

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

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

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: M. Hall, P. Hitchcock, D. Milton

SAMTRANS STAFF PRESENT: K. Green, N. McKenna, S. Murphy, C. Patton, E. Proctor, T. Yurek

Chair John Baker called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee (Kingsford-Smith/Nobles) approved the minutes of February 3, 2010 (Kott abstained).

PRESENTATION: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Government Affairs Manager Seamus Murphy provided the following report:

State

Last year, the State budget diverted 100 percent of State Transit Assistance (STA) funding in order to resolve the General Fund deficit. Last fall, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the California Transit Association's (CTA) lawsuit that use of these revenues for non-mass transportation purposes is illegal. In response the governor's proposed budget included a gas tax swap that would legally divert STA revenues by eliminating the sales tax on gasoline and diesel fuel. Since this proposal, staff has been working with the CTA and our Legislative delegation on an alternative proposal that would allow the State to achieve the same General Fund savings while maintaining a base level funding for public transit. The Legislature is close to approving a gas tax swap that would eliminate the 5 percent State sales tax on gasoline and replace it with a 17.9-cent increase in State excise tax on gasoline. New revenues would replace sales tax funding for highways and local streets and roads, but public transit's share of State sales tax would be eliminated. In order to preserve some base level funding for transit, sales tax on diesel fuel would increase from 5 percent to 6.75 percent. Starting in 2012 this proposal would result in a \$350 million STA program and is expected to grow to over \$500 million by 2020. A coalition of local government entities is pursuing a ballot measure that would help protect STA along with local transportation sales tax revenues, redevelopment funds and other taxes and fees reserved for local government. This is called the Local Taxpayer, Public Safety and Transportation Protection Act. This item will be on the March 9 SamTrans agenda for board action.

Chair Baker said, starting in 2012, the new tax is expected to generate \$350 million statewide, and asked what STA was estimated to generate. Mr. Murphy said under the old formula STA fluctuated depending on spillover, but on average, it was around \$230 million.

Andy Chow asked about the governor's view of this proposal. Mr. Murphy said the governor is okay with maintaining the sales tax on diesel for public transit as long as the same General Fund savings are achieved for paying down bond debt service as proposed in his plan. The governor has some problems with a piece of the proposal that included a regional fee on gasoline that the regions could impose to fund implementation of SB375.

Federal Update

Mr. Murphy said there is continued uncertainty about the timing of a long-term, six-year, authorization for surface transportation programs. Congress has been approving short-term extensions since the authorization expired on September 30. The most recent extension wasn't approved before the Federal transportation programs suffered a one-day lapse because the legislation wasn't approved in time. One senator blocked consideration of the measure, but a deal was ultimately made to pass the extension.

The Senate has approved a jobs bill that includes an extension of the current program by a full year, but the Senate's Jobs Bill is not as far reaching and does not include supplemental infrastructure funding like an earlier version passed in the House. The House will now need to either approve the Senate's version or amend and work through the differences in a conference committee.

Ken Feldstein arrived at 6:48 p.m.

Sondra Price asked if there are any mandates in any of the applications, on how right of ways are kept up and roads and bridges are maintained. Mr. Murphy said Federal Formula Funds can only be used for capital purposes and allow for maintenance.

Ken Feldstein asked if capital money can be put into operational money for drivers and maintenance. Mr. Murphy said staff is pushing this issue heavily with the delegation in Washington D.C.

Mr. Chow asked about the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) pulling the money from the BART Oakland Airporter project. Mr. Murphy said since the funding is not being used for that project MTC has an opportunity to reprogram the funds to other agencies. Staff has identified some projects that would fit these funding criteria and the District is definitely benefiting from this circumstance.

PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVING SAMTRANS SERVICE

Matey Matev said his reason for doing this research paper was because he rides public transportation every day and the biggest problem is there is no public transportation in the evenings and weekends except along El Camino Real.

Director of Bus Transportation Chester Patton said staff is taking a serious approach to reviewing these recommendations, but staff is not ready to share their findings. Mr. Patton hopes to have a full report for the April CAC meeting.

Kim Nobles said she supports the recommendation to add trips on weekday afternoons and early evening on Routes 251 and 270.

Mr. Feldstein said Route 359 service should end at Hillsdale Shopping Center. He has ridden Route 250 on Saturdays and asked if staff has a Saturday count for this route.

Wayne Kingsford-Smith said he has ridden Route 271 on weekdays and ridership is low so is there a need for this route on the weekends.

Mr. Chow said the Woodside Road corridor is under served. On Saturdays there is a bus that goes to Canada College and there is no ridership between downtown Redwood City and the Caltrain station to the college. He said maybe Route 274 should be rerouted on Saturdays to serve the areas that are not served by Route 295.

Peter Ratto said Woodside Road is an area that needs service and he agrees service ends too early for those who work retail on Routes 251 and 270.

Mr. Feldstein suggested extending Route 85 to Woodside Plaza or Alameda de las Pulgas. He said Route 250 should be split and have one schedule go up Hillsdale Boulevard to the College of San Mateo (CSM) and one route on Highway 280 to CSM. Mr. Patton said Hillsdale Boulevard has weight restrictions on the west end that prevent staff from doing this.

Chair Baker said he would like to concentrate on Routes 250, 270 and 271. Mr. Patton said staff is already working on all of Mr. Matev's recommendations.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Baker said:

- The sub-committee to review the Board representation proposal will be Mr. Feldstein, Mr. Kingsford-Smith, Ms. Price and Katherine Kott.
- He encouraged all members whose terms expire in April to reapply by March 5.

SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE

Mr. Patton made the following report:

- Last month there was discussion of the wayfinding signs for the bus bays at Millbrae Intermodal Station. There is a kiosk with this information near the BART turnstiles. Later this month staff will be installing additional signs in the dark kiosks.
- Route 359, which replaced Route FX, provides a shuttle link between Foster City and the Millbrae Intermodal Station. This route is averaging about 111 riders per weekday; on-time performance is 85 percent. There will be some time adjustments made in the April runbook to allow passengers extra time to get to BART or Caltrain from the bus.
- Ridership continues to decline with over a 10 percent decrease in January; on-time performance is almost 89 percent.

Ms. Nobles expressed appreciation to Mr. Patton for announcements on the buses that kindly remind passengers to turn down the volume on Ipods and cell phone usage.

Mr. Feldstein asked about ridership on Route KX. Mr. Patton said there are not massive loads, but articulated buses are filling up with some standees. On-time performance is 78 percent and this is attributable to more people at bus stops, which cause longer dwell times.

Public Information Specialist Kelly Green said the green color change on the timetables is for the inner-city routes and to convey SamTrans is a green company.

CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS

Mr. Ratto said ridership on Route KX looks good during peak hours and asked if these are former express riders. Mr. Patton said many were former express riders.

Ms. Kott said she rode a new bus on Route 390 out of Palo Alto and there were standees before arriving at Redwood City.

Mr. Kingsford-Smith said new bus shelters were installed at Sequoia Station in Redwood City. The problem with these shelters is there are no front panels. People are getting wet waiting for the bus and they can't sit down because the seats are wet. Mr. Patton said having no front panels was a highly contested issue. These shelter styles are used all around the world.

David Wilcox said he has heard nothing but complaints about the shelters. The shelters look great but they are terrible for protection against the elements.

Mr. Feldstein asked if there is a way to put front panels on shelters where there is intense rain and wind.

Mr. Chow said the situation at San Francisco Muni is not very good and he is glad SamTrans is not like Muni.

Mr. Ratto said, as a regular rider of Muni, service cuts were not handled well.

LIAISON REPORTS

a. SamTrans Board – John Baker

Chair Baker reported on the February meeting:

- A presentation on shuttles was given.
- The next meeting has been moved to March 9.

b. SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee – Tom Collette - no meeting.

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

d. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board - David Wilcox

- MTC Commissioner Sue Lempert reported bridge tolls have decreased because of decreased usage.
- An update on the Peninsula Rail Program was given.
- Executive Director Michael Scanlon reported Caltrain carries 2,000 bikes per day.

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

- A presentation on the San Bruno Grade Separation project was given.

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

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held April 7, 2010, at 6:30 p.m., 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, California 94070.

ADJOURNED: 7:48 p.m.