

**SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT
1250 SAN CARLOS AVENUE, SAN CARLOS, CALIFORNIA**

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING – FEBRUARY 3, 2010**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Baker (Chair), A. Chow, T. Collette, K. Feldstein, M. Hall, W. Kingsford-Smith, P. Loranger, M. Matev, K. Nobles, S. Price, P. Ratto, D. Wilcox

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: P. Hitchcock, K. Kott, D. Milton

SAMTRANS STAFF PRESENT: K. Green, N. McKenna, C. Patton, E. Proctor, H. Silvas

Chair John Baker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Sondra Price said on page four of the minutes, in the first paragraph, she called the Customer Service Center at 6 p.m. not 6 a.m.

The Committee (Kingsford-Smith/Ratto) approved the minutes of January 6, 2010 (Collette abstained).

PRESENTATION: ROUTE 17

Associate Bus Contracts Administrator Henry Silvas made the following points:

- Route 17 has become a success story.
- The north and south coast communities in San Mateo County present unique transportation needs.

Kim Nobles asked how many miles Route 17 covers. Mr. Silvas said Route 17 is 30 miles in length from Pescadero to Montara.

- Prior to 2007 transportation challenges were identified and presented as barriers to success on the coast. The included limited access in the area, roads are capacity constrained, lengthy travel times and distances between Pescadero to Montara and a choke point in Half Moon Bay at Highways 1 and 92.
- The area has a diverse population with low income, high income, senior, youth and undocumented residents and the needs of each of population was hard to meet with one service model.
- There were scarce operating funds for transportation services so a partnership was formed to review coastside transportation gaps.

- The Coastside Transportation Committee was formed with representatives from SamTrans, Coastside Hope, Cabrillo Unified School District, City of Half Moon Bay and the County of San Mateo.
- Funding was established with the City/County Association of Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission grants.
- The committee conducted a needs assessment survey and the four key areas were:
 - a. Workers and students competed for seats on the buses.
 - b. Workers and students needed extended service hours.
 - c. Twenty-five percent of low income workers worked on Sundays.
 - d. Service to Montara was very limited.
- As a result of the survey steps taken to address the needs included:
 - a. Extending Route 17 to Montara.
 - b. Extend daily service hours to 9 p.m.
 - c. Extend daily service hours to include Sundays.
 - d. Add a tripper to the start and end of school day to reduce overcrowding.
 - e. Realign route along Main Street between Highways 92 and 1 to better serve customers.
 - f. Create an outreach plan to build awareness of transit options.
- Route 17 is a local fixed route operated by MV Transportation.
- FY2009 ridership increased 12.4 percent to 97,340 total passengers over FY2008.
- The new 29-foot Gillig buses will be put in service on Route 17 in February 2010.

David Wilcox arrived at 6:41 p.m.

Tom Collette asked if a passenger gets on in Half Moon Bay are they allowed to get off half-way to Pescadero. Mr. Silvas, yes, but only at designated stops.

Ms. Nobles asked what the percentage of bus operators on Route 17 speak Spanish. Mr. Silvas said at least 75 percent.

Peter Loranger asked what percentage of the daily riders are students. Mr. Silvas said 60-65 percent per month are students.

Maureen Hall asked what the frequency of the route is. Mr. Silvas said there are 12 schedules per day and run approximately every 1 ½ hours.

Peter Ratto said he went to the dedication for the new buses in Half Moon Bay and the service was well received by the community. The community is very excited to get the new buses.

Chair Baker said in 2001 Route 17 was under consideration for elimination and he is glad to see SamTrans is on the coast and pushing the new branding.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Baker said:

- He was finally able to ride a new bus today.
- Route 122 seems to have additional riders boarding at Lake Merced and Font.

Ken Feldstein arrived at 6:51 p.m.

- Attended the January 13 Transportation Authority Board meeting. Rosanne Foust was elected chair and Pat Dixon was elected chair of the TA CAC.

Discussion on Proposal for Board Regarding Board of Directors Representation

Chair Baker said when he first drafted this memo on representation it was hot on the heels of the service reductions. He thinks that while there was great public process leading up to the discussion there seemed to be a point where the Board said, “thank you, we hear you, now let us deal with it” and this left him a bit cold. Chair Baker said sometimes there has been a disconnection between the daily riders and the Board so he offered this proposal last month for CAC’s thoughts. In the meantime he put a couple of feelers to a few sources he had on the Board to see how they would react and while they agreed wholeheartedly with his reasons for wanting this resolution, they also said they did not see it being supported by the Board. Chair Baker said one of the reasons was that if general riders are given a seat then other special interest groups, i.e., disabled or senior population, would want one. He said people he talked to also indicated that the concerns he raised on the issue of the CAC input process might be treated a little more directly before such a huge step is taken. For example, it was suggested in matters where the CAC is likely to see the issues that directly influence riders, i.e., fare increases and service cuts, joint study sessions with the Board and CAC might be something the Board would look forward to. Chair Baker said this made a bit of sense after speaking to people, but at the risk of sounding a little wishy-washy he would like to hear the CAC’s thoughts on other ways of increasing Board interactivity and perhaps tabling this proposal after hearing everyone’s thoughts and store it as a nuclear option in the future if the CAC is not able to find some middle grounds.

David Wilcox said he doesn’t know how the magic number of 15 came about. Maybe it would be better if the special interest groups are represented at the CAC level so they have direct access to the Board.

Ken Feldstein said at one time the CAC asked the Board for non-expiring terms like the other CACs. The Board has a stronger argument that this is an encompassing CAC of the entire community. He said the Joint Powers Board has non-voting members, but he is not positive how they are appointed or the constituents they represent. Mr. Feldstein said the CAC is to be representative of the entire community and that is how the Board gets their input. He feels there needs to be more discussion among CAC members before presenting to the Board.

Mr. Ratto said the CAC is diverse enough to represent and listen to all the different groups and present their positions quite well. Mr. Ratto said there is a wide range of public transit riders on the CAC, and people who are familiar with all forms of public transit in this county, but also Santa Clara and San Francisco counties. He thinks this group brings a lot to the table and having a CAC member, either the chair or a designee, would bring invaluable experience to the Board. Mr. Ratto said the CAC are riders, they are the people who get on the buses and ride them. He said not to be disrespectful of the Board, but he thinks the only time many of them get on a bus is for a ribbon cutting. The CAC has a range of experience and can represent all the big issues that can come up throughout this county from any group and probably articulate it as well as anyone. So there is great value in having a member from this committee sit on the Board. He understands this member would not be able to vote, but the fact is other boards have non-voting members.

Ms. Nobles said if the CAC got a voting or non-voting seat on the Board they must be personally familiar with being one of the riders of the classes mentioned earlier as well as Title VI passengers.

Chair Baker said one of the reasons for his proposal was the local college districts have a non-voting student trustee who can bring the issues up as they happen.

Mr. Wilcox said if you are not active with seniors or disabled riders you don't know the issues they face. There is not much support from the Board in finding out.

Chair Baker would like to create a subcommittee of four members to work on this issue and bring back to CAC for further discussion before bringing to the Board.

Ms. Nobles said there is constant turnover on the CAC and no consistency.

Mr. Feldstein said there are a lot of people who don't stay on the CAC for an extended period of time. He said people get frustrated with the lack of input that gets adopted and implemented.

Mr. Collette said since he joined the SamTrans Accessibility Committee it has given him more purpose to stay on the CAC and he has learned so much from this committee.

Andy Chow said he doesn't think the Board is ready to adopt this plan. They have their own way of making their decisions, but they are open to other kinds of dialogue.

Ms. Nobles said the CAC is appointed by a subcommittee of the Board. Maybe it is possible to be part of the Community Relations Committee as a start before asking for a seat on the Board.

Chair Baker said he feels the Board subcommittees are only on paper and nothing else. He would like a couple of volunteers to work with him on this issue.

Ms. Nobles, Mr. Feldstein and Mr. Kingsford-Smith volunteered to be on the committee.

Chair Baker would like to table this issue, meet with the sub-committee and bring back to a future CAC meeting for discussion.

SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE

Director of Bus Transportation Chester Patton made the following report:

- Ms. Nobles advised last month of a 40-foot bus on a southbound Route 390 that was not adequate for passenger load. Staff was able to get a 60-foot bus on the route the next day.
- A couple of months ago Mr. Chow recommended a change on the routing for Route 292 in San Francisco and the planning department looked at this suggestion. The recommended change will be effective with the new runbook on April 11.
- Chair Baker recommended a routing change for Route KX and the planning department said no to this recommendation.

- Matey Matev gave a number of recommendations including Routes 43 and 53. The planning department agreed with the recommendations for Routes 43 and 53 and these changes will be effective April 11.
- December ridership continues to decline at approximately 9 percent.
- On-time performance was 87.2 percent.

Mr. Chow said the 9 percent drop is significant and could be contributed to the recent service changes.

Mr. Feldstein asked when the Transbay Terminal move will occur now that there is money. Mr. Patton said he is not sure.

Mr. Patton said staff is watching the loads very closely on Route KX. People are not being left behind, but some trips have standees. There are no statutes that restrain transit from carrying standees. The next runbook is April 11 and there will be some schedule adjustments to Route KX.

Mr. Feldstein asked about Route 359 which replaced Route FX. Mr. Patton said there are about 120 trips per day. He will provide more information on this route at the March meeting.

Mr. Chow said he rode Route 359 and the ridership wasn't that good and there was congestion getting into Millbrae. He said there may be a possibility to extend Route 359 via Hillsdale.

Mr. Collette recently rode Route 359 from the Millbrae Intermodal Station and it dropped him off in front of his home. He said it is an excellent service. He said none of the signs were working at the Millbrae Intermodal Station.

Mr. Patton said all the signs are dark at the Millbrae Intermodal Station because the vendor went out of business.

Mr. Chow said without the electronic signs the bus stops are extremely confusing. A laminated map should be put where the non-working signs are indicating the stops.

Ms. Price said she got off BART at Millbrae and it was extremely confusing. Some type of signage is needed.

Assistant District Secretary Nancy McKenna said CAC recruitment to fill five vacancies begins on February 8 and ends on March 5 at 5 p.m. The five members whose terms are expiring are Andy Chow, Tom Collette, Pam Hitchcock, David Milton and Kim Nobles. All members are eligible to reapply.

CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS

Mr. Feldstein said he would like to revisit the term limits for the CAC.

Mr. Matev distributed a detailed report on improving service and making it consistent with people's needs and current ridership and asked for a discussion at the March 3 meeting.

Chair Baker asked staff for this item to be on the March agenda.

Mr. Chow asked why the colors were changed on the new schedules. Community Relations Specialist Kelly Green will find out and report back.

LIAISON REPORTS

a. SamTrans Board – John Baker

Chair Baker reported on the January meeting:

- Director Omar Ahmad replaced Jim Hartnett on the Board.
- Mr. Kingsford-Smith received a certificate of appreciation.
- All member concerns expressed at the January CAC meeting were reported.
- Deputy CEO Chuck Harvey gave a presentation on Caltrain.
- Fifty-five employees were displaced with the recent service reductions.
- Rose Guilbault was elected chair and Karyl Matsumoto was elected vice chair.
- The first class of Senior Mobility Ambassadors were introduced.

b. SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee – Tom Collette - meeting cancelled.

c. Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee – Peter Loranger - no meeting.

d. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board - David Wilcox

- Metropolitan Transportation Commission liaison reported applicants are needed for the new advisory committee.
- Nineteen people died on the railroad tracks in 2009.
- A resolution of appreciation was given to a San Carlos school bus operator for saving a woman who had fallen on the tracks.
- A large amendment to the budget was made for the San Bruno Grade Separation Project.

e. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board Citizens Advisory Committee – Andy Chow

- Executive Officer Public Affairs Mark Simon gave an update on suicide prevention efforts.

f. Senior Mobility Action Plan – Ken Feldstein –nothing.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held March 3, 2010, at 6:30 p.m., 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, California 94070.

ADJOURNED: 7:54 p.m.