

SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT

Minutes- Board of Directors

March 10, 2000

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District met on Friday, March 10, 2000 at the District Administrative Office, 370 Encinal Street, Santa Cruz, CA.

Vice-Chairperson Rotkin called the meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

SECTION 1: OPEN SESSION

1. ROLL CALL:

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Bruce Arthur
Katherine Beiers
Bart Cavallaro
Tim Fitzmaurice
Bruce Gabriel
Michelle Hinkle
Mike Keogh
Mike Rotkin

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Jeff Almquist
Jan Beautz (arrived at 8:53)
Kenneth Burch
Oscar Rios

STAFF PRESENT

Bryant Baehr, Operations Manager
Paul Chandley, Human Resources Manager
Kim Chin, Planning & Marketing Manager
Mark Dorfman, Assistant General Manager
Linda Fry, Service Planning Supervisor
Margaret Gallagher, District Counsel
Tom Hiltner, Transit Planner

David Konno, Facilities Maint. Manager
David Moreau, Bus Operator
LeAna Olson, H. R. Analyst
Elisabeth Ross, Finance Manager
Judy Souza, Base Superintendent
Tom Stickel, Fleet Maint. Manager
Leslie R. White, General Manager

VISITORS

Wally Brondstatter, UTU
Jim Dong, Raymundo Engineering
Spence Erickson, PG&E
Naomi Guntner
Debbie Hale, SCCRTC
Patti Korba, SEA
Jeff LeBlanc, MASTF
Yolanda Lennon, Lift Line

Manny Martinez, PSA
John Mellon, VMU
Ian McFadden, UTU
Cam Pierce, Bus Rider
Bob Scott, Consultant
Marion Taylor, League of Women Voters
Candace Ward, UCSC

2. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- a. District Counsel reported that an item will be added to the agenda for the March 17, 2000 Board meeting which will request the Board to consider the District's

response to the Grand Jury inquiry regarding MetroBase. Counsel Gallagher distributed a draft letter of a response from the Board to the Grand Jury addressing their inquiries. Two binders of supporting documentation will be available for review at the Administrative offices.

- b. Director Gabriel expressed concern that the newer bus operators are not receiving training on how to be sensitive to wheelchair users. He requested that staff review the MASTF sensitivity training and return to the Board with a report at next month's meeting. Director Gabriel will discuss with Les White the specific problems he has encountered.

3. LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

None

4. METRO USERS GROUP (MUG) COMMUNICATIONS

None

5. METRO ACCESSIBLE SERVICES TRANSIT FORUM (MASTF) COMMUNICATIONS

None

6. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Les White distributed a Technology Committee Bulletin from the Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition.

CONSENT AGENDA

Review Consent Agenda Items 7-1 through 7-9

- 7-1. **Approve Minutes of Regular Board of Directors Meeting of 2/11/00 and Regular Board of Directors Meeting of 2/18/00**
- 7-2. **Accept and File Preliminary Approved Claims**
- 7-3. **Accept and File Passenger Lift Report for February 2000**
- 7-4. **Consideration of Tort Claims: None**
- 7-5. **Accept and File Minutes of MASTF Committee Meeting of 2/17/00**
- 7-6. **Accept and File Minutes of MUG Committee Meeting of 2/16/00**
- 7-7. **Accept and File Monthly Budget Status Report for January 2000 and Approve Budget Transfers**
- 7-8. **Accept and File Highway 17 Status Report for January**
- 7-9. **Accept and File Status Report on ADA Paratransit Program for January**

REGULAR AGENDA

8. **PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE LONGEVITY AWARDS**
9. **CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF FY 00/01 PRELIMINARY LINE ITEM BUDGET**

Summary:

Elisabeth Ross presented the preliminary line item budget for the coming fiscal year to the Board. The budget needs to be submitted to the Transportation Commission with the TDA Claim by April 1st. Ms. Ross reported that there are no funds available for new programs other than the continuation of existing levels of service plus an allocation of \$150,000 for service improvements. The recommended final budget will be presented to the Board in May and will be agendized as a public hearing.

Discussion:

Director Rotkin inquired into having an informal meeting regarding the budget as was held in the past. Ms. Ross stated that the recommended final budget would be ready for an informal meeting either at the end of April or early May and that the Board would be notified of the date as early as possible. The sales tax revenue figure of 6% was based on year-to-date trends and State projections.

10. **ACCEPT AND FILE PRESENTATION OF SERVICE PLANNING ISSUES RELATED TO TITLE VI CIVIL RIGHTS**

Summary:

Kim Chin reported that the District must submit specific reporting requirements every three years to the Federal Transit Administration regarding minority and non-minority areas to ensure the District is in compliance with Title VI requirements. The staff Report highlights three areas to which particular attention must be paid: 1) improvements to routes that are below performance standards established by the District; 2) work with Cabrillo College to provide more direct service from non-minority areas to the College; 3) increase peak-hour capacity on routes having consistent overloads. Linda Fry, Service Planning Supervisor, stated that the firm of Pacific Transit Management (PTM) was hired to perform the on-board surveys, in addition to data being collected in-house. Ms. Fry will make a full presentation complete with overhead transparencies at the March 17th meeting.

Discussion:

Director Fitzmaurice asked what staff's recommendation is for improvements based on minority consideration for the beach area. Ms. Fry responded that the recommendation is to incorporate those routes falling below performance standards into the system redesign study. At Director Fitzmaurice's request, Ms. Fry referred to the Bus Evaluation Study which shows that the beach route is carrying thirty passengers per hour, which is slightly above the standard. This will be reviewed by staff.

11. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 1999 COMPREHENSIVE BUS EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

Summary:

Kim Chin reported that the Nelson Nygaard Bus Evaluation Study is an effort to review the system's current performance. This is a two-step process: 1) to conduct a comprehensive bus evaluation study to direct and provide benchmark information about how the system is doing. This study provides staff with data compiled during a very short amount of time; 2) to use data to develop service plans in conjunction with the Transportation Commission, E&D TAC, MUG, and MASTF. The study documents where the District is currently. Linda Fry stated that there are two main elements to the study: 1) benchmarking of data, 2) on-board data collection effort. These elements will direct staff as to performance problems and where the District is doing well. Extensive outreach took place with UCSC and Cabrillo College, all user groups, staff, school districts, and the County Planning Dept. The on-board surveys covered 76% of the District service, including weekdays and weekends. Areas of concern are -- 7% of all trips exceed the load standard; 9% of all trips are running late. The next step is for staff to develop a multi-year plan in conjunction with the Transportation Commission's RTP (Regional Transportation Plan). Les White interjected that UTU service proposals will also be included as part of this discussion.

Discussion:

Director Rotkin asked to what extent this data could be used to respond to the myth concerning low ridership and if staff has the ability to anticipate low or overcrowded ridership from this data. Linda Fry responded that staff can discern the maximum load point and also the low ridership point. Ian McFadden stated that this information is a snapshot taken of one day on one particular run, however, fareboxes will enable staff to average out the information needed.

Director Keogh asked about the status of the farebox project. Les White reported that staff needs to get back to this time-consuming project. As part of the solicitations from the Governor's Office and Cal Trans, staff submitted applications for the Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) system upgrade. As a component of the AVL, there is an automated passenger counter for both doors of the buses, along with a count of passengers boarding and de-boarding by time and location.

Director Fitzmaurice expressed concern that there is no service to the new Seymour Lab and that the largest impact to Delaware St. would be from visitors to this Lab. Mr. Chin stated that the Service Review Committee would plan routes and frequency for this area within two quarters. Ian McFadden stated that possibly something could be done with the route on the Westside to accommodate this new facility as the route already runs down Western Drive.

Director Beautz inquired about the Highway 17 Express stopping in Los Gatos. Mr. White reported that staff is meeting with VTA on a regular basis and this stop would be designed by VTA. According to Mr. White, the District's challenge is how staff would split this stop out from the rest of the Highway 17 route and if this would be done simultaneously with the Highway 17 bus going to the Metro Center. Mark Dorfman added that the afternoon stop in Los Gatos,

which would take approximately 10-15 minutes, would be a problem due to timechecks. He stated that making this stop would be difficult without adding service. Mr. White further noted that the General Manager of VTA is making the Los Gatos stop a priority along with upgrading this corridor with additional destinations, however, the airport would not be one of them.

Debbie Hale of the Transportation Commission reported that their staff would be looking at the data from the evaluation study and work with District staff and the Board on what projects come out of this and how it fits into the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Commission staff is looking at the corridor concept in particular. Highway 17 will factor into this very heavily. It was suggested that this study be used to publicize the fact that bus ridership is high; this may filter through for support of MetroBase. Director Almquist stated that a digest of this information, along with graphs and charts, would be good for the website.

12. CONSIDERATION OF AMENDING BUS ACQUISITION GRANTS TO REFLECT 40' CNG POWERED VEHICLES

Summary:

Director Rotkin informed the attendees that the Board would make a decision on this item at this meeting. Les White reported that this topic was covered extensively at the February 11th Workshop Meeting. Currently, the District has grants in place for 24 coaches to be acquired; 14 of these are 40' diesel and 10 are 60' articulated coaches. With this action, the Board would be addressing the issues of articulated coach strategy, reconfiguration of bus stops for articulated coaches, and that there are no bus manufacturers who make 60' articulated coaches in CNG. If the Board desires to move to alternate fuel and comply with the new emissions standards, staff recommends that they begin the process to amend the grants to apply for CNG powered 40' standard coaches to be delivered in November 2002. Along with this, all future bus acquisitions would be for CNG powered 40' standard coaches. The only time staff would alter from CNG would be if a new technology came forward that was cleaner than CNG. Mr. White stated that there are four grants currently in place for 24 buses. If the District converts to 40' buses, the grants would fund the purchase of 27 buses; if CNG buses were purchased, the grants would fund 23. Staff recommends that the Board approve amending the current applications to provide for 23 40' CNG powered coaches to be delivered in November 2002.

Discussion:

Director Keogh is concerned with the post-combustion output of the CNG engine and requested that staff say in touch with the experts to follow up on this, as we do not understand what the exhaust of the CNG engine looks like. Jim Dong of Raymundo Engineering stated that research on CNG is on going. Patti Korba asked about the timing of receiving the CNG buses with the opening of MetroBase. Mr. White replied that if MetroBase does not come to fruition, the CNG issue would be brought back before the Board for reconsideration, as there are not fueling facilities in the County that would accommodate a fleet of buses. Jeff LeBlanc mentioned that it is important to remember that CNG is a bridge to even cleaner fuel (i.e. fuel cells). Director Fitzmaurice asked about the difference in cost for operation, maintenance, fueling and repair of CNG vehicles. Les White responded that information from Sacramento states that CNG is \$.11 to \$.12 per mile less expensive than diesel vehicles.

ACTION: MOTION: DIRECTOR GABRIEL SECOND: DIRECTOR BEAUTZ

A Motion was made to authorize Metro staff to file amendments to the current bus acquisition grants to reflect the purchase of 40-foot, compressed natural gas powered buses.

Director Rotkin requested that staff produce a press release regarding this decision and to include the safety issues in order to address concerns raised in this regard. This press release should be distributed extensively to all local media.

The Motion passed unanimously with Directors Almquist and Rios absent.

13. CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF 5-YEAR OPERATING AND CAPITAL PLAN

Summary:

Mark Dorfman reported that as a result of the CNG issue being passed, staff will be seeking funds from the Air District.

14. CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZATION TO APPLY FOR CARL MOYER FUNDS

Summary:

Mark Dorfman reported that the Air District has funds to assist in the District's transition from diesel to CNG and staff is looking at full differential funding on the bus acquisition grants. Dave Fairchild is working with the State to see if this qualifies. In the future, the District may be restricted to only the local share of the differential. Staff is attempting to obtain the full \$50,000 per bus from the Air District.

15. CONSIDERATION OF AWARD OF RADIO SERVICES CONTRACT

16. CONSIDERATION OF AWARD FOR SCOTTS VALLEY TRANSIT CENTER JANITORIAL SERVICES

17. CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT WITH NATIONWIDE AUCTION SYSTEM

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Vice-Chairperson Rotkin adjourned the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

DALE CARR
Administrative Services Coordinator