

**MINUTES
REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT
AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2017
AT 3:30 P.M.**

Members Present: Roger Gitlin (Chair), Darrin Short (Vice Chair), Heidi Kime, Lori Cowen, Jake Smith

Members Absent:

Also Present: Joseph Rye, Nicole Burshem, Bill Lonsdale, Kevin Heckman

1. Call Meeting to Order. Roll Call.

Chairman Gitlin called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Nicole Burshem took roll call. The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted by Director Short.

2. Approve the Minutes of February 15, 2017

On a motion by Director Short, seconded by Director Cowen, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the minutes of February 15, 2017.

3. Public Comment

The following person(s) addressed the Board: None

4. Discussion of RCTA Fiscal Year 2015-16 Annual Report.

Discussion was held in regard to the RCTA Fiscal Year 2015-16 Annual Report. Mr. Rye reported the overall ridership is relatively flat over the last 10-years. Basically, most of the system metrics are down. Director Smith commended Mr. Heckman, Mr. Herron, and Mr. Rye for their work. Director Smith found the charts easy to read and the explanation was understandable. Bill Lonsdale commented he always looks forward to the meetings, but would like to note a typo on page 21 on the agenda, there reference to no signs.

5. Presentation on Status of RCTA Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2016-17 and Projected Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18 including Trends Impacting Different Fund Sources and Impacts of Funding Reductions in Federal Transit Administration Section 5311(f) (Rural Intercity) Funding.

Mr. Rye introduced Dan Herron to the Board. Dan Herron presented a slide show on "the color of money" describing the various sources of RCTA budget funds. RCTA has four main funding sources and each has its own set of "strings". Herron reported 5311(f) is the intercity routes and is being cut by Caltrans due to an over-programming issue at the state level. All source fell (at least slightly) in FY 2016/17. Savings in fuel costs have helped us considerably. RCTA expects to finish FY 2016/17 at or slightly under budget. Commissioner Cowen asked if RCTA was called to be a part of the discussion. Mr. Rye responded not yet, but he was pushing for inclusion. Commissioner Cowen asked if RCTA could submit a

formal letter requesting participation in the study? Chairman Gitlin asked if Mr. Rye if he can agendize a letter of support. Mr. Rye responded that he can do that for the next meeting. Mr. Rye reported the good news is we are doing ok on our budget this year, the bad news is RCTA needs to plan now for cutting the least productive transit service to survive FY 2017/18 budget. Mr. Lonsdale had a word of caution on the advertising, a lot of advertisers want to wrap the busses and that will cover the windows. Chairman Gitlin asked that the letter of support be drawn up and asked what they would like to see included in the letter. Mr. Rye reported the letter can be drawn up and ready for April. Director Gitlin asked if there would be a budget deficit. Mr. Rye responded there will not be.

6. Discussion of Options Available for Reduction of Operating Costs to Match Declining Revenues and Timeline for Implementation and Board Approval of Public Outreach on Changes.

Discussion was held in regard to reduction of operation costs. Mr. Rye reported staff is seeking Board approval of service and administrative reductions. The funding drop that most effects RCTA in FY 2017-18 will be Caltrans cutting the 5311(f) funding statewide. Are funding level will go from \$300,000 to \$122,000. Mr. Rye reported the report provided in the packet offers many reduction options. Those alternative options are as follows: Reduce dispatch and trainer hours, eliminate Route 10, reduce Route 20 by eliminating night time service, reduce Crescent City Local routes by one hour, reduce contract general manager services by up to 10%, and eliminate Route 199. Mr. Rye reported the year ahead is likely to be challenging. Staff is seeking Board input on the service reductions. Director Smith reported he would like to talk about Dial-A-Ride and seeing a shift from ridership from fixed route to Dial-A Ride. Mr. Herron responded most of the places that have Dial-A-Ride have gone over to making it for disabled qualified riders only. Kevin Heckman reported lowering the dispatch would not eliminate any dispatcher jobs. The main staff that would be affected by route cuts are drivers. There would be some degree of turn over and a lot of people would become part time. Bill Lonsdale commented it is good to see an effort made to spread the pain. Staff has done a good job with that. There was a very compassionate decision made in regard to Dial-A-Ride because it involved trips to the doctor and paperwork for the riders that are least able to handle the extra effort. There should be a system that requires some sort of steps to prove you are eligible, not just someone saying that they are. Director Cowen suggested the top three alternatives. Director Cowen believes there was discussion at the last meeting in regard to which routes would affect the college. She feels comfortable with the top three because it won't affect Gasquet or manager services. Director Kime asked if Mr. Rye knew how many students were using the service. Mr. Rye responded there are very few students who ride the buses at this time.

7. Adopt Resolutions 2016-17-11 and 2016-17-12 Authorizing Certifications and Assurances and Authorized Agent Form for LCTOP Fiscal Year 2016-17 Allocation of \$12,766 for Free Bus Program

Discussion was held in regard to Resolution 2016-17-11 and 2016-17-12. Mr. Herron

reported this item has to do with LCTOP a funding source based on the selling and trading of pollution “credits” with a goal of overall reduction in greenhouse gas emissions statewide. This item is to approve RCTA’s FY 2017/18 LCTOP project application. In a change from the prior LCTOP allocation, staff recommend a different project, one that will in effect replace a little bit of the lost 5311(f) operating money. The Free Bus Project will lowering the cost of passes or giving out free passes and backfill the lost revenue into RCTA’s farebox (operating budget). Targets could be College of the Redwoods or any educational institution, or anyone who would want to provide free transit to the public. At this point we are not selecting anyone. We are just looking for the Board to approve this program for \$12,000 of LCTOP in FY 2017/18. The resolution is to apply for the 16/17 funds (will be spent in FY 17/18) for this free bus program. Mr. Herron asked the Board if they would like to ask Caltrans to reprogram the prior year’s LCTOP money to support the same project, thus helping replace lost operating monies? Director Kime would like to see staff pursue the re-programming of the prior year’s LCTOP monies from bus shelters to operating revenues via the Free Pass Program. Director Smith agreed with Director Kime, but asked if it would interfere with the Oregon Street shelter? Mr. Rye responded we can fund the wind screen with other funding sources.

On a motion by Director Cowen, seconded by Director Smith, and unanimously carried the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Director approved and adopted Resolutions 2016-17-11 and 2016-17-12 Authorizing Certifications and Assurances and Authorized Agent Form for LCTOP Fiscal Year 2016-17 Allocation of \$12,766 for Free Bus Program.

8. Authorization to Release 2017 Advertising Revenue Request for Proposals.

Discussion was held in regard to release 2017 advertising revenue. Mr. Rye reported this item is asking for permission to release the 2017 advertising revenue request for proposals.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Cowen, and unanimously carried the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board Director approved authorization to release 2017 advertising revenue request for proposals.

9. General Manager Verbal Report

- **Update on Minor Spring Service Changes, Zonal Fare Structure, and New Passes** – Mr. Rye reported we are stream lining the local fixed routes. This should be completed by May or June. There were driver meetings conducted today. The regional route fare structure will be reported on at the next meeting. We are trying to generate new passes. We have punch passes that slow routes down. Mr. rye reported we are trying to have all issues dealt with by next month.
- **Letter Update on Ms. Elizabeth Burrows** – Mr. Rye reported there is a letter from Ms. Burrows stating she is doing better and that she will be back with us soon. Chairman Gitlin suggested sending Ms. Burrows a Get Well Soon card.

10. First Transit (Operations) Verbal Report

Mr. Heckman reported they are currently fully staffed with 16 drivers, 2 on medical leave and one will return by June. 14 drivers make things difficult to run buses. Mr. Heckman

reported there are six buses out of service. We have seven buses fully operational. Mr. Heckman reported the maintenance man was on leave to move his family to our area. Mr. Heckman reported there has been no complaints or accidents reported. Mr. Heckman reported he is opposed to cutting Mr. Rye's hours. Mr. Heckman reported the his operations staff surmise that approximately 20% of our Dial-a-Ride riders are not disabled but many try to claim the lower disabled fare. Chairman Gitlin would like to see an agenda item regarding the Elizabeth Burrows shelter.

11. Announcements

By consensus the next regular meeting will be held on April 12, 2017 at 1:30 p.m.

12. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Director, the Chairman Gitlin adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m. until the next scheduled meeting on April 12, 2017 at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Rye, Executive Director

TMP Consulting