

**MINUTES
REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT
AUTHORITY
JANUARY 26, 2017 AT 3:30 P.M.**

Members Present: Roger Gitlin (Chair), Darrin Short (Vice-Chair), Heidi Kime, Bob Berkowitz

Members Absent: Jake Smith

Also Present: Joseph Rye, Nicole Burshem, Tamera Leighton, Autumn Luna, Eileen Cooper,
Kevin Heckman

1. Call Meeting to Order. Roll Call.

Chairman Gitlin called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m. Nicole Burshem took roll call.

2. Closed Session: "CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (Gov. Code section 54956.9 - one case): Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of 54956.9 based on receipt of claim under the Government Claims Act (54956.9(e)(3)), which claim is available for public inspection (54957.5)."

Chairman Gitlin closed open session at 3:38 p.m. and immediately reconvened in closed session. Chairman Gitlin opened the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

Legal Counsel Autumn Luna reported on a motion by Director Berkowitz, seconded by Director Short, and unanimously carried with Director Kime recused, the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved to reject the claim of John Alexander.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for CY 2017

Discussion was held in regards to elections. Director Berkowitz nominated Director Roger Gitlin as Chair of the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors.

On a motion by Director Berkowitz, seconded by Director Kime, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors accepted Director Roger Gitlin as Chair of the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors.

Director Berkowitz nominated Director Darrin Short for Vice Chair of the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors.

On a motion by Director Berkowitz, seconded by Director Kime, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors accepted Director Darrin Short as the Vice Chair of the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors.

4. Approve the Minutes of December 21, 2016

On a motion by Director Short, seconded by Director Kime, and unanimously carried on a polled vote with Director Berkowitz recused, the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors accepted the minutes of December 21, 2016.

5. Public Comment

The following person(s) addressed the Board: Eileen Cooper, Friends of Del Norte, commented in regards to wireless charging buses. They are built on 100% electric with a large magnet in the pavement. The unit sits right on top of the magnet of the pavement. The magnet is tough enough to be run over and this would enable for on-street recharging. This unit would take very few batteries, making the vehicles light weight. The batteries charge quickly and are also equipped with solar cells. Ms. Cooper suggested the Board of Directors look into these buses and think about an alternative fuel system. Chairman Gitlin requested this item be placed on a future agenda and asked Mr. Rye to look into more information on this.

6. Approve Resolution 2016-17-09 Approving a Revised Amendment 6 with First Transit Extending the Operations and Maintenance Contract through September 30, 2016.

Discussion was held in regards to Resolution 2016-17-09. Mr. Rye reported this item is being brought forward due to the fact that Caltrans denied our first request for billing rate increases. Caltrans would only approve an amendment featuring a CPI increase of 2%. Mr. Rye recommended the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approve Resolution 2016-17-09. Director Berkowitz reported he was confused and asked for clarification if there was a contract through September 2016; why is the board reapproving the amendment. Mr. Rye responded that is correct, that the Board had approved an amendment similar to this, but with higher billing rates, back in December 2015, but that Caltrans had repeatedly refused to approve that version. Director Berkowitz asked if that was normal procedure. Mr. Rye responded that this is not normal procedure. Director Short asked what the reason was for getting this approved and moved forward. Mr. Rye responded the resolution needs approval so First Transit to be reimbursed for expenditures made in the last 12 months. Director Kime reported she remembers going over this at the last meeting and feels good about approving the resolution. Director Gitlin asked what the cost if there was failure to gain Caltrans approval and how do we avoid this in the future. Mr. Rye responded to avoid this issue in the future is to not have to amend contracts. Mr. Rye reported what RCTA staff should have submitted the original amendment to Caltrans prior to having it approved by the Board, rather than after. First transit has waited all these months to be reimbursed for the difference between what the Board approved and what Caltrans ultimately approved (the 2% CPI increase). Eileen Cooper suggests not paying out in a higher rate unless everything is locked in place.

On a motion by Director Short, seconded by Director Berkowitz, and unanimously carried on a polled vote, the Redwood Coast Transit Authority approved and adopted Resolution 2016-17-09 approving a Revised Amendment 6 with First Transit extending the operations and maintenance contract through September 20, 2016.

7. Discussion of Impacts of Amendment 6 and Mechanisms to Balance Account Between RCTA and First Transit to Close the 2008 Contract Equitably.

Discussion was held in regards to the Revised Amendment 6 and mechanisms to balance account between RCTA and First Transit to close the 2008 contract equitably. Mr. Rye reported as discussed in previous meetings that the RCTA Board had approved a rate increase for FY 16-16 that was fairly robust to account for the raise in the State's Minimum Wage rates. First Transit and RCTA staff reached an agreement, it was approved by the Board

in December 2015, but never approved by Caltrans despite repeated attempts and detailed explanation. Caltrans refused to allow more than the CPI index increase contained in the original 2008 contract. The accumulating balance grew from the beginning of 2016 to an amount of nearly \$45,000. Back in 2015, First Transit negotiated a rate increase due to the start of the Greyhound Connect project, where RCTA became an “agent” of Greyhound, and began selling tickets. In early 2016 it was discovered that the cost increases were never justified, and a credit back to RCTA was negotiated with First Transit. This credit of \$22,000 for Greyhound overbilling will be used to help offset some of the unpaid balance owed to First Transit due to the Revised Amendment 6 situation. This item will come back to the Board for action at the next meeting, as RCTA is still in discussions with Caltrans, working with Caltrans to get the official start date on the new contract with First Transit moved to November 16th, 2016, rather than January 1, 2017. This would be to avoid a period where RCTA would be ineligible for reimbursement of operating costs. The November and December invoices are held up at the moment until this matter is clarified. It is expected that RCTA will add funds to the payments made to First Transit on the November and December invoices to repay the amount owed. During 2016, several urgent safety, security, and landscaping projects were required at the RCTA Williams Drive Maintenance and Operations Center. RCTA asked First Transit to “advance” some of those repairs out of the \$22,000 “credit” that First owed to RCTA from the Greyhound staffing issue. RCTA moved money around within its capital budget at the December 2016 meeting, so that now funds are available to both pay First Transit back for the completed projects, and to fund projects not yet complete, such as the paving of the roadway extension, and parking lot improvements. In the end, RCTA will pay First Transit approximately \$17,000 for the facility projects out of RCTA’s PTMISEA funds budgeted for the Facility, and then about \$22,885 for the short-paid operating cost invoices out of the operating contract budget. This will close the old contract with First Transit with a zero balance. Chairman Gitlin asked what the net dollar amount is on the budget. Mr. Rye responded the \$22,000 is part of the equation to get things fixed up on the facility. Chairman Gitlin asked if the budget is in peril. Mr. Rye responded the budget has some issues, but nothing insurmountable. The larger issue looming ahead is that Caltrans has cut RCTA’s funding. Director Berkowitz asked how long Mr. Rye has been manager. Mr. Rye responded he has been manager for a few months.

8. Approve Investment Justification and Del Norte Local Transportation Commission Resolution for Fiscal Year 2015-16 Prop 1B California Transit Security Grant Program (CTSGBP) Funding.

Discussion was held in regards to the Investment Justification application for the CalOES (Office of Emergency Services) Prop 1B CTSGBP program that is passed through to RCTA (as the regions only transit agency) by the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission. Mr. Rye reported this this transit security grant fund that has been tapped before and RCTA is applying for two fiscal years’ worth of projects, including electronic vehicle access gates, as well as an emergency generator and lighting improvements. Chairman Gitlin asked if these projects will be on a feature agenda. Mr. Rye responded yes this will be. The item was unanimously approved and will be forwarded to the DNLTTC for their approval, and then on to CalOES for execution. Funding should be available late this fiscal year, and is already shown in the RCTA FY 2016-17 Budget.

9. Overview of Transit Planning Requirements of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) – Annual Unmet Transit Needs Process Administered by the DN Local Transportation Commission.

Discussion was held in regards to Overview of TDA Transit Planning requirements. Mr. Rye introduced Tamera Leighton, Executive Director of the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission. Ms. Leighton reported that Mr. Rye and herself have new board members and they have agreed to educate their boards about certain key topics. Tamera provided the Board a handout that covers the topics she will talk about today. On the unmet needs process the TDA statute is what makes the money happen and sets the rules for the funding. Some rural communities use their money for non-transit projects, but Del Norte Local Transportation Commission uses 100% of the money towards Transit needs only.

Director Kim reported she had a personal experience with Sutter Coast Hospital to get home at 3:00 a.m. and asked if that would be an unmet need. Ms. Leighton responded that would be considered a “non-emergency medical” transit need. Ms. Leighton explained how the County’s designated Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) is now Sutter Coast Hospital, and Sutter has initiated (with the 5% annual “off the top” TDA funding apportioned to the organization designated as the CTSA) an “return trip reimbursement program to help patients that are transported out of Del Norte County for specialized medical treatments to cover the costs of returning home.

Chairman Gitlin reported he is not a big fan of ambulance rides and asked who was funding the ambulance rides. Ms. Leighton responded those types of things are paid for by the insurance companies. This is not funded by a local city, county or transit agency. Director Gitlin asked if the money is TDA is going to grow or decline. Ms. Leighton responded the funding is allocated primarily by population, and to a lesser extent, transit operating revenues. TDA is a one quarter cent statewide sales tax that is returned back to the local community. The local economy affects the LTF. Chairman Gitlin asked if these funds are being allocated to Del Norte County, is the Transit getting a fair shake. Ms. Leighton reiterated that the DNLTC allocates 100% of the LTF funds to transit, there is none diverted to road repair. Tamera explained that overall, Del Norte County receives more funds then we pay out, and fares well in the transportation funding process.

10. General Manager Verbal Reports

- **Update on Spring Service Changes and New Zonal Fare and Pass Structure-** Mr. Rye reported they continue to work on a spring service change. They are trying to make Crescent City times run better. Also, trying to work on a new fare structure for Route 20. Mr. Rye reported they are looking at half of the fare structure. Hopefully for the next meeting they will have more information and move forward to see what the public will think about advertisement. There will also be some service changes and bus stops.
- **Update on Deferring of ADA Card Recertification Process-** Mr. Rye reported we had ceased work on reinstating the ADA card recertification process. Sensing Board discomfort, staff will instead focus on populating the database of the new Dial-A-Ride computer scheduling software with active riders and ensuring that correct contact information is on file for every customer using the service. Then, in the future, RCTA will be positioned to do a comprehensive mailing to all DAR customers, including a re-registration process if desired.

First Transit staff will go through the 2014 applications that we still have and identify active riders that are still using the service, and enter these riders into the database. As others call for their next rides, they too will be entered into the database. Over a few months, all current active customers will be in the database with up-to-date contact information.

The 2014 effort that everyone still remembers intended to get everyone processed with a paper application to determine ADA eligibility, then the issuance of an ID Card establishing eligibility to use the service, and to use the service at ADA pricing (less than General Public for the same ride). Things fell apart when the County didn't want to issue the cards anymore.

- Mr. Rye is pleased to announce that RCTA has initiated a small pilot project with College of the Redwoods to start a bulk pass sales project. COR will be purchasing blocks of RCTA bus passes and distributing them to subsets of students at their Crescent City Campus.

- 11. First Transit Operations Manager Verbal Report** – Mr. Heckman reported staff dropped to 13 active drivers, but he expects to have 3 more trained in April. Mr. Heckman reported maintenance continues to be a challenge. The new manager (Nick) arrived in January and is working very well. Mr. Heckman reported five vehicles were out of service in December, and now we have five different ones down. Director Short asked if the fixes were small issues. Mr. Heckman responded one lost an engine but most of the issues were small. Some of them are the kneeling low-floor “Arboc” buses. Mr. Heckman is optimistic the new maintenance manager will get a handle on things.

Mr. Heckman reported customer service only had 3 complaints. One of the complaints Mr. Rye dealt with. There was a misunderstanding for time frame of Dial-a-Ride and how the service actually works. Riders are issued a pickup time, from which RCTA is allowed to pick them up 15 minutes before or after and still be considered “on-time”. The road paving is scheduled for Mid-February. Mr. Heckman reported he is attending and enrolled in a crisis leadership class. Mr. Heckman reported the radio repeater is waiting on logistical issues.

Chairman Gitlin reported there has been meetings with discussions of park service. “Take the Bus and Leave the Driving to Us”. This slogan would be in reference to meetings with National and State Parks. Mr. Heckman responded at the last RCTA meeting he mentioned he took one of the large buses up Stout Grove. He, Mr. Gitlin, and Mr. Rye met with the Parks Service to further discuss what the vision for this potential project was. Mr. Rye reported there will be another meeting. Mr. Rye noted this will be an item to keep updated for the Directors. Chairman Gitlin asked will now have an ingress and egress alternate route into the Williams Drive M&O Facility? Once the CVS Project is complete that provide an alternate route. Mr. Heckman reported it will happen in the middle of February. Chairman Gitlin asked if the kennel will be impacted. Mr. Heckman responded we haven't brought them into it, but he would be happy to go talk to Jennifer. It should be a non-issue for them. Chairman Gitlin is very pleased of the feedback and ongoing communication.

12. Announcements

The following Directors reported: Chairman Gitlin wanted to share some of the vision we want to propagated. He would like to see the RCTA develop an advertising program on our buses. An issue that has been touched on before and asked Mr. Rye to pursue that. Ms. Leighton commented the transportation AHS funded a scope of work for a ridership survey and will add that to it.

13. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Director, the Chairman Gastineau adjourned the meeting at 4:19 p.m. until the next scheduled meeting on June 15, 2016 at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Rye, General Manager

Redwood Coast Transit Authority