

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

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)  
MEETING MINUTES**

**August 26, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT (Via Teleconference):** M. Adler, S. Appenrodt, A. Barnes (Chair), I. Chan, B. Gomez, A. Juarez, S. Johnston, N. Lacsamana, A. Madrid

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** J. Baker (Vice Chair), M. Lewis, D. Smith

**STAFF PRESENT:** A. Rivas, D. Olmeda, J. Castellanos, K. Longa, K. Shanks, J. Brook

**1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Andrew Barnes called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. ROLL CALL**

CAC Secretary Jean Brook called the roll. A quorum was present.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There were no comments.

**4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JULY 29, 2020**

Motion/Second: Lacsamana/Johnston

Ayes: Adler, Appenrodt, Barnes, Chan, Gomez, Juarez, Johnston, Lacsamana, Madrid

Noes: None

Absent: Baker, Lewis, Smith

**5. PRESENTATION: TRANSIT 101**

Ana Rivas, Acting Director of Bus Transportation, provided a presentation.

Nancy Lacsamana asked why the District leases tires for its bus fleet. Ms. Rivas said it was more cost-effective than actually owning the tires. David Olmeda, Chief Operating Officer/Bus, said that the actual frame or carcass of the tire itself can be reused. He said that SamTrans has a contract with the tire manufacturers and that the District gets billed according to the amount of rubber that is used.

Mary Adler asked Ms. Rivas about the best and worst parts of her job when she was a bus operator. Ms. Rivas said she felt her job was meaningful when she succeeded in transporting a young mother to her children's daycare and to her work. She said the worst part was taking restroom breaks during a route. She added that driving strangers around on late-night routes represented a culture shock for her as a young woman.

Ms. Lacsamana expressed her appreciation for all the operators.

Alex Madrid asked how all the buses could get cleaned nightly in such a short period of time. Ms. Rivas said each utility worker is assigned a set number of buses to work on. Mr. Olmeda said that the fleet of 350 buses are cleaned in multiple locations. He added that the staff also cleans all the paratransit vehicles.

Chair Barnes asked about the dispatch process. Ms. Rivas said that the dispatcher position is crucial to all the route operations. She added that there are standby operators located throughout the County if needed.

Iris Chan asked if there was still an operator shortage during the pandemic. Ms. Rivas said the District has established a continuous recruitment and is constantly hiring operators. She said currently the District has enough operators. Ms. Chan said that some operators only seem to be familiar with their own route and are not able to answer customers' questions about other routes. Ms. Rivas said the operator training devotes two weeks to route familiarization. She added that it likely takes several years for operators to master their knowledge of all the routes.

Allie Juarez suggested putting the maintenance video displayed during Ms. Rivas's presentation on the public website to highlight all the behind-the-scenes activities of SamTrans. She praised the driver recognition program. Ms. Rivas commended the CAC on their role in supporting SamTrans services. She said the video is currently available on the SamTrans website.

Ms. Adler recommended that the CAC members watch "The Daily Miracle," a video about New York transit in the 1960s.

Mr. Olmeda said the bus dispatchers are like air traffic controllers, being responsible for day-to-day operations on a minute-by-minute basis for buses arriving on time. He said they also coordinate operators' schedules and provide phone assistance to operators and intervene in incidents on the buses.

Mr. Madrid asked how complaints or positive comments are passed along to the drivers. Mr. Olmeda said sometimes customers write letters, call the call center, or post on Twitter. Ms. Rivas said she writes thank-you notes to the operators each month.

## **6. REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Barnes said he had no report.

## **7. SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE**

Ms. Rivas provided details from the following report on the most recent bus statistics:

### Ridership

- The total bus ridership (including weekends) for the month of July 2020 declined by 58.8 percent compared to last year, July 2019.

- The average weekday bus ridership declined by -61.4 percent in the month of July 2020 compared to July 2019.
- We observed an average 10% decline on the first week of the new RB compared to the last week of the previous RB. This could be attributed to reinstating fare collection and schools implementing distance learning

#### Other

Service changes were implemented on August 16, 2020, with higher frequency on high ridership routes such as the ECR, 110, 112, and 281 to increase capacity and meet the demand. Additionally, fare collection and front door boarding resumed that same day. Consequently, we no longer have to send as many trippers to help with maximum capacity trips (from an average of 35 trippers to an average of 6).

We also took a strong stand on face covering compliance at all times onboard the buses. The Customer Experience Team launched a robust marketing campaign to support us with this state mandate, which included social media messages, voice announcements, and signage inside the bus and at bus stops. As a result, we have not experienced any negative incidents.

#### OTP

We exceeded our On-Time Performance goal of 85% at 86.4% for the month of July.

#### DNO

I am happy to report that we only had 3 DNO schedules in the month of July.

Ms. Rivas recognized the participation of departing CAC member Doug Smith.

### **8. CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS**

Ms. Juarez said she notices the SamTrans buses going by as she walks and runs in her neighborhood and expressed her appreciation for the continued service.

Ms. Lacsamana said her friend is transit-dependent and appreciates the bus service.

Ms. Chan suggested that schoolchildren could learn about the fundamentals of bus transportation with a presentation like Ms. Rivas had provided.

Mr. Johnston said he also supported the idea of educating elementary schoolchildren about the bus service.

### **9. LIAISON REPORTS**

#### **a. SamTrans Board**

Chair Barnes said that due to Vice Chair Baker's absence, there was no report from the July 8 meeting.

#### **b. Community Engagement Committee**

Ms. Lacsamana said she had no report.

Ms. Rivas said that the District currently has a department that promotes the bus service to schoolchildren.

Mr. Olmeda said he appreciated the feedback and questions from the CAC members. He said in the past, he felt it had been very helpful to show the CAC members in person about the behind-the-scenes activities. He said he looked forward to being able to once again provide the CAC members with a first-hand look at the bus maintenance facilities.

#### **10. NEXT MEETING**

Chair Barnes said that the next meeting will be held Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 6:30 pm, via Zoom teleconference.

#### **11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.