

MINUTES
REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023, AT 5:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Joey Borges (Chairman), Ray Altman, Vidette Roberts, Darrin Short (via Zoom at entered 6:20 P.M.)

ABSENT: Kelly Schellong

ALSO PRESENT: Joseph Rye (Via Zoom), Fernando Hernandez, Nicole Burshem, Dan Herron (Via Zoom), Makenzy C (Via Zoom), Michael Conneran Hanson Bridgette LLP (Via Zoom), Tamera Leighton (Via Zoom),

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

Chairman Borges called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Roll Call was taken by Nicole Burshem. Chairman Borges led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following person(s) addressed the Board: None

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3A. APPROVE RESOLUTION 2022-23-10 AUTHORIZING RCTA APPLICATION FOR FTA 5311-F OPERATING FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-24.

3B. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 27, 2023, RCTA BOARD WORKSHOP

3C. APPROVE RESOLUTION 2022-23-11 APPROVING RECEIPT OF VOLKSWAGEN SETTLEMENT FUND GRANT FUNDING FOR ONE REPLACEMENT ELECTRIC BUS AND DIRECTING THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE GRANT DOCUMENTS

On a motion by director Altman, 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. APPROVE RELEASE OF AN RFP FOR PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING AND SITE PLANNING FOR THE RCTA WILLIAMS DRIVE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

Discussion was held regarding RFP. Mr. Rye reported RCTA is mandated by California Air Resources Board to comply with the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation. We are required to start replacing our buses with ZEBs in 2026, and to purchase only ZEBs from 2030 on. The initial approach by RCTA is to start on purchasing battery electric buses while monitoring the hydrogen path. There are still concerns with range and power issues with regard to how well electric buses will perform on RCTA's regional routes. The most difficult part of the transition is the requisite design and construction of the yard charging infrastructure required to charge electric buses. The buses must be charged overnight and it would make sense to also have a small amount of "fast chargers" that can charge a bus quicker, for use during the service day. Pacific Power requires RCTA to figure out maximum future charging capacity needs before putting together a new service order and cost

estimate. In order to do that we will need to hire a consultant to develop these calculations and a site plan layout of future equipment needed for the yard. Mr. Rye reported that the RFP scope of work will include an evaluation of future maximum RCTA bus charging needs and infrastructure; development of an optimal site plan for the location of the electrical service equipment, while maintaining bus and employee parking and circulation; and evaluate potential drainage and paving considerations for the site plan. Staff is close to finalizing the RFP and would like to release it soon for award in June. The full scope of the preliminary engineering is expected to be completed by late 2023. Staff recommendation is to authorize the release of the Electric Bus Charging Preliminary Engineering Request for proposals.

On a motion by Director Roberts, seconded by Director Altman, and unanimously carried on a polled vote the Redwood Coast Transit Board of Directors approved the release of an RFP for Preliminary Engineering and Site Planning for the RCTA Williams Drive Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project.

5. UPDATE ON RCTA ON-DEMAND SERVICE TO CRESCENT CITY AIRPORT

Discussion was held regarding on-demand service to Crescent City Airport. Mr. Rye reported that RCTA soft launched this in the Fall of 2022, while working with the Airport to place a bus sign for an official drop off/pick up location. RCTA has now reached agreement with the Airport on a location near the terminal. Due to the CEC being well off the nearest fixed route and the flights leaving and arriving just at the start and end of RCTA's service schedules, RCTA has developed a "on-demand" model to get to and from the airport. The current flights are departure at 7:00 A.M. and arrival at 7:15 P.M., just before and after our current Dial-A-Ride DAR service hours. Chairman Borges suggested getting flyers on the plane and asked how someone calls for a ride. Mr. Rye responded right now it is a phone call to dispatch. We are working on a module to request trips online and waiting on Caltrans for an agreement for a grant awarded over a year ago, which will have funding for this software module. Mr. Rye responded not exactly, as DAR uses a different software than RCTA fixed route which does stream bus location via the RCTA website. Mr. Rye will check on the CTS software and see if its capable of a visual real-time bus location function. Director Altman asked regarding the fee schedule. Mr. Rye responded that staff recommends that RCTA would use our current Dial-A-Ride service area to operate this on demand service, and our General Public DAR fare of \$5 unless the passenger is ADA-qualified. Chairman Borges asked once we get the app service would it still need to be 24-hour notice. Mr. Rye responded you will probably not have to give 24-hour notice but it makes RCTA able to not schedule a driver for hours that are unnecessary, but that if the CTS Software is eventually able to handle more real-time trip requests, this might be possible. Director Roberts asked if there has been any discussion about if a flight coming in gets diverted into McKinleyville. Mr. Rye responded no we haven't discussed that either, but we still have to work through some of those details. Ryan Cooley, Airport Director commented he is excited to explore this opportunity to have transit to the airport. We currently do not have taxi service before 10:00 A.M. and Mr. Cooley believes if we promote this actively many people would actually be able to use this option. Mr. Cooley responded in regarding to delayed flights that RCTA dispatch will be in email and phone contact with Airport staff, as well as passengers, to make adjustments as needed when flights are delayed or cancelled.

6. **DISCUSSION OF FARE INCREASE OPTIONS AND MINIMUM FAREBOX RECOVERY STANDARDS**
Discussion was held regarding fare increase options and farebox recovery. Director Altman asked regarding the Contactless fares (Credit Cards, Pay apps) promotion that is started with rides being \$1.00. and how long that promo will run? Mr. Rye will research this, as it is a regional collaboration project led by Humboldt Transit and Caltrans, so it requires a group decision on when the promo period will end, he guesses most likely late in 2023. It was discussed how September might be counterproductive to change RCTA's fares during the contactless fares promotion. Mr Rye responded that RCTA has been accepting contactless cards for about a month now in a soft launch mode, while working out the complex array of vendors involved to ensure the system works well before pushing it to the public. This project is intense, has cost more than expected, and stresses RCTA's minimalist management model. However, it is exciting and provided immediate value to some of RCTA's local Social Service Agencies pass buyers, who are now buying their paper monthly passes with credit cards. Chairman Borges asked is a fare increase of \$.50 for adults doesn't sound like a lot, but what does staff predict the impact will be on ridership. Mr Rye responded it would be a risk and we aren't sure how it will do, usually fare increases drop ridership, at least at first. However, if Mr. Rye has implemented fare increases along with addition of new premium services that actually led to ridership and fare revenue increases. Consensus of the board to move forward and look into this more and come back with options and an outreach plan.

7. **DISCUSSION OF DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICE AREA EXPANSION, SENIOR FARE, AND LATE CANCEL AND NO-SHOW POLICIES**
Discussion was held regarding Dial-A-Ride service area expansion; late cancellation and no show policies. Director Roberts asked if there were chronic abusers and if letters get sent out? Fernando Hernandez responded yes and we send a letter stating this behavior can lead to a suspension of 3 days, but we have never actually suspended anyone for these infractions. This is an issue that will involve our new attorney to ensure RCTA remains in compliance with FTA laws and best practices. Consensus of the Board to move forward to come up with some policies for the late and no shows. Director Roberts would like to get a map of the current DAR Service Area and the areas being considered for extensions, and asked if we could possibly charge more for far-flung areas? Mr. Rye responded yes we can definitely get a map and research the extra charges concept.

8. **DISCUSSION OF FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 PRELIMINARY RCTA DRAFT BUDGET**
Discussion was held regarding the Fiscal Year 2023-24 RCTA Draft Budget. Chairman Borges asked regarding operation expenses and shelters and asked why there is a 0 placed there. Mr. Rye responded that that is a operational (maintenance) line and that Transdev (First Transit) is responsible for maintaining those under the current contract and those costs are contained in the monthly fee RCTA pays Transdev for services. Chairman Borges expressed concern over bus stop maintenance in general, and asked how the responsibility is divided between RCTA and Transdev? Mr. Rye responded that Transdev does maintenance for the shelters and bus stop equipment, and RCTA purchases and arranges installation of same.

Chairman Altman asked about the electric buses projects, and are we on a compliant timeline with CARB and how does that relate to the extension of the Williams Drive land

lease with the state? Mr Rye responded for CARB compliance we are required to start purchasing a percentage of new buses as ZEB (zero emission, electric or hydrogen) buses by 2026 and then all ZEB by 2030. Director Altman was concerned putting in a major infrastructure investment (yard charging systems) on a ground lease until we have the 20 year lease extended with the State. Mr. Rye responded that he and the Fairgrounds Manager had reached a verbal agreement to extend the lease, and she had submitted the request to the state to draft up the extension, but we have not seen the draft yet. The current land lease ends in 2024 but plans and possibly even yard charging infrastructure may be ready for installation prior to the beginning of the ground lease extension. The Board asked Mr. Rye to check in on the status of the ground lease extension before we commit major funds to upgrade the site.

9. MANAGEMENT REPORT – FIRST TRANSIT PROJECT MANAGER

Fernando Hernandez reported staffing levels are back up to normal. 10 drivers on board and looking to get 1-2 more part time positions for summer trips and another full time position for/if we do the Southern Oregon medical shuttle. Chairman Borges asked regarding the general maintenance on benches. Mr. Hernandez responded we have spray cans to paint them, but they are not an exact match in color.

10. RCTA GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr Rye reported we were successful obtaining a large TIRCP Grant to design and build the downtown transit center, the aforementioned Williams Drive electric bus charging infrastructure, and to purchase 4-6 electric buses. The grant takes time to be executed, so the money is unlikely to be available in 2023, but should be by this time in 2024. Mr. Rye found and purchased two lightly used MV-1 paratransit vehicles (like our popular MV-1, bus 210) to augment the DAR fleet at a low-cost. These can also be deployed on lighter passenger trips of the future South Oregon Medical Shuttle and for special events.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following Directors commented on the following: Director Altman get the buses ready for the Forest Moon Festival on June 3rd.

12. ADJOURN

Redwood Coast Transit Board of Directors adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m. The next regular scheduled meeting will be on Monday, May 22nd, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. (later rescheduled to June 12th at 3pm)

Joseph Rye, General Manager
Redwood Coast Transit Authority