

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MARIN COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS HELD MONDAY, MAY 19, 2008 AT 10:00 A.M.

Roll Call

Present: Director McGlashan; Director Adams; Director Arnold; Director Heller; Director Albritton; Director Brown; Director Kinsey

Director McGlashan opened the meeting at 10:10 a.m. Director Brown, Director Heller, and Director Adams arrived later.

1. [Open time for public expression, limited to three minutes per speaker, on items not on the Transit District's agenda.](#)

No member of the public spoke at this time.

2. [Approval of minutes for April 21, 2008.](#)

M/s Director Arnold - Director Kinsey to approve the minutes of April 21, 2008.

Vote: Motion carried 4-0

AYES: Director McGlashan, Director Arnold, Director Albritton, Director Kinsey

ABSENT: Director Adams, Director Heller, Director Brown

3. [Board of Directors' Matters.](#)

Director Arnold mentioned that two public meetings have been held in Novato regarding transit needs planning for possible changes to the EZ Rider. Three options have been presented to the community: 1. Dial-A-Ride, 2. Fixed route, and 3. Flex route, which would be a combination of options 1 and 2. She stated the meetings were well attended and she looks forward to future meetings.

Director Albritton stated that he attended a recent Bay Area Air Quality Management District grant workshop and that their Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) regional grant applications are due by June 30, 2008. He asked staff if the Marin County Transit District anticipated a grant application submittal for these funds. Staff has reviewed TFCA guidelines and conferred with air district staff regarding project eligibility. Based on this review, staff confirmed that Marin Transit does not have projects that are eligible.

Director McGlashan announced that the Muir Woods Shuttle is in now in operation for the 2008 season and is off to a good start. He observed many full buses over the weekend.

Director Brown arrived at 10:13 a.m.

4. [Transit Planning Manager's Oral Report.](#)

Transit Planning Manager Amy Van Doren clarified issues regarding supplemental school service. She stated that she met with Director Brown to discuss equity issues involved with his proposal to offer free fares, geographic distribution of supplemental school services, and current practices. She explained that Federal regulations restrict the Transit District's ability to operate special, unique routes for schools, and transit buses are not allowed on school property. Transit agencies may provide additional trips on regular public transit routes to alleviate overcrowding due to high student ridership around bell times. Ms. Van Doren proposed a workshop later in the summer to inform the Directors of requirements and opportunities regarding supplemental school service. Ms. Van Doren also stated Governor Schwarzenegger announced a revised budget on May 14, 2008, which included a reduction in State Transit Assistance funding, and that he was committing to funding Proposition 42. She further stated that staff is waiting for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to provide a revised fund estimate.

Director Kinsey said he looks forward to the proposed supplemental school service workshop so the Directors can be updated regarding equity issues, Federal regulations, and guidelines. He added that access to schools by Marin Transit has been improved in some situations. However in others, issues regarding Federal regulations prohibiting Marin Transit from competing with private school bus service have made improvements challenging.

Director Heller arrived at 10:17 a.m.

5. [Appointment of General Manager](#)

M/s Director Brown - Director Arnold Recommended Action: Approve appointment of David Rzepinski as General Manager of Marin Transit.

Vote: Motion carried 6-0

AYES: Director McGlashan, Director Arnold, Director Heller, Director Albritton, Director Brown, Director Kinsey

ABSENT: Director Adams

Current General Manager, Public Works Director Farhad Mansourian, spoke regarding the appointment of the new Marin Transit General Manager David Rzepinski. He stated that the County currently provides staffing for the Transit District, an arrangement that may change in the future.

Director Kinsey commented that, in general, Marin County shifts the responsibility of employment to those entities over which it does not have management authority, and asked if David Rzepinski was aware of that practice. Director Mansourian responded that Mr. Rzepinski had been informed, and that no organizational changes would be made before Mr. Rzepinski's arrival. He summarized David Rzepinski's qualifications and announced that there would be a reception for Mr. Rzepinski on behalf of the Board of Directors on June 17, 2008, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., on the plaza outside

the Marin County Civic Center cafeteria.

6. [Public Hearing: Proposed Service and Capital Improvements for Local Bus System](#)

M/s Director Arnold - Director Brown Recommended Action: Hold public hearing and approve implementation of proposed improvements.

AYES: ALL

Director Adams arrived at 10:38 a.m.

Director McGlashan opened the public hearing.

Six people spoke on behalf of the Canal Alliance Group and Marin County Youth Commission (MCYC), which is sponsored by the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI). They presented the results of their survey titled "Youth Bus Rider Survey 2008 - Canal Neighborhood," and responded to questions and comments from the Directors. Survey results included issues such as youth safety, insufficient bus service, and sexual harassment occurring on overly crowded buses on routes 35 and 36, which serve San Rafael Canal area residents and students from San Rafael and Madrone High Schools. They noted that these routes pay for themselves. They also discussed the need for a pedestrian bridge, signs on buses, and the cost of bus fare. Their recommendations included meetings with youth in the Canal area of San Rafael, creating supplemental bus service for students, increasing the frequency of buses on existing routes, and funding a Social Norms Campaign for education regarding sexual harassment.

Director Heller asked the youth who was causing the harassment. Morgan Green responded that it was her understanding that it was non-students but that she needed to verify this, and emphasized that it would be helpful if a bus could be a dedicated school route.

Director Arnold asked what the ratio was between students and non-students riding these buses. Ms. Green estimated that it was 50/50, and that, although the survey didn't address this question specifically, it was her understanding that the harassment was caused by non-students.

Director McGlashan asked if funding support was needed to conduct further study, and emphasized that the Directors and staff would like to know who is perpetrating the harassment. Ms. Green stated that no funding assistance was needed for a meeting with the Canal Alliance, and the ultimate goal would be to add more buses on this route to alleviate overcrowding and to ensure rider safety.

Director Albritton asked which routes were in question, what the frequency of buses is currently, and if it would be helpful if there were crossing guards or other officials on the buses. Ms. Green responded that more buses should be added to routes 35 and 36 in the mornings before school, and that students did not want increased police

enforcement. Mike Graham-Squire stated that a transit official or school official on buses could be considered.

Director Brown asked for further study detailing the routes, times, and incidents of harassment during over-crowded conditions.

Samantha Ramirez stated that although there are frequent buses on routes 35 and 36, they are often full and leave riders to wait for the next bus. Also, she confirmed that adults are the ones doing the harassing, and there is a greater ratio of men to women.

Director Heller clarified that the overcrowding occurred between the Canal area and the bus stop near Elephant Pharmacy, at 3rd Street and Grand Avenue in San Rafael, and correction to a short section of a route could be difficult to change. Ms. Green responded that an added short route would be effective in that case.

David Schonbrunn, representing TRANSDEF (Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund), spoke regarding the high quality of information provided by the MCYC Commissioners, the use of cell phone photographs to deter harassment, and cited a Los Angeles lawsuit which resulted in a consent decree requiring the Los Angeles transit agency to add more buses to relieve overcrowding. He stated that he was troubled by the proposal to spend substantially more money to purchase hybrid buses rather than standard buses. He explained that purchasing more of the less-expensive standard buses would allow more people access to public transit, thereby having a greater positive effect on air quality than using fewer hybrid buses.

Director McGlashan closed the public hearing.

Transit Planning Manager Amy Van Doren responded to questions and comments from the Directors. She stated that additional trips could be added to alleviate overcrowding, but not buses exclusively for students unless there was a yellow school bus contract separate for students. She estimated that if service was added in the Canal area, December 2008 would be the earliest it could be implemented. Service in the Canal is provided every few minutes in peak periods. In December, Route 29 will have additional service in the Canal (approved by your Board in May 2008). Staff will meet with Youth Leadership staff and develop recommendations to address the findings.

Director Heller suggested a campaign should be started in middle school to educate students about harassment issues.

Director Kinsey thanked the MCYC for coming and making clear points, in particular the education campaign. He said there is a study being done currently regarding the Canal bridge project and is still under consideration. Widening of the Grand Avenue bridge and the sidewalk on East Francisco Boulevard would most likely be completed within the next couple of years, likely before the Canal bridge. He further stated that using Measure A funds for a yellow bus service may be a way of providing service without using federal funds and violating federal regulations. He acknowledged David Schonbrunn's comments regarding hybrid vehicles.

Director Adams clarified that Measure A funding was separate from federal funding and may be available for additional bus service. She also stated that she believed the San Rafael police department had restarted their community policing program and there might be an opportunity for a community-based program to increase adult or law enforcement presence on the buses. Director Heller stated that San Rafael has two officers in public schools at all times and available for education.

Director McGlashan recommended that the Youth Commission follow up on who is doing the harassment; which routes are worse than others; suggestions regarding non-police officers riding the buses; and ideas regarding communicating with the school district about school routes about a special school route. He further stated that staff and Directors would bring back their analysis of additional service in the Canal area.

Director Albritton called for improving outreach to riders for input on how the bus system is working, including a bus passenger advisory committee with a representative from each route; placing crossing guards on buses and in the streets; considering rotating signs on the buses showing the school name; and providing the public with additional access information to facilitate getting people to ride the buses. He added that he would like to see funding go to encourage GGT to work on vehicle locating systems, signage to help riders get to the buses, and possibly for a consultant to look at the overall system.

Director McGlashan asked Amy Van Doren to comment on the timing for the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) and the ability of that process to address some of the issues regarding route optimization and location systems. She responded that the entire system was redesigned for 2006 implementation. On board surveys would be conducted in September and October 2008 in the context of other planning studies, including the West Marin Transit Needs Assessment. She stated that her intention has been to develop the update of the SRTP in house and to use consultant time for research projects. Ms. Van Doren also stated that the passenger survey would address Measure A and Transit District qualitative and demographic performance criteria that cannot be captured in the Monthly Monitoring Report. She clarified that a proposal for 7 hybrid buses was approved this year under Proposition 1B funding for capital. If directed by the Board, staff would investigate the possibility of changing this proposal to purchase regular buses.

David Schonbrunn commented that there was an equity issue because route 35 is shorter than any other route in the county. He stated that if the fare were cut in half, increased usage would make up much of the revenue. He stated that the MCYC survey confirmed the consistent theme that more people would ride buses if fares were reduced. Ms. Van Doren summarized current reduced youth fares and stated that staff is looking at changing fare policies through new fare media such as transit passes, transfer policies, and incentives for youth to ride transit.

Director Brown stated he has supported reduced fares for students and asked if students who are not taking the bus are walking or riding bicycles instead. He asked that MCYC clarify some of the survey statistics when they come back to the Board, and that staff evaluate statistics on increased ridership resulting from reduced fares.

Director Adams asked for clarification regarding survey statistics related to reduced fares, and requested further information on how many people used transfers to other routes after riding the bus from the Canal area to the transit center.

7. [Marin County Transit District Preliminary Capital and Operating Budget for FY 2008-09](#)

M/s Director Adams - Director Brown Recommended Action: Set public hearing for consideration of Preliminary FY 2008-09 Budget for Monday, June 16, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

AYES: ALL

8. [Purchase of Two Replacement Shuttle Vehicles using Proposition 1B Funds](#)

M/s Director Adams - Director Brown Recommended Action: Approve purchase of two 18 passenger shuttle vehicles for the Community Shuttles Program.

AYES: ALL

SINE DIE

PRESIDENT

ATTEST:

CLERK