

**MINUTES
REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
AUGUST 24, 2020 AT 5:15 P.M.
ZOOM ONLINE MEETING**

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

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Joseph Rye, Dan Herron, Chuck Clarkson, Autumn Luna, Nicole Burshem

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER. ROLL CALL.

Chairman Fallman called the meeting to order at 5:15 P.M. and Nicole Burshem took roll call.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Fallman led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following person(s) addressed the following: None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4A. ADOPT RESOLUTION 202-21-01 APPROVING THE 2020 UPDATE TO RCTA'S TITLE VI PLAN

4B. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-21-02 AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF CARES ACT PHASE II FUNDING

4C. APPROVE AGREEMENT WITH RJ RICCIARDI CPAS FOR RCTA ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT SERVICES 2020-2022

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

5. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 29, 2020 RCTA BOARD MEETING

On a motion by Director Gitlin, seconded by Director Berkowitz, and unanimously carried the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the minutes of June 29, 2020, as presented.

6. APPROVE RESOLUTION 2020-21-03 APPROVING AMENDMENT #2 TO FIRST TRANSIT OPERATIONS CONTRACT

Mr. Rye reported COVID-19 pandemic caused losses in revenue and demand. Pre-COVID-19 RCTA was running at about 20,000 annual revenue hours, but now we are projecting to run approximately 13,245 annual revenue hours, a reduction of 33.7%. First Transit proposes to raise its hourly billing rate by \$3.06 and credit RCTA \$833/\$1356 per month on the monthly fixed rate. The hourly increase supports lost overhead. The net increase will increase operating costs by about \$30,000/year. Mr. Rye recommends the board adopt Resolution 2020-21-03.

On a motion by Director Berkowitz, seconded by Director Fallman, and unanimously carried on polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit authority approved Resolution 2020-21-03 approving amendment #2 to First Transit Operations contract.

7. UPDATE ON COVID-19 IMPACTS ON RCTA CONTINUATION OF OPERATIONAL CHANGES, AND CARES ACT FUNDS

Mr. Rye reported that RCTA has done its part to keep the employees and riders safe by hiring a cleaning crew and augmenting staff pay. Both these services were deemed critical to maintain services during this time. On March 25th, the US Senate presented us with a stimulus package through the CARES Act. We received over \$700k in funding and are anticipating another disbursement for approximately \$900k. This could be used over the next few years to pay for lost sales tax, lost fare revenue, and increased operations costs. Until now RCTA staff has not tested posted for COVID-19, but last week a bus operator tested positive for COVID-19 during a doctor's visit. The operator has been put on leave and is receiving medical treatment. Other drivers were encouraged to get tested and have not come back positive and the operator who tested positive is reporting mild flu-like symptoms. Mr. Rye reported the staff recommends the Board to approve extending the operation expenditures until further notice. Director Gitlin asked regarding the reserve fund and if RCTA has used these funds. Mr. Rye responded no we have not. Director Gitlin asked if the budget is impacted or if it is just a bookkeeping issue and getting funds reimbursed. Mr. Rye responded yes, the expenses that are directly related to COVID-19 will be reimbursed by the CARES Act Funds and the reserves remain intact. Director Gitlin asked Mr. Rye a report to put together a report to show how to implement those reserves. Mr. Rye responded that he can do that. Director Gitlin also asked if Mr. Rye if he could come back with an update on electric buses. Mr. Rye responded that he can do that as well.

On a motion by Director Gitlin, seconded by Director Berkowitz, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved continuation of operational changes, and Cares Act Funds.

8. APPROVAL OF RCTA AUGUST 2020 SERVICE PLAN

Mr. Rye reported RCTA made adjustments each year based upon changes and fluctuations in transit demand. For the most part the adjustments were successful. RCTA has adapted to the COVID-19 crisis by reducing several of its lower-producing routes, and the reduced service platform remains in place today. At the May 29th meeting the Board provided direction to pursue a "cautious" reinstatement of service, holding off on reinstatement until the COVID-19 situation improves. This cautious approach will help better protect RCTA's reserves for capital

projects and future needs. The proposed August 2020 service plan would maintain the lower service level services enacted in April 2020 but add in an AM version of Route 300 to increase bell-time options to both DNHS and CEMS. This AM Route 300 will only run if and when in-person instruction resumes at Del Norte High School. This additional service to the two schools will only be in affect during schooldays and during in-person instruction. Mr. Rye reported staff recommends only this one service addition for August 2020.

On a motion by Director Berkowitz, seconded by Director Roberts, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved RCTA August 2020 Service Plan.

9. ANNUAL UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF RCTA PROGRAMS: GREYHOUND INTERLINE, CTSA, TOKEN TRANSIT

Dan Herron reported the Greyhound partnership is something RCTA has had for about 5 years. RCTA's Route 20 is supported by special federal money (FTA 5311(f)) that scores more competitively by having the Greyhound Interline in place. However, ridership to/from Greyhound has never materialized to any great extent, due no doubt to the late night and early morning connections in Arcata. In 2018 RCTA reallocated the unproductive late night Route 20 trip to mid-day to serve local travel markets. During this summer, Greyhound stopped promoting RCTA Route 20 connections (the AM trip, the last one that Greyhound used to show on their schedule) noticed that we cut one of the runs and they have taken us out of that system and not selling those tickets anymore. To keep the Interline Partnership project somewhat alive, RCTA would like to make convince Greyhound to again show the morning connection. This benefits RCTA most notably by helping RCTA to continue to secure annual FTA 5311(f) funds due to extra points awarded to RCTA for its connections with Greyhound. Greyhound policy states that a layover (delay in travel) cannot be more than 3 hours unless there is an open indoor facility for passenger to wait within. It is harder because we don't have a meaningful connection. Staff recommends continuing negotiations with Greyhound to see about getting back on their online trip planner and ticketing system. Director Gitlin commented this business is very vexing and understands the connection to Los Angeles and not sure why they would want to go to Portland, Seattle or Reno. Are we helping anyone with these routes? Is it in RCTA's best interest to have this Greyhound connection? Dan Herron responded that this is more about the 5311(f) money. Director Gitlin asked Mr. Rye if he was supporting this decision. Mr. Rye responded yes because it would hurt in the long run to lose this money, which supports the entire multi-trip Route 20 corridor. Chairman Fallman commented that RCTA is a public agency and the more connections the better. Our goal is to provide the most transportation to the most people.

The CTSA program has gotten off to a very slow start due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Token Transit (contactless mobile ticketing) continues to grow in popularity albeit very slowly.

10. OPERATIONS REPORT – FIRST TRANSIT

Chuck Clarkson reported RCTA did have one driver test positive for Covid and they are recovering at home and hope to be cleared sometime next week. First Transit staff were proactive on the incident and had already disinfected the bus in question twice. RCTA has the drivers wearing a mask during service as well as being behind the in-house designed and installed barriers. Right now all indications are we have gotten through this. No one else has

symptoms. Director Roberts asked if there are any changes made in the office or break room. Mr. Clarkson responded yes all the tables and chairs have been set aside and more consistent wearing masks in the office has evolved. Director Roberts asked how is staffing on the drivers. Mr. Clarkson responded we are doing ok with drivers. We have been able to hire new drivers who have already been licensed. We had a bus break down on 199 about three weeks ago and get back on route quickly. Mechanically wise Chuck reported one bus down and everything is doing good. Director Gitlin asked are we still paying premium bonus pay? Mr. Clarkson responded yes, we are. Director Gitlin asked regarding making these increases permanent. Mr. Clarkson responded yes if we could can that would be great. Chuck has assessed that with the premium pay RCTA is now competing more effectively for talent against other service industry employers in the region. Director Gitlin asked Mr. Rye to get the financial analysis of if we can afford this. Mr. Rye responded that he will continue to monitor and provide that data.

11. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Rye introduced Autumn Luna and Michael Taney. Autumn Luna commented she will be leaving the Black and Rice Legal team effective September 15, 2020, and will no longer be RCTA's assigned Black & Rice Attorney. Ms. Luna will be staying in the community and will be the new Assistant County Council. Autumn Luna introduced Michael Taney as the new counsell for RCTA from Black & Rice. Michael introduced himself to the Board.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following Directors commented: None

13. ADJOURN

Redwood Coast Board of Directors adjourn the meeting at 6:30 P.M. The next regular meeting is on October 26, 2020 at 5:15 P.M.

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