

COMMITTEE FOR TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

REVISED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairperson Tamez in Building A, Auditorium, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams
Emma Eljas
Linda Gallo
Sandra Gouveia
David Grant
Katie Heatley (Ex-Officio)
Troy Hernandez
David Julian
Martin Lasich
Laura Michels
Aaron Morrow, First Vice Chairperson
Barbara Rhodes, Second Vice Chairperson
Thomas Slack
Randy Tamez, Chairperson

Members Absent

Marjorie Jensen
Jeanette Law
Barbara Stahl

A quorum was present.

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The Committee received introductions from the audience including: David Ledwitz, Management Analyst; Mark Thomas, Technical Training Supervisor; Michael Hursh, Deputy Director; Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager; Francisco Salvador, Client Relationship Supervisor; Connie Langford, City of San José Senior Citizens Commission; Susan Stark, Controller; Jerry Mikolajczyk, Chief Financial Officer; Nancy Coss-Fitzwater, Policy and Administrative Manager; Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer; and Joonie Tolosa, Manager, Operations Analysis, Reporting and Systems.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

4. Minutes of May 9, 2007

M/S/C (Morrow/Gouveia) to approve the Minutes of May 9, 2007.

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

5. Bus Stop Annunciator Update

Joonie Tolosa, Manager for Operations Analysis, Reporting and Systems, gave a brief update regarding the bus stop annunciator. He reported that the main cause of the problem has been identified. He noted that the invalid public annunciator ID causes bus stop announcements to malfunction. He explained that the annunciator system has a 50-character limit and each character is represented by a bus stop. He added that if a route exceeds the 50-character limit, the annunciator defaults to an invalid public relations ID that causes the bus stop announcements to fail. He stated that staff resolved the problem by changing the character limit to 40. He added that the conducted field checks and system tests proved that the bus stop announcements are now working properly.

Member Slack queried if bus announcements are geared towards people waiting at bus stops. Mr. Tolosa responded that there are internal and external bus announcements directed to inform passengers inside and outside the bus.

Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes queried about the external volume of bus announcements. She also queried about the annunciator's ability to announce every stop or a stop requested by the passenger. Mr. Tolosa responded that the volume is programmed to change automatically at a particular time. He stated that the annunciator does not announce every bus stop on routes that have more than 40 stops because the system has a 40-character limit. He added that operators could verbally announce bus stops upon passengers request.

Member Lasich commented that bus operators are not properly trained. He explained that being visually disabled, he requested the operator to identify a bus stop. He added that the bus operator dropped him off seven blocks away from his requested stop.

Member Grant queried about the process of adjusting the volume of the bus stop announcements. Mr. Tolosa responded that the internal announcements are configured to change automatically at a certain time. He added that the system also has a sensor that minimally changes the volume of the announcement when it is affected by ambient noise.

Member Gallo took her seat at 1:13 p.m.

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

Chairperson Tamez commented that the CTA has a standing request that all bus stops be announced. Mark Thomas, Technical Training Supervisor, stated that in the new automated announcements, some single stop routes are not being announced. He added that staff will study the new system and report back to the CTA regarding bus stop announcements. Chairperson Tamez stated that the CTA should be informed if there are changes made regarding the announcement of bus stops.

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams, took his seat at 1:18 p.m.

Member Slack queried about VTA's policy regarding bus stop announcements. Sam Lau, Deputy Director-Operations, responded that VTA's policy is to adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Chairperson Tamez commented that the ADA requirement is only the minimum and that VTA can go beyond the ADA requirement.

The Agenda was taken out of order.

13. FYTD 2007 Third Quarter Transit Operations Performance Report (July 1, 2006-March 31, 2007)

Joonie Tolosa, Manager for Operations Analysis, Reporting and Systems, gave a brief background on the FYTD 2007 Third Quarter Performance Report. His report highlighted the following topics: 1) Ridership; 2) Operating Expense and Revenue; 3) Key Performance Indicators; and 4) Paratransit.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley queried about the long term plan for the San José Monterey Express. Dan Smith, Chief Operations Officer, responded that with or without VTA's contribution, the San José Monterey Express will continue its service.

Member Grant expressed concern regarding the increase in the Outreach late rate. Ex-Officio Member Heatley responded that the report was accurate. She explained that the increase in the late rate of Outreach reflect the transition for the following: 1) Two new parking yards; 2) New fleet of vehicles; 3) Training for the new vehicles; 4) Installation of new lifts; and 5) Acquisition of 30 new drivers.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow queried about the total projected paratransit ridership for FY 2007. Mr. Tolosa responded that the projected ridership for FY 2007 is 1.03 million. Ex-Officio Member Heatley commented that for FY 2006, paratransit ridership increased seven percent. She added that for FY 2007, the paratransit ridership continues to grow at five to six percent. She stated that a five percent growth in paratransit ridership is incorporated in the paratransit budget for FY 2008.

Member Slack queried about the allotted time before Outreach's service can be considered late. Ex-Officio Member Heatley responded that Outreach service is considered late after 40 minutes from the requested time of pick up.

Member Grant queried about the process of having the paratransit service providers accountable for being late in picking up customers. Ex-Officio Member Heatley

responded that there are four factors to consider regarding late paratransit service: 1) Information from the automated system; 2) Customer complaints; 3) Information from the Caregiver program; and 4) Information from the dispatcher. She stated that the information gathered from the four factors are compiled in the software for review. She added that service providers are penalized for providing poor service. She commented that there is also a process for service providers to contest late complaints.

6. Comprehensive Operations Analysis: Draft Proposed Service Operating Plan

Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager, reported on the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA). He conducted a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the following topics: 1) COA Outreach schedule; 2) VTA Board Policy; 3) Core network areas; and 4) Proposal organization.

Member Slack queried about the flexibility of the Community Bus routes. Mr. Connolly responded that it is possible to develop variable routes depending on the time of the day and the needs of the community.

Member Lasich queried about the bus route that services the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center on Homestead Road and Lawrence Expressway. Bill Capps, Service Planning Manager, responded that Bus Line 81 services the Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Medical Center. Member Grant described the route of Bus Line 81 from Downtown San José to Lawrence Expressway and Homestead Road.

Member Grant queried about the Community Bus that travels to the Santa Clara Transit Center. Mr. Connolly responded that Bus Line 32 travels to the Santa Clara Transit Center. He added that the proposal would convert the existing route into a Community Bus route. Mr. Capps described the modified route of the Community Bus Line 32 and stated that it will have a 30-minute service interval.

Member Grant expressed concern regarding the bus route modifications and its effect on the paratransit service areas. Mr. Connolly responded that the effects on the paratransit service will be addressed in the second phase of the analysis. He explained that analysis of the paratransit service could be conducted once the route changes have been identified.

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams, queried about the implementation of the Community Bus, the interval of its service, and its effectiveness to take over discontinued routes. Mr. Connolly responded that 19 routes will be implemented on July 2007. He stated that the frequency of the service is 30 minutes to an hour. He explained that the Community Bus routes are still being studied to ensure its effectiveness. He added that the Community bus has the ability to partner up with different sectors of the community to provide a better service.

Member Michels queried about the marketing strategy to promote the use of public transportation. Mr. Connolly responded that from August 2007 to January 2008, heavy promotion to use public transportation will be conducted. Mr. Capps added that VTA partnered with San José State University to develop the Eco Pass, which is a discount pass for students at San José State University.

Member Julian expressed concern regarding Bus Line 81 that services the Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Medical Center on Homestead Road and Lawrence Expressway. Mr. Connolly responded that the route of Bus Line 81 will be studied to address issues and concerns of the community.

Chairperson Tamez requested that staff inform the CTA of any changes made to the COA before it goes to the VTA Board of Directors for approval. Mr. Connolly stated that the second draft of the COA will be released in August 2007, and it will highlight changes made from the first draft.

Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes expressed concern about the reduction of service in the Almaden Valley. She stated that the poor service resulting from the proposed changes will drive people away from using public transportation.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow commented that staff needs to study the effects of the service consolidation to the paratransit service area and determine ways to provide service for the affected areas.

Member Grant queried about the information gathered from the public meetings about the COA. Mr. Connolly stated that staff is still reviewing the information gathered from the public meetings.

Member Slack queried about the market analysis that determined the transportation service for the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center on Homestead Road and Lawrence Expressway. Mr. Connolly responded that the presence of the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center was identified when the initial study was made. He added that a more detailed study will be conducted in the second draft of the COA. Mr. Capps stated that VTA staff met with the staff of Kaiser and they have no information on the estimated number of patients that would be using public transportation. He added VTA will adopt to the demand of service for that area.

7. Organizational and Financial Assessment Work Plan for Implementation Support

Ann Carey, Executive Assistant to the General Manager, provided a brief background of the Organizational and Financial Assessment Work Plan. She gave an update on the implementation process of the recommendations by the Hay Group that focused on three main areas: 1) Governance, the Board and its Committees; 2) Operational Structure, VTA's Organizational Structure; and 3) Financial Management.

Chairperson Tamez relinquished his seat at 2:03 p.m.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow presided over the meeting as Chairperson.

Ms. Carey reported on the first phase of the work plan that highlighted the following topics: 1) Project Management; 2) Implement Governance process and practices to enable transformation; 3) Implement organization recommendations; 4) Upgrade the SAP system; and 5) Develop strategies with the General Manager on transformation program initiatives.

Ms. Carey reported that the second phase of the work plan that was approved by the Administration and Finance Committee will be heard by the Board of Directors at its August 2007 meeting.

Chairperson Tamez took his seat at 2:10 p.m.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow relinquished his seat as Chairperson and Chairperson Tamez presided for the remainder of the meeting.

Member Grant queried about the Committee's participation regarding an item in the second phase of the work plan that states "Work with the General Manager to develop the Annual Work Program for the Board and its Committees." Ms. Carey stated that the CTA will be included in the development of the work program. She explained that the plan is for the Board of Directors to set direction for the Advisory Committees to achieve their goals. She added that the role of the consultant is to improve the communication between the Board of Directors and the Advisory Committees.

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams, queried about Sarbanes Oxley in phase two of the work plan. Ms. Carey responded that VTA will review the concept of Sarbanes Oxley which provides visibility in financial reporting.

Mr. Drummond queried about an item in the second phase of the work plan that states "Improve the conduct of the Board and Committee meetings." Ms. Carey responded that the Board of Directors will empower its Standing and Advisory Committees to fulfill some of its functions. She stated that this action would help the Board of Directors focus on their main role to provide direction and policy to VTA.

8. Revised Accessible Document Program

Francisco Salvador, Client Relationship Supervisor, stated that the goal of the program is to provide accessible documents to everyone. He reported that VTA is changing its business practices to achieve its accessibility goals. He stated that VTA is currently developing new training and procedures. He added that continuous monitoring of produced documents is being conducted to ensure that they are accessible.

Mr. Salvador reported that staff is currently researching new technology that will improve accessibility. He stated that the VTA is also working with San José State University and De Anza College for training and information regarding accessibility.

Mr. Salvador reported that the VTA is redesigning its website. He stated that information gathered from the focus groups will be reviewed and incorporated in the new website.

Member Slack queried about the use of voice interactive technology for the new VTA website. Mr. Salvador responded that staff is exploring voice interactive technology. He stated that VTA has two examples on the web where audio technology was used to convey information.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow expressed concern regarding the verbal reports presented to the CTA. He stated that the CTA passed a motion that reports should be in writing.

Member Michels queried about the availability of large print maps on the website. Mr. Salvador stated that staff is currently studying options that would enable users to enlarge maps on the website.

Member Grant queried about the goals of the accessible document program. Mr. Salvador stated that the goals of the program are the following: 1) Information will be posted on the web and will be accessible to the public; and 2) Ability to provide accessible information in a timely manner.

Member Grant expressed concern regarding the return of the accessibility issue in CTA's agenda. Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager and Staff Liaison, responded that the issue of accessibility was brought back to the Committee to provide information about the new training being conducted and the availability of new technology that would address the accessibility issues. Mr. Salvador stated that staff is updating its training and restructuring programs that relate to accessibility with the aide of new technology.

Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes commented that VTA employees in various departments should be trained to produce documents in accessible format. Mr. Salvador responded that it is VTA's plan to train staff in every department to produce documents in accessible format. He stated that the initial accessibility training which was comprised of staff from various departments are currently working on producing accessible documents that will be published in a few months.

9. Distribution of Information to CTA

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Program Manager and Staff Liaison, commented that anyone who would like to be added to the Board or any Committee distribution list should send a written request to the Board office via email or regular mail.

Chairperson Tamez expressed concern regarding the Committee's ability to receive information. He commented that there is denial of communication for the CTA. He stated that there is an inconsistency in the process of receiving information. Ms. Williams noted that staff is not withholding information to the Committee. She stated that staff does not want to send information to members who did not request to receive the information. She stated that there are some members who receive certain information because they made a written request to be added to that distribution list.

Chairperson Tamez recommended that the Committee should receive all information and it is the member's discretion if they want it or not. He referenced the 500-paged Technical Memorandum and stated that it should have been offered to the Committee members if they wanted to receive it or not, instead of having Committee members send a written request if they wanted a copy. Ms. Williams clarified that the Administrative Code states that a written request should be submitted in order to receive information. Chairperson Tamez stated that for a group of people with disabilities, accommodation

could be adjusted so that policies and procedure are fair and equitable. He commented that the issue of not receiving information maybe driven by the Committee's complex requirement of receiving information.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow supported the statement of Chairperson Tamez. He commented that the information produced by VTA is a public record and the Committee should receive the information without sending a written request.

Member Michels stated that she supports the Chairperson and she added that the Chairperson has discretion over the information that will be distributed to the Committee.

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams, referenced the Hay Group report and queried if it was distributed to all the Committees. Ms. Williams responded that the executive summary of the Hay Group report was sent to all the Committees. She added that the Technical Memorandum is available upon request.

Mr. Drummond commented on the process of receiving information as a Policy Aide for Council Member and VTA Board Member Forrest Williams. He stated that their office receives all Board and Committee information. He added that they notify the Board office if they decline to receive certain information.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow expressed his concern regarding the requirement for a written request for disabled people who are unable to write and has no access to a computer.

Member Slack recommended that the Committee should receive a list of released documents and they would decide which one they want to receive.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley commented that a procedure should be established regarding the distribution of information to the Committee and the distribution of documents in accessible format. Ms. Williams responded that staff is being trained to produce all documents in accessible format. She stated that this will eliminate the issue of having to provide a separate document in accessible format. She added that all documents that will be released to the public will be accessible.

Member Grant commented that the email that the Committee received from the VTA General Council as a response to the ADA Title 2 that was sent out by Chairperson Tamez was inappropriate. He stated that the Committee was not engaging in a serial meeting.

Member Grant noted that there is a disparity in the distribution of information. He stated that he has an outstanding request for information that has not been acted upon. Ms. Williams clarified that there seems to be a disparity because some members requested a long time ago to receive information and be added to other distribution lists. She queried if the Committee is willing to receive all documents that are produced for the Board and its Committees.

Member Julian commented that he does not have access to the internet and he cannot write. Ms. Williams responded that staff sends a hard copy of documents that are sent out electronically. She added that in this CTA meeting, June 13, 2007, the following requests will be accepted without a written notice: 1) Addition to any distribution list; and 2) Format to receive the information.

Member Eljas commented that Chairperson Tamez and Ms. Williams should talk about this issue regarding the distribution of information to the CTA offline and include it in the next meeting's agenda. She stated that she does not want to receive all information especially the 500 paged Technical Memorandum.

Chairperson Tamez asked the Committee's preference in receiving information and the type of information to be received.

Member Michels, to receive all documents via email.

Member Gallo, to receive all documents via email.

Member Lasich, do not want to receive any document other than CTA.

Member Slack, to receive all documents in large print and via email. He noted that a list should be provided for the Committee to choose the information they want to receive.

Member Grant, to receive the same information Chairperson Tamez receives via email.

Member Hernandez, to receive all documents via regular mail.

Member Eljas, to receive all documents via email.

Member Julian, to receive all documents via regular mail.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow, to receive all documents via email and regular mail.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley, to receive all documents via email.

Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes, to receive all documents via email.

Member Gouveia, to all documents large print via email and regular mail.

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams, commented that he is currently receiving all information.

Chairperson Tamez, to receive all documents. He commented that the Committee should receive a list of documents available.

10. Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities into VTA

The Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities into VTA was deferred.

11. **Door-to-Door and South County Service Area Surcharge Deferment Information**

The Door-to-Door and South County Service Area Surcharge Deferment Information was deferred.

12. **Light Rail Station Elevator Announcements**

The Light Rail Station Elevator Announcements was deferred.

14. **Operator Training Quarterly Report**

The Operator Training Quarterly Report was deferred.

15. **CTA members for future Accessible Format Training**

The CTA members for future Accessible Format Training was deferred.

REPORTS

16. **Board of Directors Report**

There was no Board of Directors Report.

17. **Committee Staff Report**

There was no Committee Staff Report.

18. **Chairperson's Report**

There was no Chairperson's Report

OTHER

19. **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 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Diaresco, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors



COMMITTEE FOR TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY

Wednesday, July 11, 2007

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) was called to order at 1:02 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
Sandra Gouveia
David Grant
Katie Heatley (Ex-Officio)
Troy Hernandez
David Julian
Martin Lasich
Aaron Morrow, First Vice Chairperson
Barbara Rhodes, Second Vice Chairperson
Thomas Slack
Barbara Stahl
Randy Tamez, Chairperson

Members Absent

Anthony Drummond, staff aide representing Ex-Officio Board Liaison Forrest Williams
Linda Gallo
Marjorie Jensen
Jeanette Law
Laura Michels

A quorum was not present and a Committee of the Whole was declared.

2. INTRODUCTION OF AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The Committee received introductions from the audience including: David Ledwitz, VTA Accessible Services Management Analyst; Michael Hursh, VTA Operations Deputy Director; Mark Thomas, VTA Technical Training Supervisor; Steve Newgren, VTA Operations Service Planning Management Analyst; Dan Smith, VTA Chief Operating Officer; Jerry Mikolajczyk, VTA Acting Chief Financial Officer; Ann Carey, VTA

Executive Assistant to the General Manager; Nancy Coss-Fitzwater, VTA Operations Policy and Administrative Manager; and Sam Lau, VTA Operations Deputy Director.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

David Julian, Interested Citizen, requested to receive his Committee information in large print format. Michelle Garza, Board Assistant, responded that the distribution lists will be updated to reflect the change.

Member Grant arrived and took his seat at 1:05 p.m. and a quorum was declared.

4. Minutes of June 13, 2007

Chairperson Tamez referenced the June 13, 2007 CTA Meeting Minutes Agenda Item #9., Distribution of Information to CTA, noting that the discussion on VTA's Administrative Code is not reflected in the meeting minutes. Chairperson Tamez requested that the June 13, 2007 CTA Meeting Minutes include the discussion on VTA's Administrative Code.

The Committee deferred the Minutes of June 13, 2007 to the August 8, 2007 CTA Meeting.

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

5. Door-to-Door and South County Service Area Surcharge Deferment Information

David Ledwitz, Accessible Services Management Analyst, provided a brief overview of the Door-to-Door and South County Service Area Surcharge Deferment Information. Mr. Ledwitz reported on the deferment of the paratransit Door-to-Door surcharge and the South County Service Area surcharge.

Mr. Ledwitz stated that prepared script has been provided to VTA and Outreach Customer Service staffs to respond to questions about the deferment of both the Door-to-Door and South County Service Area surcharges. Mr. Ledwitz read the prepared script into the record: "The additional charges for South County Outreach paratransit customers who live more than 3/4 of a mile from a bus route, and for customers who receive door-to-door service, will continue to be deferred until further notice. Should you have any questions, please contact VTA's Accessible Services department at 408-952-4249."

Mr. Ledwitz stated that the Paratransit Riders' Guide will be updated to include information regarding the surcharge deferments.

Chairperson Tamez requested that the Door-to-Door and South County Service Area surcharges deferment information be made available on VTA's webpage. Mr. Ledwitz responded that staff will work on the request.

6. Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities into VTA

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and Staff Liaison, provided a brief overview of the Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities into VTA. Ms. Williams reported that the Committee requested that staff provide information about how VTA integrates services for individuals with disabilities within the organization.

Ms. Williams stated that VTA has integrated elements of accessibility into transit, planning, and construction programs and projects. Ms. Williams reported that the Fiscal Resources Department created and provided VTA's Biennial Budget in an accessible format. VTA's Marketing Department is currently in the process of updating VTA's website and has solicited input from the disabled community. VTA's Technology Department is taking the lead to update software and provide training resources to make the process of creating accessible documents more efficient.

Ms. Williams noted that VTA's Congestion Management Program and Planning (CMPP) Division Community Design and Transportation (CDT) Program created and published a best practices manual in partnership with community stakeholders that incorporate principles of universal design. She stated that according to the CDT best practices manual the intent and consideration creates accessible travel environments for individuals with disabilities and senior citizens.

Chairperson Tamez referenced his response email to Agenda Item # 6., Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities, noting that his interpretation of mainstreaming is that each department complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure that services are provided in the most integrated way. Chairperson Tamez stated that he views VTA's Accessible Services Department a segregation of services for individuals with disabilities.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow expressed his support of Chairperson Tamez's response to Agenda Item # 6., Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities.

Member Stahl stated that she did not have the opportunity to review Mr. Tamez's response and requested clarification regarding the definition of "mainstreaming." Chairperson Tamez stated that the context of "mainstreaming" is that everyone receives the same level of service at the same point.

Chairperson Tamez commented that his response states that CTA is requesting services that are currently provided by the Accessible Services Department be provided in VTA's appropriate departments. He stated that the first level of customer contact should be VTA's Customer Service Department and other departments.

Member Grant expressed his support of Chairperson Tamez's response and stressed the importance of the Accessible Services Department to work collaboratively with the CTA.

Member Eljas stated that she believes that there is merit in both an Accessible Services Department working with individuals with disabilities and being treated equally as other customers. Member Eljas requested additional clarification regarding Chairperson Tamez's response regarding "mainstreaming."

Chairperson Tamez stated that the objective is to implement an organizational change and recommended that the Committee receive a monthly update on the status of “mainstreaming” of individuals with disabilities within VTA.

Member Gouveia stressed the importance of including the calling out of stops in Chairperson Tamez’s response. Chairperson Tamez commented that the response is a starting point for the Committee to determine the importance of needs to be addressed.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow expressed concern regarding the delay to begin VTA’s travel-training program.

Member Slack stated that he did not have the opportunity to review the response and asked Chairperson Tamez for a summary of the items and references that reflect the adversarial relationship between Accessible Service Department and CTA. Chairperson Tamez responded that it is his perception that the relationship has been adversarial.

Dan Smith, Chief Operating Officer, expressed concern and disagreement with Chairperson Tamez’s response and the statement regarding an adversarial relationship between the Accessible Services Department and CTA. Mr. Smith stated that VTA staff works diligently to serve all the communities to ensure that all customers receive the best service that VTA provides. Mr. Smith commented that VTA staff works diligently to address all customer concerns and service complaints.

M/S/C (Julian/Gouveia) to support Chairperson Tamez’s response to Agenda Item # 6., Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities into VTA, and forward the information to the Board of Directors.

M/S/C (Julian/Gouveia) to request that Mainstreaming of Individuals with Disabilities be placed on CTA’s Regular Agenda as a reoccurring item to allow for Committee discussion and assist VTA to integrate working with individuals with disabilities into VTA as a whole.

7. Stop Request Activated Announcements

Steve Newgren, VTA Operations Service Planning Management Analyst, provided a brief overview of the Stop Request Activated Announcements. Mr. Newgren reported that Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes requested staff investigate modifying the “Stop Request” system to activate the next stop announcement.

Mr. Newgren reported that VTA’s current announcement technology relies on a Global Positioning System (GPS), which utilizes satellites to locate the actual position of each bus along the route. Stop announcements are activated when a vehicle enters into a defined geographic area known as a “trigger box,” surrounding the stop to be announced.

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

Mr. Newgren commented that the “Stop Request” system is designed to notify a VTA bus operator of a passenger’s request to stop at the next bus stop. The “Stop Request”

system was not designed to be integrated with the stop announcement system; therefore, merging the two systems would be difficult and costly.

Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes asked if a customer activates the stop request could the bus operator call out the next bus stop. Mr. Newgren responded that operators are required to call out certain stops. He stated that if the Annunciator System is not working then the operator is required to call out the stops from a call stop sheet.

Chairperson Tamez noted that ADA regulations state that operators call out enough stops so that the customer is oriented to the surroundings.

Member Grant queried about the problems related to invalid public annunciator identification malfunction. Mr. Newgren responded that staff resolved the problem by changing the character limit from 50 to 40. He stated that staff has conducted field checks and the bus stop announcement system is working properly.

Member Eljas asked how old was VTA's current communication system. Mr. Newgren responded that the communication system was put into service in October 2004.

Member Eljas asked when staff would consider implementing a new system. Mr. Newgren stated that he doesn't have any information when a new system will be implemented.

Sam Lau, Operations Deputy Director, referenced Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes' question regarding calling out the next bus stop when the stop request is activated, noting that this request would be very difficult and challenging since VTA has over 4,000 bus stops and each bus route has approximately 50 to 60 stops.

Mr. Lau responded that the ADA requires that a major change in direction or major transfer points are to be called out, but not every single stop.

Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes stated that it is difficult and challenging for individuals with visual disabilities to know where they are and to become oriented while traveling on the bus if the stops are not being called out. Mr. Lau responded that operators can contact Operations Control Center (OCC) to obtain route stop information for customers.

Member Slack asked if it is reasonable for a customer to request that the operator call out their stop. Mr. Lau responded that it is reasonable for operators to call out stops requested by customers.

Member Slack referenced an incident where a visually impaired individual was left off at the wrong bus stop and the individual was completely disoriented and required assistance to get back to the Santa Clara Valley Blind Center (SCVBC). Member Slack asked if there was something that the operators could be instructed to do to assist customers requiring assistance. Mr. Lau responded that operators can contact OCC to obtain location information for customers.

Mr. Lau stated that customers can request that the operator call out a specific stop. He stated if the driver is not aware of the location stop then the driver can contact OCC to obtain the appropriate information.

Chairperson Tamez requested that the Committee discuss the different levels of orientation and stressed the importance of addressing the issues to ensure that individuals are being left off at the appropriate bus stop.

8. Accessible Document Training

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and Staff Liaison, provided a brief overview of the Accessible Document Training. Ms. Williams commented that staff has completed its first round of training to learn to create accessible documents. She reported that Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes participated in the first round of training.

Ms. Williams reported that staff is evaluating future training needs for the organization and will provide opportunities for CTA Members to participate in the training courses.

Ms. Williams asked the Committee to provide a list of members who are interested in participating in accessible document training. She stated that staff will contact these Members when training courses and dates have been scheduled. She noted that the accessible training courses will be scheduled during the week and will require a commitment of at least a full day. Member Julian volunteered to be added to the list for future training.

Member Julian left his seat at 1:50 p.m., the quorum was lost,
and Committee of the Whole was declared.

Chairperson Tamez expressed his concern that the Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons were contacted to participate in the Accessible Training courses, noting that the Committee does not serve in this type of capacity. Chairperson Tamez stated that it would be better to hire consultants to conduct the Accessible Training since they would be better prepared to illustrate how to create accessible documents. Chairperson Tamez recommended that the Committee establish an Accessible Document Training Subcommittee.

Ms. Williams stated that the purpose of the Accessible Training is to create accessible documents, but it is beneficial and valuable for the Committee to understand the limitations and types of technologies that are available.

Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes reported that she participated in three days of the Accessibility Training. Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes expressed her appreciation and noted that she was impressed with the participants who attended the training in an attempt to learn how to create accessible documents.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow requested information on the accessibility consultants. Ms. Williams responded that the consultants hired for the Accessible Training were Knowbility. Knowbility conducts an annual conference entitled, "Access U Accessibility Training," where corporate users are instructed on the process of creating accessible documents.

Ms. Williams continued that staff also worked with an individual from De Anza College, Assistive Technology Department, for accessible Portable Data Format (PDF) training.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow asked if the consultants are local and requested the consultants website address. Ms. Williams responded that the consultants are located in Austin, Texas and stated that the website address will be distributed to the Committee.

Chairperson Tamez recommended that the Committee establish a Subcommittee to provide reports and updates to the Committee.

9. Quarterly Update from VTA Technical Training

Mark Thomas, Technical Training Supervisor, provided a brief overview of the Quarterly Update from VTA Technical Training. Mr. Thomas reported on the External Announcements System, noting that the design of the system is to call out the Route Line and destination at every stop when the front door is opened. He continued that the External Announcements System has had some problems recently, but staff is currently working to address the issues.

Member Julian took his seat at 1:56 p.m. and a quorum was declared.

Member Slack asked when VTA's External Announcements System became available. Mr. Thomas responded that the system became available in the mid 1990's.

Mr. Thomas continued that the External Announcements System previously was mechanically triggered by the front door, whereas now it is triggered by the Advanced Communications System (ACS) Radio System.

Steve Newgren, VTA Operations Service Planning Management Analyst, commented that staff has checked VTA's bus vehicles and determined that the system has experienced a low percentage of problems associated with the External Announcements System.

Member Lasich stressed the importance for operators to call out stops for customers with visual disabilities. Mr. Newgren responded that operators are required to call out stops requested by customers.

Mr. Thomas suggested that customers inform the driver that their stop is near a specific main cross street.

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and Staff Liaison, stated that operators can contact OCC to obtain route stop information and directions for customers.

Member Lasich asked if it were possible to program every bus stop announcement within the system. Mr. Newgren responded that it would not be feasible.

Chairperson Tamez stressed the importance to focus on better strategies to address the issues and concerns related to the Announcements System and "Stop Request" system.

Member Julian referenced an experience on Route Line 57 or 58, where the External Announcements System was announcing the wrong destination. Mr. Newgren stressed

the importance for customers to provide relevant information to VTA when reporting these types of incidents to ensure that the concern is addressed.

Mr. Newgren stated that the announcement system concern will be forwarded to staff.

Member Grant asked if VTA provides courtesy stops between stops for customers with disabilities and/or seniors. Mr. Thomas responded that VTA maintains the “night stops” program. Under this program, a driver may stop between regular bus stops to allow a passenger to disembark in a safer location. Mr. Thomas stated that the “night stops” program is in effect from dusk till dawn.

Member Grant stressed the importance to expand the “night stops” program to provide additional assistance for individuals with disabilities and seniors.

8. Accessible Document Training (continued)

Chairperson Tamez recommended that the Committee establish an Accessible Document Training Subcommittee to provide reports and updates to the CTA Committee.

M/S/C (Julian/Morrow) to recommend establishing an Accessible Document Training Subcommittee to attend Accessible Document Training and provide reports and updates to the CTA Committee.

Chairperson Tamez asked if there were any members willing to volunteer to serve on the Accessible Document Training Subcommittee to provide input and feedback to the CTA Committee.

Member Julian and First Vice Chairperson Morrow and Second Vice Chairperson Rhodes volunteered to serve on the Accessible Document Training Subcommittee.

Ex-Officio Member Heatley requested that OUTREACH Paratransit Services staff attend and participate in the Accessible Document Training.

REPORTS

10. Board of Directors Report

There was no Board of Directors Report.

11. Committee Staff Report

Camille Williams, Accessible Services Manager and Staff Liaison, reported that Community Bus Service began operating in the South County communities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy on July 2, 2007. Ms. Williams noted that VTA attended and participated in the Morgan Hill Independence Day Parade.

Member Eljas queried about the Community Bus Program. Ms. Williams responded that the Community Bus Program uses smaller more fuel-efficient vehicles on a fixed route.

Member Eljas queried about the Community Bus Program headways. San Lau, Operations Deputy Director, responded that the headways are between 15 to 30 minutes depending on the location and time of day. He stated that the Community Bus is similar to regular service with fixed routes.

First Vice Chairperson Morrow asked if the Morgan Hill and Gilroy Community Bus Program eliminated or replaced any fixed route service. Mr. Lau responded that the Community Buses replaced some service and provides service to existing routes.

Mr. Lau stated that Morgan Hill Community Bus Routes will serve the northern and southern portions of the city and both lines interconnect with Bus Line 68.

Member Slack queried about the Community Bus Program fare structure. Mr. Lau stated that Community Bus single ride fare will cost \$1 for adults and 50 cents for youths, seniors, and disabled customers. He noted that VTA offers free shuttle service for Great America and River Oaks.

12. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Tamez reported that he was recently appointed to the City of San Jose Disability Advisory Commission (DAC), where he attended and participated in the July 9, 2007 City of San Jose DAC.

Chairperson Tamez requested that the City of San Jose DAC Report be placed on CTA's Regular Agenda as a standing monthly report provided by fellow City of San Jose DAC member and CTA First Vice Chairperson Morrow.

Member Julian reported that he represents the City of Santa Clara ADA. He requested that the City of Santa Clara ADA Report be placed on CTA's Regular Agenda as a standing quarterly report. Chairperson Tamez requested that Member Julian provide the quarterly City of Santa Clara ADA Report to the Committee.

On order of Chairperson Tamez, there being no objection, the Committee requested that City of San Jose DAC and City of Santa Clara ADA Reports be placed on CTA's Regular Agenda as standing reports.

OTHER

13. Announcements

Member Grant queried about the status of the Hope Center Shelter request for a bus shelter at Scott and Space Park in the City of Santa Clara. Mr. Newgren responded that Clear Channel is scheduled to begin installation of the bus shelter on July 17, 2007.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle M. Garza, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors