

**MINUTES
REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OCTOBER 24, 2022, AT 5:30 PM**

PRESENT: Ray Altman (Chairman), Darrin Short (Vice-Chairman), Vidette Roberts, Susan Masten

ABSENT: Beau Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Joseph Rye, Fernando Hernandez, Nicole Burshem, Dan Herron (Via Zoom), Tamera Leighton Executive Director Del Norte Local Transportation Commission, Catherine Groves Hanson Bridgett LLP (Via Zoom), John Horner (Via Zoom), Mark Shaffer with Mark Shaffer Consulting (Via Zoom)

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER. ROLL CALL. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Altman called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M. Nicole Burshem conducted Roll Call. Chairman Altman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following person(s) commented on the following: None

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

3A. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2022-23-03 APPROVING A CAL-OES GRANT FROM DEL NORTE COUNTY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$22,000 FOR PURCHASE AND INSTALL OF BACKUP GENERATOR AND AUTHORIZING GM TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT.

3B. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2022, RCTA BOARD MEETING.

3C. ADOPT RESOLUTION 2022-23-04 APPROVING THREE BUDGET TRANSFERS TO ENABLE RCTA TO PAY FUTURE CAPITAL PROJECT OUTLAYS DIRECTLY FROM CAPITAL FUNDS 695, 696, AND 697.

On a motion by Director Short, seconded by Director Roberts, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved the Consent Agenda items 3A-3C, as presented.

4. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH HANSON BRIDGETT LLP FOR RCTA LEGAL COUNSEL SERVICES

Discussion was held regarding an agreement with Hanson Bridgett LLP for RCTA Legal Counsel services. Mr. Rye reported RCTA has never leaned heavily on an attorney, but it is required that we have one for certain legal services. RCTA has been frugal over the years utilizing local legal services as needed over the years, first with Black and Rice LLP and for the last year plus with Del Norte County. The RCTA attorney is critical during major procurements, plus the periodic procurements of the General Manager position.

After receiving direction from the County Attorney that he did not have bandwidth or transit experience to continue to support RCTA (after Ms. Luna left the County), RCTA sought out a proposal from Hanson Bridgett LLP of San Francisco. Mr. Rye reported on staff's recommendation to approve the attached agreement with Hanson Bridgett LLP for legal services. Director Roberts asked if the fee was an annual fee. Mr. Rye responded yes; it is estimated to be \$30,000 per year, and that was based on a paced approach to modernizing RCTA's required and recommended array of policy and procedure documents. Director Masten asked when talking with other counties if they just didn't express any interest? Mr. Rye responded that he reached out to transit partners in nearby counties to see if their attorneys may be interested in adding RCTA to their customer base. No responses were received to date. Director Masten would feel more comfortable with a couple more coming forward and having options and has concerns about the price jump from where RCTA has been to \$30k/year. Chairman Altman asked when the last time RCTA had an attorney conduct a governance and policy review for the agency? Mr. Rye responded never that he knows of. The Board suggested this issue be tabled and staff look into conducting a formal solicitation, such as an RFP to secure a level playing field. Mr. Rye suggested having an RFP on the agenda for the early special meeting to bring back something in December. The item was tabled.

5. REVIEW THE RCTA FISCAL YEAR 2021-22 RCTA ANNUAL REPORT PERFORMANCE DATA

Discussion was held regarding the Fiscal Year 2021-22 RCTA Annual Report Performance Data. Mr. Rye reported RCTA held its revenue services low during almost all of FY 2021-22, at pandemic level, sustaining cuts that were enacted in April 2020, with slight service reinstatement late in the fiscal year. Overall FY 2021-22 revenue hours were up 8.35%, while DAR hours were up 17%. DAR ridership rose by 14%, with RCTA providing 17.2% more DAR hours. Crescent City Local Routes (1-4) gained 6% over prior year ridership, with RCTA providing only 1.34% more revenue hours on the CC Locals. Route 20 and 199 recovered slightly, but struggled compared to local routes, with Regional Routes ridership up 5.62%, even though RCTA provided 14.9% more regional service hours in FY 21-22. Mr. Rye reported transit Agencies in the USA have experienced staggering ridership losses since COVID-19 pandemic. Very few agencies have seen those riders fully return. Director Roberts asked if we have a plan in place to do fare increases?. Mr. Rye responded no we do not, and it might be time, as the last fare increase was in 2017. Director Roberts suggested doing that in two increments rather than all at once. Chairman Altman asked how far out we are with the contactless fare collection (credit card acceptance on-board) electronic system? Mr. Rye responded that we are behind schedule and now looking toward the end of the year for launch. This will start the introductory promotion period of 6 months of \$1 fares (\$2 if you fail to "tap off"). After that introductory period on the regional route, might be a good time to do a general fare increase. The RCTA Board of Directors would like to see some kind of plan for this.

6. AUTHORIZE AWARD FOR PLANNING SERVICES TO MARK SHAFFER CONSULTING FOR THE SOUTH OREGON MEDICAL SHUTTLE PLANNING STUDY

Discussion was held regarding a proposal received in response to RCTA's RFP from Mark Shaffer Consulting for the South Oregon Medical Shuttle Planning Study. Mr. Rye reported during the 2022 iteration of the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission Unmet Transit Needs (UTN) process the need to provide additional transportation to either Southern Oregon or Humboldt County to better meet the needs of travelers who have medical appointments in Southern Oregon or Humboldt was expressed. The Del Norte Healthcare District pledged \$20,000 to help fund a planning study and to launch a service in 2023 if market is identified. RCTA is going to match their pledge to have a total budget of \$40,000 for the planning and launch of service. RCTA has expanded the initial scope to include shopping trips, to meet further needs and help with ridership. The Mark Shaffer proposal is a strong one, Mr. Shaffer has decades of experience running a successful CTSA in San Luis Obispo County (Ride On) and has planned and implemented several similar non-traditional transit services. Mr. Rye recommended that the Board approve an agreement with Mark Shaffer Consulting in a not to exceed amount of \$25,150 and authorize General Manager to execute the agreement. To be clear on the project goals, RCTA is doing this comprehensive evaluation of the existing conditions to ensure that any service concept that emerges from this study does not compete with existing medical transportation entities, but rather fills gaps in the transportation spectrum. If no viable markets are found that need this service, there will be no implementation phase. The study is heavy on interviews and public outreach to the medical community to learn what is currently happening to see if significant transport gaps exist. The phase 1, data gathering and exploration phase will be completed by and presented to the RCTA Board at their April strategic planning workshop. If a need is found that can be realistically met, RCTA could have a service plan around May 2023 that could be implemented as soon as the summer of 2023. Director Masten asked what the remaining funds from \$40k will be used for. Mr. Rye responded remaining balance will be used for launch of project or returned.

On a motion by Director Short, seconded by Director Roberts, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Authority Board of Directors approved an agreement with Mark Shaffer consulting not to exceed amount of \$25,150 and authorize General Manager to execute the agreement.

7. DISCUSSION OF RCTA'S PTMISEA EXPENDITURE PLAN – FUNDING MUST BE ENCUMBERED BY JUNE 30, 2023

Discussion was held regarding RCTA's PTMISEA Expenditure plan. Mr. Rye reported presentation was done last month. Old funding source from 2006 Prop 1B bond package. RCTA received the PTMISEA funding in annual allocations from 2007-2016. RCTA banked the funds in the early years, and recently has been using the funds as local match for bus replacement projects, and to repair and upgrade its Williams Drive Maintenance and Operations Facility. The current balance of \$500k or so will be used for mostly for bus replacement projects, with a few exceptions for facility projects. All

funds must be expended or at least encumbered by June 30th. The biggest risk staff sees is that Caltrans has awarded RCTA several bus replacement grants, but has yet to produce standard agreements. These Caltrans Standard Agreements enable RCTA to encumber and spend the funds. Staff will keep the Board updated on this item in the coming months, to ensure no funds are lost to the agency.

8. MANAGEMENT REPORT – FIRST TRANSIT PROJECT MANAGER

Fernando Hernandez reported the driver staffing is going great. He has a long list of applicants, much different than where RCTA was even a few months ago. First Transit Crescent City receives at least 3-4 applications per week and is currently fully staffed. RCTA ridership has picked up over the summer and fall. Even Saturday ridership has risen, up to about 144 riders last Saturday. Our school tripper, Route 300 is starting to pick up, after a slow start. Route 300 transported 16 riders each afternoon this week.

9. RCTA GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Rye reported that the contactless fares project and all its components continues to slowing move forward, including wifi and other electronics on the buses. The latest challenge involves RCTA’s lack of an agency bank account for fare reconciliation. This problem almost derailed our smart phone ticket sales effort three years ago, the partnership with token transit. That issue was solved by First Transit agreeing to open up its existing bank account (where all other RCTA fares and pass sales are deposited and accounted for) to Token Transit. However, this time that won’t work, because First Transit is a private corporation and the RCTA project relies upon government card processing rates. Mr. Rye reported that he has a meeting with the County Treasurer on Wednesday and is hopeful she can assist and get this account setup.

The Front Street Transit Hub project has started, with utility markings and topographic surveying scheduled for RCTA’s preferred site on Front between H and I Streets. Discussions with the City are happening regarding an MOU or other agreement that will govern the use of the property. Mr. Rye has a meeting with the city tomorrow to talk about the MOU and timelines and processes. The project is gaining support, as evidenced when RCTA was approached by the Redwood State and National Parks Conservancy about including the Transit Hub in a grant to speed up construction.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following Directors reported: None

11. ADJOURN

Redwood Coast Transit Board of Directors adjourned the meeting at 6:37 p.m. The next meeting will be on Tuesday December 6, 2022, at 5:30 P.M.

Joseph Rye, General Manager
Redwood Coast Transit Authority