



COMMITTEE FOR TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Emma Eljas
Linda Gallo
Sandra Gouveia
David Grant
Katie Heatley (Ex-Officio)
Troy Hernandez
Marjorie Jensen
David Julian
Laura Michels
Aaron Morrow, First Vice Chairperson
Barbara Rhodes, Second Vice Chairperson
Barbara Stahl
Randy Tamez, Chairperson

Members Absent

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams
Martin Lasich
Jeanette Law
Thomas Slack

A quorum was present.

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The Committee received introductions from the audience including: David Ledwitz, Management Analyst; Michael Burns, General Manager; Ann Carey, Executive Assistant to the General Manager; David Sausjord, Revenue Services Manager; Carol Lawson, Fiscal Resources Manager; Susan Stark, Controller; Ali Hudda, Fiscal Resources Manager; Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager; Sam Lau, Deputy Director-Operations; Marcella Rensi, Transportation Planning Manager; Evelyn Tran, Senior Assistant Counsel; Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer; Jack Collins, Chief Construction Officer;

Keith Roan, Technology Manager; Patrick Griffin, Customer Service Supervisor; George Sandoval, Communications Manager; and Michelle Garza, Board Assistant.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

The Agenda was taken out of order.

REPORTS

15. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Tamez queried about the policy and procedure for inclusion in the CTA E-mail distribution list. Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager and Staff Liaison, responded that the June agenda will include this item to allow for discussion.

Chairperson Tamez expressed concern about the level of service received by people with disabilities when they contact VTA. He stated that the calls of people with disabilities should not be directed to the Accessible Services Department. He added that VTA staff should have the skills to handle calls from people with disabilities.

12. Quarterly Report from the General Manager

Michael Burns, General Manager, reported on the Recommended Biennial Budget for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009. His report highlighted the following: 1) No service cuts are recommended; 2) Reinvestment in areas affected by past funding cuts; 3) Resurrection of deferred projects; 4) Reduction in monthly fares for the youth, elderly, and disabled; and 5) Reduction in day pass fares for all categories. He concluded that the budget is stable.

Mr. Burns reported that public presentations on the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) will take place to receive public input and feedback. He added that Community Bus service will start in the Gilroy and Morgan Hill communities in July. He stated that the adoption of the COA is scheduled for the August 30, 2007 Board of Directors meeting, and implementation is scheduled for January 2008.

Member Jensen took her seat at 1:16 p.m.

Mr. Burns reported that the Board of Directors will receive a work plan for the Organizational and Financial Assessment of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority at the June 7, 2007 Board of Directors meeting.

Mr. Burns reported that as a result of Veolia Transportation terminating its contract with VTA and Outreach, a study of options to replace Veolia is underway. He stated that Veolia Transportation's last day of service is scheduled for October 15, 2007.

Mr. Burns announced that the northbound Santa Clara station platform is now open. He noted that the station was completed at end of April 2007, five weeks ahead of schedule. The southbound platform will open at the end of May 2007.

4. Minutes of April 11, 2007

M/S/C (Gouveia/Morrow) on a Roll Call Vote of 10 Ayes, to 0 Noes, to 2 Abstention to approve the Minutes of April 11, 2007. Member Julian and Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes abstained.

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

5. Recommended Biennial Budget for Fiscal Year 2008 and 2009

Carol Lawson, Fiscal Resources Manager, reported on the major sections of the Recommended Biennial Budget for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009. The first section titled "VTA Transit" highlighted the following topics: 1) Sources and uses of funds FY08-FY12; 2) Sources and uses of funds FY07; 3) Outstanding debt; 4) Operations; and 5) Capital.

Ms. Lawson reported on the second section titled "Congestion Management Program (CMP)/Highway" that highlighted the following: 1) Introduction; 2) Sources and uses of funds; 3) Comparison of revenues and expenses; 4) Contribution to capital; 5) Member assessments; 6) Valley Transportation Plan 2030 highway program introduction; and 7) Schedule of total VTP 2030 highway program appropriation.

Ms. Lawson reported on the third section titled "2000 Measure A" that highlighted the following: 1) Introduction; 2) Sources and uses of funds and outstanding debt; 3) Comparison of revenues and expenses; 4) Schedule of recommended projects; 5) Description of recommended projects; and 6) Schedule of total highway program appropriation.

Chairperson Tamez expressed appreciation and thanked staff for preparing the Recommended Biennial Budget for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009 in accessible format.

Member Grant queried about the method used to determine the growth rate of paratransit. Ms. Lawson stated that the number of trips determines the growth rate of paratransit. She noted that the growth rate of paratransit is decreasing. Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer, stated that the growth rate of paratransit is determined through historical data and information collected from Outreach. Member Heatley stated that it is still early to predict if the paratransit growth rate will increase or decrease.

Member Grant expressed concern regarding the cost savings for Outreach. Mr. Smith explained that cost savings measures were done to compensate for growth in ridership. He noted that Outreach was brought to VTA property to eliminate lease payments. He added that the relationship with the County was extended to save money from gas taxes and the cost to repair vehicles. Member Heatley stated she agrees with statement made by Mr. Smith and noted that additional cost may develop when a new vendor is selected to replace Veolia Transportation. She stated that the budget reflects a reduction to the allocated cost structure to the paratransit program, and that Outreach is trying to contain cost.

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

Chairperson Tamez queried about the estimated time for the selection of a new vendor so that the CTA may determine the cost for paratransit and ensure that the level of service will remain the same. Member Heatley responded that the schedule calls for the selection of a new vendor by October 2007. She added that costs for the new vendor will be part of the mid year budget review. Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager and Staff Liaison, stated that paratransit programs like Travel Training should be utilized to contain the growth of paratransit so it does not continue to be expensive.

Member Grant queried about the VTA and Outreach overhead costs. Ms. Lawson noted that VTA overhead cost for Fiscal Year 2008 is \$3.7 million and \$3.9 million for Fiscal Year 2009. She added that the Outreach overhead cost is \$5.6 million in Fiscal Year 2008 and \$5.8 million in Fiscal Year 2009. Member Heatley commented that the Outreach costs stated were broker costs and not overhead costs.

Member Grant commented on the implementation of fare box tokens for disabled people. He suggested incentives for Outreach riders to take fixed routes. Chairperson Tamez commented that when a new fare box system is acquired, it is important for the CTA to examine its functions and make sure that it is accessible.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow commented that staff should monitor Caltrain ridership to ensure that the amount of capital improvements invested for Caltrain is utilized properly.

Chairperson Tamez suggested establishing a subcommittee that would study the Travel Training program. He added that the findings of the subcommittee will be forwarded to the CTA for approval.

Member Grant commented about the bus stop improvement plan. David Ledwitz, Management Analyst, responded that he presented a list of bus stop improvements to the Committee. Chairperson Tamez requested documentation that the plan was provided to the Committee. Member Julian supported the statement made by Mr. Ledwitz and stated that there was a list of bus stop improvements presented to the Committee. Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager, stated that there is a list of bus stop improvements and it will be provided to the Committee.

M/S/C (Morrow/Julian) to review and recommend that the VTA Board of Directors approve the Recommended Biennial Budget for Fiscal Year 2008 and 2009.

Member Jensen queried about the status of the De Anza Transit Center project. Mr. Capps responded that the De Anza Transit Center Project is programmed in the FY08 budget. He stated that the project was delayed due to the down turn of the economy.

6. Fare changes proposed for implementation in July 2007 and September 2007

Ali Hudda, Fiscal Resources Manager, reported on the paratransit service area surcharge and the paratransit door-to-door surcharge. He stated that the Board of Directors approved and deferred the surcharge until June 2007. He stated that staff recommends continuing the deferral of the surcharge until a final ruling is made by the Department of Transportation. First Vice Chairperson Morrow expressed concern regarding the

exclusion of the surcharge deferral in the memorandum. Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager and Staff Liaison, stated that one of the reasons for the deferral of the surcharge is the condition of the CTA that one year notice should be provided prior to the surcharge taking effect.

Mr. Hudda gave a brief background on the proposed fare modifications. His report highlighted the following: 1) Youth summer blast pass; 2) 8-hour light rail excursion pass; 3) Day passes; 4) Monthly passes; 5) Community bus fares; 6) Effective dates for changes; 7) VTA fare policy considerations; 8) Title VI impact analysis; and 9) Fare box recovery.

Member Eljas queried about the guarantee of increased ridership when fares are lowered and VTA's action plan when ridership does not improve. Mr. Hudda stated that experts were given VTA's ridership information to perform an elasticity model of fares. He added that based on the elasticity model, ridership and revenue was predicted. He stated that VTA will conduct constant monitoring and the Transit Planning and Operations Committee will receive a monthly report on ridership performance. He noted that if a need to restructure the fare model arises, staff will inform the Board of Directors immediately.

Member Jensen suggested revisiting old routes and extend hours of service to increase ridership. Mr. Hudda responded that the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) will address those issues.

Member Grant queried about the discontinuation of the Mid Day Free Fare program for seniors and disabled. Mr. Hudda responded that the program was a one time commitment from the previous budget and there are no plans of resurrecting it at this point.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow commented that he cannot support the proposed fare changes because the fares are not affordable for low income people. Member Gouveia supported the claim of Member Morrow and added that the development of the fare structure should consider the income of the people.

Member Michels commented that VTA should use a portion of the operating budget for the token system to attract people who are visually disabled to use transit. She added that light rail ticket vending machines are not accessible. Mr. Hudda responded that currently tokens are used for youth and adult passes. He added that the current 18 year old fare box system restricts the use of additional tokens. He noted that the search for a new system will include input from the CTA to ensure that the machines are accessible.

Ms. Williams queried if Translink will have the ability to address the issues brought up by Member Michels. She also queried about the Homeless Pass program. Mr. Hudda responded that once Translink becomes operational, it will provide a senior and disabled card. He added VTA together with the County of Santa Clara has a Homeless Pass program where passes are sold at a very low rate. He noted that the Homeless Pass program administered by the Social Services department of the County of Santa Clara is 90 to 95 percent utilized.

Member Gallo queried on the feasibility of programming adult tokens for seniors and the disabled. Mr. Hudda responded that it would be feasible in the bus system, as long as there are only two types of tokens used. He noted the this will not work for the light rail system.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley commented that there is a tremendous demand for affordable monthly passes for low income people. She suggested developing programs that would cater to the needs of low income people and at the same time increase ridership and revenue.

Chairperson Tamez commented on documenting the service area surcharge and the door-to-door surcharge for public awareness.

Member Rhodes expressed concern regarding public awareness of the tokens. She commented that as a user of fixed route service, she is not aware of day pass tokens.

M/S/C (Julian/Eljas) to support the proposed fare changes and request VTA staff to look at reducing all fares especially for people with low income.

7. Project Priorities for the FY 2008 Countywide Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 3 Program

Marcella Renzi, Transportation Planning Manager, provided a brief background on the Transportation Development Act (TDA) that highlighted the following: 1) Guarantee Fund; 2) Bicycle expenditure program projects; and 3) Rescind/Reallocate requests.

Ms. Renzi reported that the total TDA Article 3 funding available for programming is \$1,628,695, \$1,088,668 of that is available for the Guarantee Fund, and \$547,989 is available for the Bicycle Expenditure Program (BEP). She added that both the Guarantee fund and the BEP fund may be carried over to the next cycle when they are not used.

Ms. Renzi apologized to the Committee regarding the missing attachment that listed the projects. First Vice Chairperson Morrow suggested deferring the item since the Committee did not receive complete information. Ms. Renzi noted that the TDA cannot be deferred because the Board of Directors will act on it before the June meeting of the CTA.

Member Stahl queried about the missing attachment and its impact to the CTA. Ms. Renzi noted that the following projects concern the CTA: 1) Fourth and Fifth Street handicap ramp installation in Gilroy; 2) Sidewalks on Hedding Street, from 8th Street to 10th Street in San Jose; 3) Sidewalks in Mussdale Way and N. Jackson Ave. in San Jose; 4) Sidewalks in Moorpark Avenue and the I-880 overpass in San Jose; 5) Pedestrian pathway on Lawrence Expressway between Saratoga and Prospect; and 6) Pedestrian pathway on Central Expressway between Granada and Rengstorff. Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager and Staff Liaison, explained that the projects have to abide with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standard.

M/S/C (**Julian/Rhodes**) the Committee for Transit Accessibility cannot endorse the FY 2008 Transportation Development Act Article 3 project priorities due to lack of information provided to the committee.

8. Report on the Web Site Updates

Patrick Griffin, Customer Service Supervisor, gave an update report regarding the web site. His report highlighted the following topics: 1) Positive review about the site; 2) Tutorial page; 3) Access keys; 4) Improved graphics; 5) Commissioned accessibility test; and 6) VTA staff sent to the National Accessibility Conference.

Member Julian commented that transit schedule cannot be enlarged in the current web site. Member Rhodes commented about the inability to enlarge the font size in the current web site. Mr. Griffin responded that the issues mentioned are addressed in the new web site.

Member Julian commented that he wanted to participate in the Web Focus group.

Member Jensen and Member Gallo left the meeting at 3:04 p.m., the quorum was lost and a Committee of the Whole was declared.

Members Julian, Eljas, Stahl, and First Vice Chairperson Morrow left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

10. Update on the Orbital System

Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager, provided a brief update on the Orbital System. He stated that the invalid announcement issues were reported to Orbital System and they are developing a software patch to address the problem. He added that if the patch does not solve the problem, Orbital will send two engineers to ride the VTA system who will identify and resolve the problem.

Mr. Capps stated that staff is exploring other announcement systems that may provide better quality.

11. Update on the Hope Center Shelter

Member Gouveia left the meeting at 3:06 p.m.

Member Michels left the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager, reported that VTA is working with Clear Channel on this project. He stated that Clear Channel has been focusing on the installation of shelters in Palo Alto and is also working on the rehabilitation of shelters.

Mr. Capps provided an update on the bus shelter/stop at Scott and Space Park in the City of Santa Clara. He stated that Clear Channel's initial project proposal was rejected by the City of Santa Clara and the approval for the resubmitted proposal is still pending.

Member Grant provided suggestions about the shelter installation. Mr. Capps stated that staff will study the suggestions.

9. Update from VTA Securement Task Force Meeting

The update from the VTA Securement Task Force meeting was deferred.

REPORTS

13. Board of Directors Report

There was no report from the Board of Directors.

14. Committee Staff Report

There was no Committee Staff Report.

OTHER

16. CTA Transit System Ridership Report

The CTA Transit System Ridership report was deferred.

17. Announcements

There were no Announcements.

18. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee of the Whole adjourned the meeting at 3:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Diaresco, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors