

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

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING – APRIL 29, 2015**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Baker, N. Ballator, K. Gilbert, B. Gomez, B. Hasten, K. Heatley, S. Koya, C. Laughon, J. Manalo, J. McKie, A. Merriman, H. Plischke, M. Pye (Chair)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: B. Lock, P. Loranger

SAMTRANS STAFF PRESENT : S. El-Khatib, E. Harris, A. John, R. Lesser, N. McKenna, A. Rivas, E. Rivas, J. Sung (MV Transportation)

Chair Margaret Pye called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. and Heinz Plischke led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INTRODUCTION/WELCOME NEW CAC MEMBERS

Barbara Hasten said she lives in San Mateo and rides Routes KX, 292 and ECR.

Annette Merriman said she lives in El Granada and rides the local buses to connect to transportation into San Francisco.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Wilkerson, Half Moon Bay, said he is concerned with the location of the bus stop located at 925 Main Street in Half Moon Bay in front of the Coastside Senior Housing. The bus stop would be better located 46 yards south from the current location. By moving the stop the buses would be able to pull right into the stop and not have to back up with loud signal sounds. When the buses are idling at their current location exhaust fumes are going into the residences. He said by moving the stop it would eliminate the visibility issue that is created for those leaving the parking lot at the center.

Ana Rivas, Superintendent, Bus Transportation, said Chester Patton, Director, Bus Transportation, has already sent an email to Mr. Wilkerson addressing these issues.

Juslyn Manalo arrived at 6:46 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2015

Motion/Second: Koya/Baker

Ayes: Baker, Ballator, Gilbert, Gomez, Hasten, Heatley, Koya, Laughon, Manalo, McKie, Merriman, Plischke, Pye

Absent: Lock, Loranger

PRESENTATION: FIXED-ROUTE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) PROGRAM

Richard Lesser, Accessibility Specialist, presented:

- All consumer reports related to accessibility and disability are referred to him for investigation and response to the customer within 10 days.
- Travel training is a program offered free of charge to those over 18 years of age within San Mateo County.
- Fixed-route bus is free for those who have a paratransit identification card.
- The travel trainer will meet the customer at the location where they would like to start their trip. The trainer will assess the challenges faced by the trainee and discuss how they are going to take their trips.
- The travel trainer will take the trainee through each step of the process from origin to destination, show them how to research routes, inform them of resources available, such as the customer service line, websites, Google maps, and 511.org. The trainer will point out landmarks to recognize along the route to enable the trainee to better recognize their stops and transfers.
- After the first trip if there is any uncertainty by the trainee the trainer will work with the trainee until they are comfortable traveling on their own.
- The Travel Training Program is sub-contracted to local social service agencies who have qualified staff and programs. Currently there are three sub-contractors who do the travel training.
 - Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired is an orientation and mobility specialist.
 - Pomeroy Recreation and Rehabilitation Center specializes in training individuals with cognitive disabilities and brain injuries.
 - Caminar has a wide experience in training people with different disabilities.
- Bus stop inspections are done to see where stops can be improved.
- When a new stop is being installed he assesses it to make sure it is ADA compliant. Cross slopes must be no more than 2 percent and any slope over 5 percent generally needs a ramp.
- There is a Talking Signs Program at two stations. It is not widely used, but receivers will be sent to those who request them.
- Staff participates in the California Highway Patrol Age Well Drive Smart Program and Association of American Retired Persons driving seminars.
- Tether straps are used to secure wheelchairs on the bus. He will attach the straps free of charge to those who need them. This helps the operator secure the passenger safely and quickly on the bus.
- He works with the SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) Accessibility Advisory Committee. The SamTrans committee meets every other month and the JPB committee meets twice a year.

Judy McKie said she was in San Francisco and she noticed a wheelchair went in backwards and asked which way is appropriate. Mr. Lesser said either way is okay. There are different buses and some have ramps and some have lifts.

Sonny Koya asked why the operator sometimes doesn't ask passengers to move if a wheelchair is boarding. The priority seating is just that and a person is suppose to give up the seat if a person needs it. Mr. Lesser said most people are good about giving up their seat, but no one should assume anything because some disabilities are hidden.

Charlotte Laughon asked what the protocol is for getting a bench at a bus stop. Mr. Lesser said the request goes to staff for assessment. He said sometimes where a shelter is too large for a location simme-seats can be installed.

Katie Heatley asked where staff is with the preparation for reasonable modification. Mr. Lesser said staff is in the process of putting together a process that will take effect on July 15, 2015. He said this applies to rail, fixed-route, and paratransit. Mr. Lesser said each request will require a different process.

Nada Ballator asked what a simme-seat is. Mr. Lesser said it is a pole with two seats.

Ms. Ballator asked what the ADA requirements are for benches and where does the District fall within those requirements. Mr. Lesser said it is the height of the bench, back support, and depth of seat. He has evaluated benches and they are compliant.

Ms. Ballator asked what the ADA height of the bench is. Mr. Lesser will send the link with the ADA requirements to the CAC.

Juslyn Manalo asked if all bus stops and benches are ADA compliant. Mr. Lesser said bus stops before 1990 are not required to be ADA compliant. He said sometimes this is a good thing otherwise there would not be as many bus stops. An example would be stops on Highway 1 where there are are no sidewalks and would not be compliant now.

Ms. Merriman asked if bus stops are not up to ADA standards who should be contacted. Mr. Lesser said people should call the customer service center.

Kathy Gilbert asked which Caltrain stations have the talking signs. Mr. Lesser said Diridon and 4th and King.

John Baker asked if more passengers are moving from the on-demand service to the fixed-route service. Mr. Lesser said seniors and disabled are moving to the fixed-route. He said that is one of the benefits of the travel training program.

Ms. Hasten asked why seats on the buses are not able to come down when there is no wheelchair. Mr. Lesser said the front forward facing seats were deemed unsafe and the manufacturer has locked them in the upright position so they can't be used.

Ms. Hasten asked if a bus stop has to be cleared by a city or SamTrans. Mr. Lesser said by the city and sometimes stops are moved because of complaints from a resident in the neighborhood.

Bob Gomez said he volunteers at the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital in Menlo Park. He said the bus operators are very helpful to those who use the service. Mr. Lesser said the drivers go through a full day of sensitivity training.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Certificate of Appreciation to Tryn Miller

Chair Pye presented Ms. Miller with a certificate for her three years of service.

Ms. Miller thanked the CAC for allowing her to serve for the past three years.

Chair Pye said she spoke to Director Peter Ratto who was part of the interview panel for the CAC recruitment. He said there were five applications received and Ms. Hasten and Ms. Merriman were the most qualified.

SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE

Ms. Rivas reported:

- March performance:
 - Average weekday ridership was 45,120, up 5.5 percent.
 - On-time performance was 86.9 percent.
 - Complaints were low at 166.
 - Miles between road calls was 27,879.
 - Tokens continue to be popular.
 - There were five missed schedules.

Mr. Gomez asked if there is a way to find out how many complaints come from East Palo Alto. Ms. Rivas said the complaints cannot be sorted by city, but can be by route. She said not all complaints are complaints, but may be suggestions or requests. When there are complaints about a bus operator staff meets with the operator and counsels them.

Ms. Hasten asked how complaints are received. Ms. Rivas said through the website, the customer service call center or the comment cards on the bus.

Eric Harris, Manager, Operations Planning, said a lot of comments come in without addresses, only route information, which makes it difficult to pull information for a particular city.

Ms. Heatley said it would help to know what the standards are and how they compare to the performance statistics. She said it would be helpful to see a snapshot of the complaints and compliments.

Ms. Laughon asked how many of the buses are green. Elliott Rivas, Superintendent, Maintenance, said all buses are green. They run on ultra-low sulphur fuel and utilize clean diesel technology. All buses are equipped with exhaust after treatment systems and 25 hybrid buses were put in service last year.

Chair Pye asked about the goal of zero for early buses. Ms. Rivas said it is when a bus departs early from a stop and the operators have strict instructions to not depart early from a stop.

CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS

Ms. McKie said there are no Route 292 schedules on the Route 292 bus.

Mr. Koya said he helped spread the word on the getting an extension on the rider survey and getting people to complete it. He attended a community meeting in South San Francisco and there was strong praise for the South San Francisco Shuttle. Mr. Koya said the seats on the new buses are too small.

Ms. Laughon asked how much it would cost to move a bus stop and improve infrastructure or add concrete pads. Ms. Rivas said she did not have that information.

Ms. Laughon said she attended a meeting in Half Moon Bay about transportation and the contractor told the group that in order to get a bus shelter the location requires 110 riders per day. She said this was discouraging and should only be a guideline. Ms. Laughon said the contractor should not throw out a number, it harms the public.

Ms. Heatley asked about the extension of the Day Pass. She said the CAC should send a strong message of support to the Board.

Chair Pye said she will have the Day Pass agenda item for the May meeting so the CAC can take action prior to the Board votes at their June 3 meeting.

Ms. Ballator said she wants to support the San Carlos FLX. She said she took the route yesterday and for half the ride she was the sole rider until Redwood City when another passenger boarded. She said many of the signs are missing so how can ridership increase if people do not know where to wait for the bus. Ms. Ballator said there are stops by the San Carlos senior center and the driver has not seen anyone use the service from the senior center. Ms. Rivas said there are a lot of requirements to install permanent signs. Signs that are permanent on Alameda de las Pulgas are from grandfathered posts from where a route used to operate. Ms. Rivas said temporary signs were installed because this is a pilot program.

Ms. Manalo said there have been great marketing strategies for Clipper and wanted to know if usage has increased on SamTrans.

Ms. Gilbert said a lot of schedules are missing on buses and the Westlake Library is very empty. She said recently she was on Route 122, Bus 709, Operator 682, and the operator stayed in the traffic lane and didn't pull into the stop. On the same day Operator 507 was especially helpful by lowering the bus and making sure the elderly and disabled were seated before moving the bus.

Ms. Hasten said it is a long walk to get to the southbound Route ECR from the Millbrae Bay Area Rapid Transit Station, but it is not problem going northbound. She said people

want weekend service on Route 295 and on Route KX into San Francisco. She said it would be nice if Route 295 ran later in the evening.

Mr. Gomez said overall the service is great and the bus operators do a great job and it is all influenced by their supervisors. He asked if the buses can change the way they go inside the VA Hospital by making a u-turn before the building instead of going all the way in to turn around. Ms. Rivas said it is not as easy to maneuver a bus and make u-turns. She said a group of experts consisting of staff from the training department, risk management, and bus operations assessed the area and came up with the safest route.

LIAISON REPORTS

a. SamTrans Board – Margaret Pye

- CAC appointments were made.
- February ridership was presented.

b. SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee – Judy McKie – no meeting

c. Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee - Peter Loranger – absent

d. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board – Bill Lock - absent

e. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board CAC - vacant

f. Senior Mobility Action Plan - vacant

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held May 27, 2015, at 6:30 p.m., 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, California 94070.

Adjourned at 8:21 p.m.