

## Committee for Transit Accessibility

Wednesday, August 12, 2009  
 Building A, Auditorium  
 Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)  
 3331 North First Street  
 San Jose, California

### SUMMARY MINUTES

**CALLED TO ORDER at 1:04 pm**

#### 1. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Lori Arnberg	Member	Absent
Emma Eljas	Member	Present
Christina Fernandez	Staff Aide to Ex-Officio Board Liaison Reed	Present
Linda Gallo	Member	Absent
Sandra Gouveia	Second Vice Chairperson	Present
David Grant	Member	Present
Katie Heatley	Ex-Officio Member	Present
Troy Hernandez	Member	Present
Marjorie Jensen	Member	Absent
David Julian	First Vice Chairperson	Absent
Connie Langford	Member	Absent
Martin Lasich	Member	Absent
Laura Michels	Member	Absent
Mike Montague	Member	Absent
Aaron Morrow	Chairperson	Present
Shawna Nourzaie	Member	Absent
Larry Saltman	Member	Present
Dilip Shah	Member	Present
Thomas Slack	Member	Present
Barbara Stahl	Member	Absent
William Zhu	Member	Present

**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: Mark Robinson, Chief Engineering and Construction Officer; Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager; Aiko Cuenco, Transportation Planner;

Jelani Young, Transportation Planning Intern; Scott Haywood, Policy and Community Relations Manager; Ehsan Ilyas, Transportation Engineering Manager; Ali Hudda, Deputy Director of Accounting; Joe Smith, Chief Financial Officer; Kermit Cuff, Transportation Service Development Specialist; Sandra Weymouth, Policy and Administration Manager; Patrick Griffin, Customer Service Supervisor; David Ledwitz, Management Analyst; Jennie Loft, Public Information Officer; Patrick Griffin, Public Affairs and Customer Information Manager; Deborah Harrington, Board Secretary; Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer; Walter Schinke, Interested Citizen; and, David Robinson, Interested Citizen.

### **3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**

Walter Schinke, Interested Citizen, indicated he had knowledge of one incident with a scooter being damaged by an unsecured tie down, but it was under warranty and the owner had it fixed. He indicated Bus 17 and 19 in South County have a transfer time of one minute once during the day and questioned if the routes times could be adjusted to give at least three minutes to change buses. Mr. Schinke noted he interviewed approximately 40 South County paratransit customers and indicated the majority are satisfied with the service. He suggested the Committee continue to address the issue of accessibility of bus stops throughout the county and requested VTA staff provide an update on bus stop repairs.

**The Committee of the Whole** questioned the types of issues noticed at bus stops. Mr. Schinke indicated several stops have no concrete strips between the road and the sidewalk, some have no sidewalks, and many posts have no tactile signage.

**The Committee of the Whole** commented they are working with staff to make the bus stop improvement program a quarterly Agenda item.

**The Committee of the Whole** questioned why the bench on route 22 located southbound on 4<sup>th</sup> and Santa Clara in San Jose is no longer there and indicated the public needs somewhere to sit. **Staff responded** they will research the issue to resolve it as soon as possible.

### **4. Minutes of July 8, 2009.**

**The Committee of the Whole deferred** the Minutes of July 8, 2009.

### **5. Chief Operating Officer**

**The Committee of the Whole received** an update from the Chief Operating Officer.

**Staff provided** a brief update on the “No Phone Zone, Safety First” campaign which prohibits operators from using personal communication devices while aboard a bus or light rail vehicle.

**Staff provided** a report on the first Senior Daycation event trip as part of the Mobility Options program. Participants from the Southside Senior Center used the light rail and bus to get to the Farmer’s Market downtown.

**Staff announced** there is no longer an Accessible Services Department and Customer Service will handle all related inquiries and manage the Mobility Options Program. Access Services staff has been reassigned to other departments within VTA.

**Staff noted** VTA's response to a mutual aid request to transport soldiers returning from a 400 day deployment in Iraq from San Jose International Airport to the National Guard Armory in downtown San Jose.

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

### **6. Board of Directors Report**

**The Committee of the Whole received** the Board of Directors Report

Christina Fernandez, Staff Aide to Ex-Officio Board Liaison Reed, provided a brief report from the August 6, 2009 Board meeting, highlighting the Board's authorization to purchase 40ft. Hybrid Low-Floor buses and the approval of VTA's response to the Grand Jury report.

**The Committee of the Whole questioned** the number of buses to be purchased. Ms. Fernandez noted the memo indicated up to 107 buses can be purchased.

### **7. The Committee of the Whole received the Quarterly Legislative Report.**

**Staff provided** a brief summary of the Federal and State programs, bills, and legislation affecting transportation. Changes highlighted were, the Highway Account, the reauthorization of the current federal transportation bill, Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA - LU), and the climate change bill known as the American Clean Energy and Security Act.

**The Committee of the Whole questioned** SAFETEA - LU and the goals and objectives of lobbying on the types of dollars that would impact Capital and Operations which would indirectly impact senior and disabled.

**Staff indicated** many of the transit agencies in California adopted the California Consensus Principles and noted most of those are in the current legislation for the House bill, but it is not the direction the Senate wants to take.

### **8. The Committee of the Whole received the Milpitas Community-Based Transportation Plan.**

**Staff provided** a presentation focused on outreach meetings, top transportation concerns, transportation proposals, bus service proposal, and projects for future consideration.

**The Committee of the Whole** questioned if there was direct outreach to the disabled community in Milpitas and any specific issues were addressed.

**Staff indicated** they were not targeted specifically but there were some disabled members in focus groups and at workshops who were concerned with the accommodations on community buses.

**The Committee of the Whole** indicated the need to collaborate with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) on items for pedestrians which would be beneficial to those in mobility devices as well.

**The Committee of the Whole provided** feedback on pedestrian issues indicating the need to be more universal to be accessible across the board, and suggested working with BPAC to address issues affecting disabled pedestrians as well.

**The Committee of the Whole suggested** examining routes for 6-month periods to evaluate if their meeting ridership goals. **Staff responded** routes take a year to mature and then examined to decide how to make it more productive.

**The Committee of the Whole** questioned ridership patterns for seniors and the disabled within Milpitas.

**Staff indicated** there was a lack of ridership concentration except for the high school and middle schools which have disabled population. Many of the senior and disabled participants were concerned with access to Fremont BART to travel throughout the region.

**The Committee of the Whole suggested** bus stop improvements be added to the plan. **Staff indicated** feedback regarding stops was solicited and the community indicated several stops where improvements need to be made.

9. **The Committee of the Whole received** a report on the January 2010 Service Changes.

**Staff provided** a presentation on the January 2010 Service Changes which highlighted the financial overview, public outreach, schedule, bus service changes, light rail service changes, impacts, and environmental review.

**The Committee of the Whole expressed** concern with the public bearing the burden of the economic downturn and questioned if there would be corresponding staff reduction.

**Staff indicated** there would be a decrease in operations and maintenance staff and administrative staff is participating in wage freezes and furloughs in an effort to prevent layoffs.

**The Committee of the Whole questioned** if Community Bus 32 has been evaluated to possibly be rerouted. Staff responded the schedule for route 32 is very tight and cannot be adjusted but an option that has been considered is rerouting line 81 to assist in the area.

**The Committee of the Whole suggested** creative marketing strategies be used to attract riders to midday service to keep ridership from declining.

**The Committee of the whole noted** their regret of the service changes being made to paratransit service and hopes the economy will improve and service can be provided again.

10. **The Committee of the Whole received** a report on the Between Car Barrier Bollards Installation on VTA Light Rail Station Platforms.

**Staff** provided a report on the Between Car Barrier Bollards trial installation on VTA light rail station platforms which will be tested for their ability to block the sizeable gaps between light rail cars and aide in the prevention of passengers stepping off the platform and falling on the tracks.

**The Committee of the Whole** questioned if the device was a deterrent or if it would stop a person from falling.

**Staff responded** it is a deterrent and will help identify sections where there isn't a door.

**The Committee of the Whole questioned** if a global positioning system would be installed to ensure the light rail would stop in the designated area. **Staff responded** operators will be trained to align their windows with a marker, and bollards would be installed wider than the gaps in the cars to account for possible human error.

**The Committee of the Whole questioned** the cost of installation. **Staff indicated** each set of bollards was approximately \$5000-\$6000, but indicated it may change during the bidding process.

11. **The Committee of the Whole received** a report on the FY 2009 Section 5310 Funding Cycle Local Review Committee (LRC) Recommended Project Review Scores.

**Staff provided** a report on the FY 5310 Local Review Committee's recommended project review scores noting there was one application received requesting 12 new vehicles and communication equipment. Scores were forwarded to Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) whose scoring was compatible with that of the LRC. The results will be forwarded to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for final approval and federal funding.

**The Committee of the Whole commented** the technical language on the applications may be difficult for the smaller non-profits to understand.

**The Committee of the Whole questioned** if there would be any help from the government stimulus program. **Staff responded** it would not receive any help from the stimulus funds, but the SAFETEA-LU legislation did lower the local match requirements and additional dollars were added to the program.

12. **Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) Subcommittee.**

There was no Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) Subcommittee report.

13. **The Committee of the Whole received** a report Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) Process.

**Staff provided** an update on the Advisory Committee Enhancement (ACE) process noting there was no consensus on proposals to modify the committee structure. Accomplishments in communication improvements include providing a supplemental report to standing committees with advisory committee comments and a memo to the entire Board, quarterly meetings with the Advisory Committee Chairpersons and the Board Chairpersons, and an annual orientation and training for Advisory Committee Chairpersons. **Staff indicated** three proposals are being considered, including, each committee to providing future trends, holding joint meetings to conduct workshops in lieu of meetings, and the Committee Chairpersons meeting periodically to review consolidated and committee workplans. The proposals will be submitted to the Administration and Finance Committee in September.

**The Committee of the Whole** expressed concern with lack of communication between Advisory Committees and staff, and lack of input during the decision making process.

**Staff indicated** the addition of the advisory comments being incorporated into the Board memos is a part of the input process and the quarterly meetings with the Board Chairperson and Vice Chairperson gives the Committees direct communication with the Board.

**The Committee of the Whole** expressed concern with Board Members not reading the Agenda packets and the Committee comments.

Christina Fernandez, Staff Aide to Ex-Officio Member Reed responded Mayor Reed is briefed by policy advisors and Department of Transportation staff for each Committee and Board meeting he attends.

Chairperson Morrow indicated he met with Ms. Fernandez in April 2009 and went over various issues pertinent to CTA and sent letters to Mayor Reed and was assured that he is being made aware of the issues.

14. **The Committee of the Whole reviewed** the Committee Workplan.

**Staff provided** an update on the workplan indicating items for September include the Farebox update and Transit Ridership for Senior and Disabled passengers. In September or October the annual report on the Bus Stop Improvement program, and Rehabilitating Elevators and Escalators on the light rail system will be presented.

**The Committee of the Whole** questioned if the light rail analysis would be presented in September. **Staff responded** they will follow up on the item which should be presented in September or October.

**The Committee of the Whole requested** the issues of people in wheelchairs or mobility devices being left at bus stops, the scope of work between the VTA and contractors for the Travel training, and assigning low-floor buses be placed on the Workplan. **Staff**

**indicated** the problem with the passengers with mobility devices will be addressed with Chairperson Morrow, and the other items will be addressed off Agenda.

## REPORTS

**15. City of San Jose Disability Advisory Commission Report**

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

**16. Committee Staff Report**

There was no Committee Staff Report.

**17. Chairperson's Report**

There was no Chairperson's Report.

## OTHER

**18. Announcements**

Chairperson Morrow announced the upcoming meeting of the Committee Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons with the Board Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and indicated he will be unable to attend.

Member Eljas announced a job fair in November by non-profit organizations and indicated Chairperson Morrow will provide the Committee with more information.

**19. ADJOURNED at 3:08 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Menominee L. McCarter, Board Assistant  
Office of the Board Secretary