

REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 16, 2019 AT 1:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Bob Berkowitz (Chairman), Alex Fallman, Roger Gitlin, Vidette Roberts

ABSENT: Heidi Kime

OTHERS PRESENT: Joe Rye, Chuck Clarkson, Nicole Burshem

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER. ROLL CALL

Chairman Berkowitz called the meeting to order at 1:34 P.M. Nicole Burshem conducted roll call.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Berkowitz.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following person(s) addressed the Board: None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4A. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2019-20-06 CANCELING AMENDMENT 1 TO THE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT WITH FIRST TRANSIT FOR CTSA SUPPORT DUTIES.

4B. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2019-20-07 AWARDED 2-YEAR CONTRACT TO FIRST TRANSIT FOR CTSA SUPPORT DUTIES AND AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT.

On a motion by Director Gitlin, seconded by Director Roberts, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the Consent Agenda items 4A and 4B.

5. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 26, 2019

On a motion by Director Fallman, seconded by Director Gitlin, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the minutes of August 26, 2019, as presented.

## 6. TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Discussion was held regarding the Transit Technology Update. Mr. Rye reported since August 2018, the Board has been prioritizing Transit Technology projects. Staff provided a discussion on all projects that could be pursued starting with the meeting in October 2018 and periodically since. Mr. Rye reported out regarding Tier 1 Projects (Board desired) that are in place, in progress, or in planning phase such as: On Board Video Surveillance (100% complete), Dial-A-Ride scheduling software (100% complete), Google Transit (100% complete), GeoTabs Automatic Vehicle Location AVL System, now replaced by DoubleMap w/Real-Time App for Riders (95% complete). RCTA is still working with DoubleMap on a few issues. Mobile Ticketing is 100% complete, while On Board Wi-Fi is only 5% complete, as staff is still evaluating what funds to use to fund this project and the benefits considering the many dead spots on RCTA regional routes. , On Board Automatic Announcement Systems is not started and may be beyond RCTA funding capacity, so for now it makes more sense for drivers to call out landmarks.

## 7. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FY 2018-19 ANNUAL RCTA ANNUAL REPORT SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

Discussion was held regarding the FY 2018-19 Annual RCTA Annual Report. Mr. Rye reported Service was reduced overall by less than one percent and ridership rose by 10.2%. Dial-A-Ride stayed stable, Crescent City Routes gained some ridership, Route 20 ridership increased, and systemwide ridership rose 10.2%. Chairman Berkowitz asked what the General Manager attributes the increased ridership to? Mr. Rye responded the partnership with the colleges, combined with recent and ongoing time spent fixing the on-time performance of the routes, and the 2018 fare restructure. Chairman Berkowitz asked if there is a way to get rid of nonperforming routes and increase the productive ones? Mr. Rye responded yes it will take some hard work and courage but we can look at them and make some cuts to make the system perform better, and free up funding for other needs. Chairman Berkowitz asked do we get more money because of the SB-1 money. Mr. Rye responded yes it comes to us based on our population. It has been growing a little per year after an initial doubling in 2017. Chairman Berkowitz suggested using that money to increase the salaries for employees. Mr. Rye responded we received a presentation on what transit wants to do and if we could trim up the unproductive stuff, we can use that portion of the money for the employee's wage increase. Director Gitlin commented in the past we have had discussions with State and National Parks about getting traffic off the road to Stout Grove, and asked if anything new has occurred on that potential project? Mr. Rye responded over a year ago staff determined that RCTA's current mix of vehicles were not compatible with that road, and that RCTA barely projects to have enough funding to replace its existing revenue fleet with little chance of securing funds to purchase a new type of mountain road friendly touring vehicle. Director Gitlin suggested putting it on the agenda to continue that discussion and review with the Parks what can be done.

8. DISCUSSION OF ELECTRIC BUS FOR RCTA FLEET, UNIQUE CHALLENGES TO RCTA, AND GENERAL BOARD DIRECTION ON RESEARCHING GRANT FUNDING AND PLANNING LEVEL COST ESTIMATES TO BEGIN DEPLOYMENT

Discussion was held regarding potential introduction of Electric Buses for the RCTA fleet. Mr. Rye reported California has been trying to meet new air quality mandates coming out of the California Air Resources Board (CARB). In 2018 CARB took it to the next step by mandating zero-emission buses to be purchased by transit agencies by 2029. They are steering the industry towards hydrogen and/or all-electric buses. As discussed frequently, RCTA's capital funding situation for bus replacement is not good. The purchase requirements for RCTA and other rural agencies is 25% starting zero emissions by January 1, 2026. By 2029 we are to be 100% zero emissions. The difference in price is only about \$10-\$20,000, but the one-time investment in charging infrastructure is a major financial hurdle. Staff began by looking at the RCTA fleet to start to comply and after research recommends that RCTA start with the buses that do Crescent City local routes and Dial-A-Ride first and then do the regional routes last. There are serious concerns about the ability of current electric buses to range far enough to reach Arcata and navigate the hills along the way. RCTA has 6 buses dedicated to local routes, that could be able to be retired and switched to electric buses gradually over time. PG&E is promoting its electric vehicle incentive program, designed to assist public transit fleets in conversion to electric buses. Mr. Rye would like to know if the board would like him to continue to immediately pursue an evaluation to find out what we will be up against to electrify the fleet or if we should watch what is happening with other organizations while biding time? Director Roberts asked if RCTA has investigated any possibility of solar generation of power and storage. Mr. Rye responded no; we haven't tied that in with this, but it could certainly make sense. Director Fallman asked if there was a cost or time estimate done for this project? Mr. Rye responded no, RCTA could proceed with the PG&E Program and if accepted we would get an estimate for the "behind the meter" costs, for service panel upgrades, conduiting, charging stations, and to pave the parking lot. Director Gitlin commented this is a big project that is coming up and we would be saving on fuel costs but offset by other costs. Mr. Rye agreed and pointed out that the costs RCTA would have to bear were capital costs, the exact type of money that RCTA does not currently possess. Mr. Rye asked if RCTA should monitor other agencies and continue to gather information as better funded fleets begin going through the process with PG&E. Director Gitlin suggested RCTA should monitor other fleets, and even consider a consultant to discuss our options. Chairman Berkowitz asked what incentive does PG&E have to offer us if they don't service Del Norte? Del Norte is served by Pacific Power so the PG&E option may not materialize anyway. Mr. Rye promised to gather more information, defer committing to PG&E for now, and update the Board again on this project later in 2020.

9. UPDATE ON LAUNCH OF CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE AGENCY (CTSA) PROJECTS: ADA ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND TRANSIT TRAVEL TRAINING AND OUTREACH EFFORTS AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Discussion was held regarding the status of implementation of RCTA's two CTSA projects. Mr. Rye reported that some public outreach events have occurred since the Board update. Mr. Rye reported there was an amendment to the Herron/TMTP (Rye) contract and a second contract with First Transit to allow Chuck Clarkson's and his local RCTA operations folks to take on the extra work to support the two CTSA programs. RCTA has purchased the software and is in the process of getting it set up. Hopefully we have training within the next month. We had one major outreach DNLTC SSTAC on November 19, 2019 and they were supportive, then we scheduled a luncheon and handed out flyers, RCTA is on track to start the program on January 1, 2020. Mr. Rye recommends waiting a year before jumping into ADA Eligibility recertifications of existing DAR customers, so starting in January 2021. We want to keep a slower time track, so we can do it well and efficient. What we want to do in early 2020 is the start the discount program and begin evaluating new ADA DAR applicants. Director Roberts asked will the ID's were to be done in the office. Mr. Rye responded yes, but we need to get an ID maker, which should be here by January.

10. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2019-20-08 AUTHORIZING FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION SECTION 5339 FUNDS FOR BUS REPLACEMENT AND REHABILITATION AND AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENTS

Discussion was held regarding Resolution 2019-20-08. Mr. Rye reported the agency was notified a couple weeks ago that RCTA was rewarded funding that we didn't expect to get. RCTA was awarded FTA 5339 funds in the amount of \$267,000 for two bus rehabilitation projects and replace two vehicles. The only downside is we will have to match it 50/50%. So, by accepting this competitive FTA money we are depleting our reserves faster. Mr. Rye suggests accepting the money, and committing the local match anyway. This will rehabilitate RCTA's two largest regional vehicles, and replace two l vehicles. Director Gitlin asked if it is going to cost RCTA \$130,000 of reserve to facilitate the project. Mr. Rye responded it is going to cost us \$267,000 for a \$534,000 funding reward. Director Gitlin asked if RCTA can tie any of this into electric buses. Mr. Rye responded he will check into that to see if we can change the details in the grant.

On a motion by Director Gitlin, seconded by Director Roberts, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved Resolution 2019-20-08 Authorizing Federal Transit Administration Section 5339 Funds for Bus Replacement and Rehabilitation and Authorizing the General Manger to Execute the Agreements.

## 11. OPERATIONS REPORT – FIRST TRANSIT

Chuck Clarkson reported RCTA had a couple mechanical failures/repairs this fall. One vehicle has been struggling for a while. Mr. Clarkson reported on a project that he and Mr. Rye are working together on to restructure space within the Williams Drive yard. Chuck will exchange where the employee parking is now with bus parking, and move the employee parking towards the front. The purpose is putting the buses where they have better visibility from dispatch and the offices. Chuck and the supervisors will be able to observe pre-trip and post trip better. Chuck's plan is to do the work ourselves, as part of the annual winter parking lot regravelling. First Transit staffing is doing well and holding steady and getting one new applicant a week. RCTA provided special event services to both the Japanese Delegation, State Championship football game, and the annual Thanksgiving Dinner. The Thanksgiving event included transporting 12 people. Director Gitlin asked about the overtime issue. Mr. Clarkson responded we are making progress and Fernando is working on rescheduling routes that aren't any longer than 8 hours. Director Gitlin asked how many vehicles are up to date on maintenance? Mr. Clarkson responded they are all up to date. Director Roberts asked if there has been changes with the lighting. Mr. Clarkson responded not yet, but that RCTA had an electrician give a quote and he did fix some things while he was there. Director Roberts asked if additional lighting would be installed in the area where the employees are parking. Mr. Clarkson responded we haven't given that consideration, but we will investigate it. Chairman Berkowitz commented we implemented students and seniors ride free and want to know how much that is being used. Mr. Clarkson and Mr. Rye responded that they will investigate that as well.

## 12. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Nothing to report currently.

## 13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following Commissioners commented: None

## 14. ADJOURN –

Redwood Coast Board of Directors adjourn the meeting at 2:54pm. The next regular meeting is on January 27 2019 at the new time of 5:30 P.M.

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Joseph Rye, General Manager  
Redwood Coast Transit/TMTP/Herron Consulting