

Minutes
Redwood Coast Transit Authority
February 2, 2021 at 5:15 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Vidette Roberts, Darrin Short (Chair) , Valarie Starkey, Beau Smith (Vice Chair), Alex Campbell

Absent:

Others Present: Joe Rye, Chuck Clarkson, Dan Herron, Mark Elias (First Transit Regional VP)

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER. ROLL CALL.

Director Roberts called the meeting order at 5:26 p.m. Nicole Burshem called roll.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Rye led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following person(s) addressed the Board: None

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Discussion was held regarding Election of Chair and Vice Chair.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Starkey, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors nominated and approved Darrin Short as Chair.

On a motion by Director Campbell, seconded by Director Starkey, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors nominated and approved Beau Smith for Vice Chair.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no items for the Consent Agenda

6. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 26, 2020 RCTA BOARD MEETING

On a motion by Director Roberts, seconded by Director Starkey, and unanimously carried on a polled vote, the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the minutes of October 26, 2020, as presented.

7. OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF 2019 RCTA SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN WITH COVID-19 IMPACTS

Mr. Rye and Herron led a discussion that walked through the 2019 Short-Range Transit Plan highlighting areas that have changed, mostly due to COVID-19 impacts. Mr. Herron

reported the system overview remains mostly factual. Changes since the system overview include the April 2020 RCTA decision to reduce service in reaction to sharp drops in travel demand and funding due to the pandemic. To help offset this loss of funds RCTA voted to reduce some low-performing services including Saturday service, with the hopes of restoring some of the cuts once the COVID-19 situation improves.

Mr. Rye reported that there were no significant changes in Public Involvement, Market Research, and Transit Needs or in the Mission Statement, Goals, and Performance Standards chapters. Director Campbell asked if RCTA has been involved with the economic strategic planning. Mr. Rye responded no RCTA has not, but would happily if invited. Director Campbell suggests that RCTA become involved. Mr. Rye responded he will speak with the City Manager to see how RCTA can get involved. Mr. Rye reported RCTA implemented DoubleMap, which is a low-mid range AVL/CAD system, to get data regarding the fixed route system on-time performance, ridership, rider demographics, etc. RCTA has also implemented Token Transit mobile ticketing system that allows riders to purchase fares and passes with their smart phones.

Mr. Herron reported there has been no change since 2019 concerning the Managerial Model/Peer Analysis and RCTA plans to continue its current model by rebidding the General Manager contract in 2021.

Mr. Rye reported how the Service Alternatives Chapter is one of the most impacted by COVID, as the pandemic triggered a reduction of lower producing services and feedback from passengers indicates they understand and are supportive of the reduced services. RCTA expects to be able to restore some service once the pandemic recedes. RCTA implemented a new route, the afternoon Route 300 in August 2019, and was prepared to augment that with a morning Route 30 in August 2020 but deferred this due to the lack of in-person instruction at Del Norte High School. RCTA eventually did receive a robust allocation of federal funding in the form of the CARES Act, which has been a life saver to cover COVID related costs and to backfill lost sales taxes. Director Smith asked who RCTA is targeting for ridership growth? Mr. Rye responded that RCTA concentrates its limited marketing towards the transit dependent, including disabled, students, and tourists.

Mr. Herron reported regarding RCTA's implementation of CTSA programs. On January 2, 2020 RCTA launched its ADA Eligibility and Travel Training programs. Both programs are off to a slow start due to COVID-19. RCTA takes a cautious approach for CTSA program expansion until full costs are known, which will only happen once the pandemic recedes and life returns to "normal".

Mr. Rye reported RCTA has historically struggled with marketing, hence the inclusion of a separate chapter on marketing in the SRTP. Historically, the GM contract did not contain enough hours to run the transit system and conduct marketing efforts. This improved in 2018 when the RCTA Board approved the new Advertising Revenue

program as a revenue generating program, and set aside up to \$10,000/year of the proceeds from Advertising Revenue to the marketing program (hours and materials). Areas remaining as a focus for improvement include information at bus stops, mass marketing on radio/newspaper, and the promotion of information already made available but little known among riders, such as the real-time bus arrival info generated by RCTA's new DoubleMap AVL/CAD system. RCTA is in the process of placing six new bus shelters which feature map cases to display a new brochure. Student and tourist marketing have been placed on hold until pandemic improves.

Mr. Herron reported that RCTA struggled with a shortfall of capital funding before COVID-19 and the pandemic isn't helping. The current sources for capital projects (bus replacement, bus stop improvements, transit center and facility improvements) are inadequate to meet the ongoing and future needs for bus replacements and capital projects for facility. Since the Pandemic RCTA sales tax funds have dropped 30%. The CARES Act funds received from federal support will help "backfill" about 2 years of diminished sales tax funding plus covering extra COVID-related expenses. However, RCTA's capital funding is still inadequate in the long run and its PTMISEA reserves soon exhausted. RCTA has built TDA reserve funds for future capital projects and keep the agency on solid footing. Director Starkey was thankful for the presentation and time spent on this. Director Smith thought it was a good presentation and presented very well. Director Campbell thanked Mr. Rye and Mr. Herron for the presentation.

8. DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE AND AGENDA ITEMS

Director Smith stated that meetings are better for him after 5:00 P.M.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Campbell, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the upcoming Board meeting schedule and agenda items, as presented.

9. OPERATIONS REPORT – FIRST TRANSIT

Chuck Clarkson reported staffing for drivers is adequate but could use a couple more. Interviews are happening tomorrow to higher some new drivers. We have not had any road breakdowns and maintenance has been going very well. One bus is down and will be for the rest of the week. RCTA has battled with Last Chance Grade landslides causing interruption of service this month. The slide and high winds have interrupted Route 20 service to Arcata and back, including service to Klamath. Ridership remains 170-220 a day, just under half what it was pre-COVID. Director Starkey asked if the 30% decline on ridership is due to COVID. Mr. Clarkson replied that is with the 30%. Mr. Rye stated it is probably more like 50%, with a funding decline of 30%. Director Roberts asked with only 10 drivers is there overtime? Mr. Clarkson replied no we have not had to do that. Mr. Clarkson invited all board members to get a tour of the facility.

10. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Rye reported RCTA does their annual workshop at the facility and conducts a tour to meet the staff and show off the facility. This usually happens in March or April each

year. Director Campbell asked who is taking on legal services. Mr. Rye responded the county sounds like they are going to, but this is being negotiated and will come to the Board for approval before any change occurs.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Rye announced the February meeting will be changed to the end of the month due to the County having a meeting on our normal meeting date and time.

12. ADJOURN

Redwood Coast Board of Directors adjourn the meeting at 6:34 P.M. The next regular meeting is on March 2, 2021 at 5:15 P.M.

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