

**MINUTES
REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, MAY 4, 2021 AT 5:15 P.M.**

PRESENT: DARRIN SHORT (CHAIRMAN), BEAU SMITH (VICE CHAIRMAN), VALERIE STARKEY, RAYMOND ALTMAN, VIDETTE ROBERTS

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: JOE RYE, DAN HERRON, FERNANDO HERNANDEZ, MARK ELIAS, SILVIA MARTINEZ-PALACIOS, TAMERA LEIGHTON

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER. ROLL CALL.

Chairman Short called the meeting to order at 5:15 P.M. and Joe Rye conducted roll call.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Short led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following addressed the Board: None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4A. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-21-09 AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO CALTRANS FOR RCTA'S FY 2020-21 ALLOCATION OF LCTOP FUNDS FOR RCTA'S ELECTRIC BUS PILOT PROJECT

4B. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-21-10 AUTHORIZING FY 2021 FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION SECTION 5311 & 5311(F) FUDNING FOR RCTA & AUTHORIZING GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE ALL GRANT FUNDING DOCUMENTS

4C. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-21-11 ACCEPTING CCRSSA FEDERAL ECONOMIC SECURITY FUNDING FOR RCTA & AUTHORIZING GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE ALL GRANT FUNDING DOCUMENTS

On a motion by Director Starkey, seconded by Director Smith, and on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the consent calendar, items 4A.-4C.

5. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2, 2021 AND APRIL 6, 2021 RCTA BOARD MEETINGS

On a motion by Director Starkey, seconded by Director Roberts, on a polled vote with Director Altman recused from March 2, 2021 minutes; the Redwood Coast

transit Authority Board of Directors approved March 2, 2021 and April 6, 2021, as presented.

6. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF STATUS OF RCTA ELECTRIC BUS PROJECT

Discussion was held regarding the status of RCTA's Electric Bus Project. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has enacted the Innovative Clean Transit Rule (ICT). CARB implemented the ICT rule in 2018, which requires all transit agencies to purchase zero emission buses by 2029. For small, rural agencies, like RCTA, the agencies must purchase at least 25% of their new bus purchases as zero emission buses by 2026.

Mr. Rye reported that the Crescent City Local Fleet has range needs compatible with existing and future electric bus performance. Mr. Rye reported the cost of the Electric vehicles will be a challenge. Like electric buses are currently 50-100% more than equivalent gasoline or diesel buses.

Mr. Rye reported that there are essentially two ways to charge electric buses: slow and fast charging systems. RCTA is leaning towards the slow charging units, which are cheaper and usually installed at the bus yard for overnight charging. For the initial funding, RCTA will be using LCTOP grants, but it is unlikely that LCTOP will provide sufficient funds alone. LCTOP funds cannot be used for planning or engineering work.

Staff recommends that RCTA use its available reserve funds to fund the missing engineering work to procure and install a scalable slow charging system that can support up to 10 electric buses. This will help provide the technical assistance RCTA lacks in house and move the project to construction phase, where RCTA's LCTOP funds can be utilized.

Mr. Rye reported that RCTA is working on ordering 1 or 2 electric "pilot" buses to test the concept. We wish to use this pilot bus to test and evaluate challenges. The cost of this pilot bus would be approximately \$20,000 above the cost of a new gasoline bus.

Mr. Rye reported that current electric bus technology does not appear adequate to meet the needs of RCTA's regional fleet, including Route 20. Current electric buses lack the range and power to perform on the challenging Smith River to Arcata Route. It may prove that hydrogen fuel will be the only option. RCTA is working closely with the Far North Group to explore this option along with how and where we will be able to get the hydrogen fuel. Director Smith commented that Mr. Rye did a good job on the presentation. Director Starkey likes the idea of a pilot program because it will get everyone to use this transition.

7. DISCUSSION OF PRELIMINARY RCTA FISCAL YEAR 2021-22 BUDGET

Discussion was held regarding the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget. Mr. Herron reported the budget projects that about 66% of services cut in April 2020 will be reinstated; with fares projected to be lower than before the pandemic. Highlights include: \$20,000 for miscellaneous needs at the bus yard; includes \$40,000 in funds to advance the electric Bus Project; \$66,000 in funds to plan and design unfracture

improvements near the Cultural Center transit Hub, and the usual contingency within the operations line to pay for bus engine and transmissions failures. Mr. Herron reported this item will be returned in June for Board action for the final FY 2021-22 Budget. Fernando Hernandez asked if the \$66,000 to purchase a hub can be used to put a down payment on a kiosk placed on M Street for ticket purchasing and other duties. Mr. Herron responded yes it can be done that way. Director Starkey asked if staff could bring back to a future meeting with more information on the Kiosk Concept? Director Short suggested refurbishing an old bus for a mobile kiosk and have a physical person to answer any questions. Director Roberts has concerns that the kiosk may be a bad idea due to vandalism and may not last long. Director Smith asked why an office couldn't be placed inside of the Cultural Center? Mr. Rye responded that is an option they are exploring. Tamera Leighton stated she agrees that it would be an upgrade to have RCTA staff at the hub so questions can be answered and also important to be mobile because we won't be able to get funding for a system in an inundation zone.

8. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-21-12 APPROVING PURCHASE ORDER 2020-21-14 TO CREATIVE BUS SALES FOR PURCHASE OF TWO REPLACEMENT BUSES FOR RCTA LOCAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES

Discussion was held regarding purchasing two replacement buses. Mr. Rye reported staff would like to use an expenditure of up to \$360,000 to Creative Bus Sales to purchase two replacement buses and authorize the General Manager to issue a purchase Order. Director Roberts asked if the buses have already been selected for purchase. Mr. Rye responded yes, we have selected some F550 and Champion low floor Ford.

On a Motion by Director Starkey, seconded by Director Roberts, and on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved Resolution 2020-21-12 approving purchase order 2020-21-14 to Creative Bus Sales for Purchase of two replacement buses for RCTA Local and Regional Services and authorize the General Manager to issue a purchase order.

9. DISCUSSION AND SELECTION OF 2021 RCTA BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Discussion was held regarding Board meeting schedule. Director Short asked if the Board would entertain a different meeting day. Director Starkey commented she does not do meetings on Fridays, but she can do the 4th Monday of the Month. Director Smith is in agreeance and votes to meet the 4th Monday of the Month. Director Altman is in agreeance and votes to meet the 4th Monday of the Month. Director Roberts is open to whatever is convenient to everybody else.

By Consensus the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved to meet the 4th Monday of each month beginning in June.

10. OPERATIONS REPORT – FIRST TRANSIT

Fernando Hernandez reported RCTA is holding it together. We are fully staffed by borrowing a First Transit driver from Visalia temporarily. We do have slight deviation

on Route 20. It leaves at 2:30 so we can bypass the 2-hour delay. We also implemented \$500 sign on and referral bonus to help recruit drivers.

11. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Rye reported they are in their last year in a base contract with Operations and Maintenance. First transit has put together an extension offer letter and he is in discussion with First Transit on the details.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Herron wants to thank Mark and First Transit for the Bonus pay. It will help to encourage people to come and drive for us. Director Smith stated it is hard to find help right now. Director Roberts stated she thinks extending the contract would be a big plus. Director Smith asked if the drivers have been offered vaccines. Mark responded we are encouraging the employees to go and get a vaccine. We are also paying the people for the time they go down to get the vaccine. Director Smith agrees that people should have the right to choose.

13. ADJOURN

Redwood Coast Board of Directors adjourn the meeting at 6:42 P.M. Next RCTA board meeting will be on Monday June 28, 2021 at 5:15 P.M.

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