

MINUTES
REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2017 AT 3:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Roger Gitlin (Chair), Heidi Kime, Lori Cowen, Jake Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Darrin Short (Vice Chair)

ALSO PRESENT: Joseph Rye, Nicole Burshem, Bill Lonsdale, Kevin Heckman, Tamera Leighton

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER. ROLL CALL

Chairman Gitlin called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M. Nicole Burshem called roll.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Director Cowen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 10, 2017 AND JUNE 21, 2017

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Kime, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the minutes of May 10, 2017 and June 21, 2017.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following person(s) addressed the Board: Bill Lonsdale commented he respectfully asked the Directors to revisit the decision for the bus stop at Safeway. Putting the stop on the opposite side from Safeway will be a tremendous hardship for the public. Mr. Lonsdale reported he argued with Mr. Wall some years ago regarding the bus stop. Saving time is good, but it is better to be late than to inconvenience the passengers. Mr. Lonsdale urged the directors to take a grocery cart over the opposite side, negotiate the curve by Rite Aid, and wait for a bus to arrive. The bulk of the passengers go to and from Safeway. Mr. Lonsdale reiterated "If it ain't broke don't fix it."

Angela Guthry thanked the Board for listening to her concerns. Ms. Guthry challenged the Directors to ride the bus to see what passengers go through daily. RCTA is losing ridership for many reasons. Ms. Guthry reported one of those reason are new signs and the second is the changes to the new schedule is difficult for handicapped riders. Ms. Guthry reported to her surprise on July first the Saturday Red Route was taken out and there was no notification to the riders of this change. This change has presented challenges to her mother. Ms. Guthry reported it is challenging to call into Dial-A-Ride with the new changes. Chairman Gitlin asked Mr. Rye to report if the issue for the bus stop change is the traffic by Safeway. Mr. Rye responded there are two reasons for the change. One reason is the traffic from cars and pedestrians and the other reason is the bus schedule running behind. Director Cowen asked Mr. Rye why the buses can't stop on the Safeway side. Mr. Rye responded there was a lack of curb cuts and no accessible path of travel. Director Smith suggested having the buses stop by the old laundry mat by the movie theater. Chairman Gitlin stated the board would like to re-evaluate the bus stop and asked Mr. Rye to place it on next month's agenda. Chairman Gitlin stated Ms. Guthry's request to ride the bus is a good one and asked Mr. Rye to evaluate her other comments.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5A. Approve Resolution 2017-18-01 Authorizing the Application for and Acceptance of the Final Allocation of \$317,000 in Proposition 1B Public Transit (PTMISEA) Funding and

Expenditure Plan Programming Funds to Bus Replacement, Facility Upgrades, and Bus Stop Improvements.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Kime, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved Resolution 2017-18-01 Authorizing the Application for and Acceptance of the Final Allocation of \$317,000 in Proposition 1B Public Transit (PTMISEA) Funding and Expenditure Plan Programming Funds to Bus Replacement, Facility upgrades, and Bus Stop Improvements.

6. UPDATE ON JULY 1, 2017 IMPLEMENTATION OF PACKAGE OF SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND COST SAVINGS STRATEGIES TO BALANCE FY 2017/18 BUDGET TO MATCH DECLINING FRA 5311(f) REVENUE FROM CALTRANS.

Mr. Rye reported at the last meeting the Board approved implementation of a package for service reductions, restructures, and cost saving strategies to combine the FTA Section 5311(f) and RCTA operating reserves to offset and balance the budget. After the discussion, staff implemented the following changes: elimination of the duplicative Route 10, adding deviations of Route 20 into Klamath Glen, elimination of first 30 minutes and last 30 minutes of daily Crescent City Local Service, reduced Saturday Crescent city local platform, and reduction of dispatch office hours in evenings. Mr. Rye reported the changes went into effect July first, but there wasn't enough staff to post signs or update print schedules at bus stops. Mr. Rye reported the website was updated and he rode the bus to see the improvements himself. Mr. Rye reported the scheduling is working and there were 1000 schedule brochures made. Director Smith asked if the drivers have any information regarding the ridership. Mr. Heckman reported the data can be collected, but the drivers need advanced notice because it's done by hand. Mr. Rye reported he can bring that data along with the annual report about grants and finances in September. Director Cowen asked how a rider could express concern to the RCTA. Mr. Rye reported they can send their concerns to redwoodcoasttransit@gmail.com, call dispatch, or express concerns to the drivers. Ms. Guthry reported when she calls dispatch to file a complaint they tell her to take it up with the Board. Bill Lonsdale commented the discussion of this item has a lot to do with decisions made depending on statistics and is wondering how far into the future will it be until there are tablet computers placed in the buses for the drivers to put in information. Chairman Gitlin asked if Mr. Rye can take another look to see if there are students riding. Mr. Rye responded there is no data rider demographic data yet.

7. DISCUSSION AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 2017-18-02 APPROVING \$.25 INCREASE IN ADULT CASH FARES AND CREATION OF NEW DISCOUNTED CASH AND PASS CATEGORIES FOR SENIORS, DISABLED, AND YOUTH/STUDENTS AND SIMPLIFIED ZONAL FARE STRUCTURE TO BE IMPLEMENTED OCTOBER 1, 2017.

Mr. Rye reported staff is seeking Board approval for new zonal-based fare structures. This will increase cash fares by \$.25 in the Crescent City Local zones, \$.50 in a new County zone, and establish distance based fares that will lower fares traveling south of Klamath and into Humboldt County. Mr. Rye reviewed with the board the adjustments to the fare structure. Mr. Rye feels the fare adjustments to Route 20 will be a better fare structure and lead to more ridership. Chairman Gitlin stated this sounds complicated and seems complicated. Chairman Gitlin asked Mr. Rye if there will be five zones and if the drivers will use a manifest to tract the riders in each zone. Chairman Gitlin requested the \$1.50 fare structure for students remain. Mr. Rye responded yes, the drivers came up with a manifest to keep track of the data. Director Smith asked Mr. Rye how he will advertise to the public. Mr. Rye responded we will post a notice on the website, in shelters, and on buses. Ms. Guthry asked how do you prove you are disabled and will there be monthly passes to cover the County's? Mr. Rye suggested offering the regional Redwood rider monthly pass at \$90.00 for adults for unlimited rides, \$45.00 for Senior/disabled,

and \$60.00 for students. Tamera Leighton, Executive Director of Del Norte Local Transportation Commission, reported she supports recommendations for the fares. Globally it seems complicated, but most of the folks' ride within the zones. This would not be atypical, and easy to manage. Leighton feels this a good perspective to keep in mind.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Kime, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority approved Resolution 2017-18-02 Approving \$.25 increase in Adult Cash Fares and Creation of New discounted Cash and Pass Categories for Seniors, disabled, and youth and simplified zonal fare structure to be implemented October 1, 2017 and Student fares be at the rate of \$1.50.

8. DISCUSSION OF SCOPE OF WORK AND AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR TRANSIT MARKET RESEARCH AND ON-BOARD SURVEY PLANNING PROJECT.

Mr. Rye reported we are looking at doing research of how to make the transit system run more smoothly and this will occur in FY 2018-19 with a full update of our Transit Development Plan (TDP). Prior to the TDP it will be helpful to arm ourselves with fresh and new information. This separate, pre-TDP market research study will consist of an on-board survey of existing riders, followed up by focus groups and interviews of key stakeholders. There will be two phases. The first phase is the on-board survey. The second phase is the focus groups and interviews. The second phase can be done in winter, but there is urgency on the on-board survey to conduct it before the weather turns and lowers ridership. Director Cowen asked if there was consideration of adding Hmong to the brochures? Mr. Rye reported we could do a third version to have that implemented but that Hmong did not officially constitute 5% of local usage per the FTA Title VI regulations. Director Smith asked if there were incentives for people to show up to the focus group. Mr. Rye agreed there should be incentives and could get riders to do that. Chairman Gitlin stated the awarding of this should at the next September meeting. Mr. Lonsdale suggested having the survey reviewed by a subcommittee and the questions be ones you want answers to. Ms. Leighton provided some clarity that Regional Planning Assistance is not an eligible use for incentives. RCTA would have to provide one from a different fund source. Ms. Leighton stated she has a lot of respect for Mr. Lonsdale, but there should be separation between board work and staff work. It is up to Mr. Rye to make the recommendations and it's important to show where staff work begins and Board work ends. Mr. Rye reported this is part of two-step process. The first is this market research and the second is the actual transit development plan next fiscal year. Director Smith asked if there are other funds that can be used besides TDA. Mr. Rye responded there is other funds that can be used to buy to incentives.

On a motion by Director Kime, seconded Director Cowen, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Board of Directors approved authorization to release request for proposals (RFP) for transit market research and on-board survey planning project.

9. PRESENTATION AND UPDATE ON YUOK TRIBAL TRANSIT SYSTEM ACTIVITIES.

Mr. Rye reported this will be agendized again on the next meeting.

10. GENERAL MANAGER VERBAL REPORT

- **Update on Arrival of New Buses** – Mr. Rye reported one of the four new buses arrived. It is one of the smaller vehicles. It is called an MV-1 and gets much better gas mileage and is easier to handle than a normal Dial-A-Ride vehicle. It is out in the community in revenue service already. So far everyone is raving about it. Three more buses were to be here yesterday, but have been delayed until tomorrow. We will receive one medium

sized bus and two larger ones. We have three grant applications still in the pipeline for addition federally funded buses, with a hope to get funded for two out of three.

- **Update on Delayed LCTOP Project-Purchase and Install 2 Bus Shelters**

Mr. Rye reported we received the LCTOP annually but its been far lower than anticipated so far. LCTOP can be for capital or operating projects. The bus shelter program had been held up depending on how RCTA wanted to react to the loss of a major chunk of federal money. At this point, the FY 2015-16 LCTOP that had been held up pending a decision on how to repair the financial hole in the FY 2017-18 budget can be now used to deliver the original bus shelters project. Staff would like to go ahead and get the bus shelters and the special wind screen. Director Cowen asked how many passengers does the new bus hold. Mr. Rye responded it holds six maximum.

11. FIRST TRANSIT (OPERATIONS) VERBAL REPORT

Kevin Heckman reported the staffing has shrunk by four. This was generally expected. Given the cuts in hours enacted on July 1, we are at 11 drivers. One person is in training. Kevin and staff have been working with a complaint about service to a location near Woodland Villa where a rider is requesting a dangerous deviation. Staff considered the request and decided we would not be able to provide that service due to visibility and safety concerns. Staff met with her and discussed the situation with her and invited her to express her thoughts to the board. The facility improvements are still being worked on, with the access gates next on the action list. The access road has been installed and working well. The next project is getting the gates and fencing installed. The radio repeater project is still waiting on the nest issue at the Fire District. Mr. Heckman announced he will be leaving First Transit and RCTA for a family move to Humboldt County in the coming weeks. He has let Don Swain (First Transit Regional Manager) know he will be leaving but is offering to stay on board as long as he can. Mr. Heckman will do his best to make sure everything goes as well as possible. Director Smith asked how Nick is doing? Mr. Heckman responded he is happy and looking forward to getting new buses. There will never be an end of work, but hopes the work will gradually become less and less critical.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following Directors addressed the following: Chairman Gitlin suggested the Board revisit the relationship with State and National Parks as the new Parks Director is in place. Regarding providing shuttles into Stout Grove, Mr. Heckman responded from what he remembers he did a calculation previously and it would cost at least \$25,000 a season to run through Stout Grove. It comes down to funding. Director Smith asked if there could be a stop at Jed Smith. Mr. Rye responded adding additional stops on existing routes is better than changing them and there is already a Route 199 stop at Jed Smith Campground and Visitor Center.

13. ADJOURN

On a motion by Director Cowen, seconded by Director Kime, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Board of Directors approved to adjourn the meeting at 5:11 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is on September 20, 2017 at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Rye, General Manager
Redwood Coast Transit/TMTP Consulting