all meetings going forth be properly noticed. Member Grant questioned the date of the next task force meeting. Mr. Unites indicated there isn't a meeting scheduled but there should be one in August or September.

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the Committee received the Mobility Options Program Information Update.

OTHER

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Announcements.

15. ADJOURN

On order of Chairperson Morrow and there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Menominee McCarter, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors