

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY

Agenda for Thursday, September 17, 2009

Meeting: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Conference Room (Room 109), Administration Building
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District
1011 Andersen Dr., San Rafael, CA 94901



Information/Recommended Action

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Agenda** Review
- 3. Minutes of July 16, 2009, meeting** Approve
(Copy of July minutes attached)
- 4. ACA-Related Items** Information
 - a. ACA recruitment
 - b. Renaming Award in Russ Bohlke's honor
 - c. Discussion to hold future ACA Meeting at Larkspur Ferry Terminal
- 5. GGBHTD-Related Items** Information
 - a. Intercounty Paratransit Services: Statistical Report and Operations Summary
 - b. Golden Gate Transit Regional Bus Service
Golden Gate Ferry Service
 - c. Follow-up to Review of GGT Procedures for Boarding and Transporting Persons with Disabilities
 - d. Facilities Update – Larkspur Ferry Terminal Accessible Restrooms
 - e. General District Matters
- 6. Marin Transit-Related Items** Information
 - a. Marin Paratransit Coordinating Council Report
 - b. Marin County Local Bus and Paratransit Service
 - c. Update on Mobile Data Terminal Project
- 7. New Business** Information
- 8. ACA Member Announcements/Comments; Public Open Time** Information

(Speakers are limited to three minutes. Members or visitors with specific comments or incidents to report are requested to call Harvey Katz, ACA Staff Liaison, at (415) 257-4416 at least two days prior to the meeting.)

Agenda and meeting materials are available in alternative formats, and a phonic-ear amplification system is available upon request. Sign-language interpreters may be requested by the deaf or hearing impaired by calling (415) 257-4415 or TDD **711** at least one week prior to the meeting. District Administration Building is served by GGT-accessible Bus Routes 29 and 36. Consult District's web site (goldengate.org) or call **511** for further GGT bus and ferry schedule information. Information on accessible services is also available on the web site. To schedule paratransit transportation to the meeting, call Whistlestop Wheels at (415) 454-0964 or (800) 454-0964. For further information regarding ACA, call Harvey Katz, ACA staff liaison, at (415) 257-4416, or e-mail to hkatz@goldengate.org.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY (ACA)

Draft Minutes of Thursday, July 16, 2009



- Members present: Bill Bodine, Herschel Ferguson, Kent Hill, Jean Hunter, Brian Pease, Kevin Siemens, Craig Yates
- Members excused: Herb Meyer
- Staff: General: Harvey Katz, Access & Compliance Planner; Helen (Haas) Moore, Customer Relations Supervisor; Karyn Paulson, Administrative Assistant; Glen Woods, Customer Service Representative; Alan Zahradnik, Planning Director
Specific Matters: Jim Swindler, Deputy General Manager, Ferry Division
- Ex-officio members: Paul Branson, Mobility Manager, Marin Transit; Jon Gaffney, Director of Transportation, Whistlestop Wheels (WSW)
- Visitors: Cynthia Petersen, Retired Paratransit Coordinator/Planner; Nelson Kimber, aide to Bill Bodine; Myrna Uhalde, Hired Hands

Chairperson Craig Yates called the monthly meeting of the ACA to order at 1:35 p.m.

1. **Introductions.** Committee members, staff and visitors introduced themselves.
2. **Agenda.** Members reviewed the agenda.
3. **Minutes.** A quorum of members accepted the minutes for the June 18, 2009, meeting.
4. **ACA-related items.** The Committee lost its longest-term member, Russ Bohlke, when he passed away on July 4, 2009. See Item 8 below.
5. **GGBHTD-related Items**
 - a. **Intercounty Paratransit Services. Statistical Report and Operations Summary.**
Jon Gaffney distributed the June 2009 report of services provided in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. GGBHTD intercounty ridership decreased 18% from June 2008 to 879 passenger trips, and decreased 24% from last month, May 2009. Mr. Gaffney said he was not sure why ridership went down so much, but he noted that a new statistician is on board and is rechecking figures. Efficiency in June moved to 1.22 passengers per revenue hour. Four of five intercounty Marin extended trip requests were provided. Intercounty service was on-time (within its 45-minute scheduling window) 91.64% of the time. There continued to be no denials of ADA-mandated paratransit service in June. Herschel Ferguson explained that his WSW driver arrived extremely early to pick him up, meaning he arrived at his appointment with at least an hour's wait. Mr. Gaffney told him that if a WSW driver arrives early, the client is not obligated to board until the time agreed upon with the reservation. Once the Mobile Data Terminals are installed and

communications are improved, there are likely to be fewer too-early arrivals.

- b. **Golden Gate Transit Regional Bus Service.** New express Route 101 began on June 15, as did Route 10 trips along the Lombard Street/Van Ness Ave. corridor rather than Geary Blvd. Mr. Katz said these changes are going well, yet have necessitated 10-to-15-minute schedule adjustments for better connectivity. Riders may refer to the District website for the new schedules. Glen Woods said he would get a new schedule for Route 10 to Brian Pease, who noted that he has seen many more passengers on that bus.

Discussion moved to "511" when a member asked if the "511" service is notified when there is a GGT bus breakdown. Staff did not think so and was unaware of any procedure involving contacting "511" with service irregularities. As the District's automatic vehicle location system (ACIS) is installed, a procedure will be developed. Currently, the driver calls Dispatch when the bus has problems, and Dispatch notifies Customer Service. Mr. Yates said he believes "511" is now ready to receive information about service disruptions from contributing agencies. Helen (Haas) Moore explained that "511" is not on real time and still unable to be updated. It will be another two years or so until ACIS is functioning.

- c. **Golden Gate Ferry Service.** Jim Swindler presented an overview on the procedure for boarding persons with disabilities on the ferries, noting there is no extensive handbook like the Bus Division's. Two years ago all ferry staff spent one full day in training sessions presented by an accessibility consultant. Currently, the District's Manager of Organizational Development is coordinating another training session. Mr. Katz said he would notify Committee members of the time and location of the training. In 1998, the Ferry Division created a 10-page handout on assisting people in wheelchairs, but it might need updating. Mr. Yates requested a copy of the wheelchair and training curriculum to review and help update.

Members had further requests and suggestions about ferry rides for persons with disabilities. Brian Pease explained that on one particularly choppy trip on the ferry, he was moved to the lower deck at once, leaving him no access to the concessions. He would have liked a crew member to check in with him for assistance. Jean Hunter wanted the Ferry staff to address the issues of using walkers on boarding ramps, etc. Bill Bodine requested a designated place for the disabled to stand while waiting, preferably at the front of the line. He noted that there did not appear to be staff at the terminals to assist with those waiting to board, who had to compete with bicyclists. Once the ferry arrived, there was crew to assist. He also suggested posting GGF and Blue & Gold schedules at the Sausalito Ferry Terminal. To keep GGF departures on schedule, Mr. Swindler said the District is looking into placing ticket vending machines at its ferry terminals within the next 12 months.

Mr. Swindler further explained that the District received \$3.2 million in Federal Economic Stimulus funds to upgrade the Sausalito docking area, which will include building a new float with the latest in gangways and accessibility features. Boarding would be streamlined to separate bicyclists from pedestrians. This project is on an accelerated timeline. Bids were recently solicited from engineering firms to provide conceptual designs, environmental studies and engineering services for modifications and improvements to the Larkspur, San Francisco and Sausalito Ferry Terminal facilities. Six proposals have been received and are

currently being evaluated, with a recommendation scheduled for Board of Directors review in August. The ultimate goal is to have passengers board on the lower/main deck at all terminals within 3 years, eliminating the need to change levels during the trips.

At the next meeting, September 17, ACA members should receive drawings of alterations planned for the new vessel from Washington State.

- d. **Follow-up to Review of GGT Procedures for Boarding and Transporting Persons with Disabilities.** No Bus Division representative was available for the meeting. Mr. Katz continues to pursue answers to the questions raised at earlier meetings.
- e. **Facilities Update.** Engineer David Lynch was unable to attend the July ACA meeting, explaining that the draft plans and specifications for the Larkspur Ferry Terminal's accessible restrooms are still being prepared and he wants to focus on their production. As soon as the plans are 65% complete, he will forward them to Mr. Katz, who will email them to ACA members, hopefully before the next meeting. This project consists of replacing ramps in the paid waiting area, installing two new fully accessible restrooms in the enclosed waiting area at Berth 1, installing new automatic sliding doors at all entrances to the enclosed waiting area (which will be heated), and installing an automatic door to the employee kiosk.
- f. **General District Matters.** Three upcoming Planning staff reports will be presented to the District's Transportation Committee on August 7, and approval is anticipated:
 - 1) Authorize Execution of the Fiscal Year 09/10 Agreement with Marin Transit for the provision of Intercounty Paratransit Services by WSW;
 - 2) Authorize a Reciprocal Transfer Agreement with Sonoma County Transit and Santa Rosa CityBus to allow for a transfer credit of \$1.00 for adults and \$.50 for youth, seniors and persons with disabilities;
 - 3) Presentation by consultants Corey, Canapary & Galanis Research on Results of the Regional Bus and Ferry Passenger Survey.

Ms. Moore explained that the District is currently reviewing its customer service center and may forward a few of the details for ACA review, such as how interaction on the phone should be handled, i.e., waiting/hold period and the message.

6. **Marin Transit-Related Items.**

- a. Marin Paratransit Coordinating Council Report. Paul Branson noted that there has not been a PCC meeting for several months, so he had nothing recent to report.
- b. Marin County Local Bus and Paratransit Service. According to the Paratransit Statistical Report distributed by Mr. Gaffney, the number of Marin local ADA passenger trips remained the same as June of last year and declined 2% from May 2009. Taxis were utilized for 63 overflow passengers during May. One of the month's accidents, related to a tie-down issue, required medical attention, and Mr. Gaffney agreed to send Mr. Katz details of the accident so he could share them with ACA. Mr. Branson announced that Marin County estimates \$685,000 less income than expected from sales tax. Marin Transit now plans a public hearing in October preliminary to service cuts that might begin as early as March 2010. He also announced that the new passes are now being used on Marin local buses. A Daily Senior/Disabled pass is \$2.50 for all local travel during one day. Marin

County's new website should be operable and fully accessible beginning next Monday. If any member finds difficulty with it, they should inform Mr. Branson.

- c. Update on Mobile Data Terminal Project. Marin Transit is reviewing four bids from potential consultants vying for the MDT Project. The selected firm will be recommended for approval by MCTD's Board in August, with anticipated completion of installation in December 2009.

7. **New Business**. Kevin Siemens noted that several of the buses on Route 17 (which he rides every weekend) are old, with smaller lifts that he believes were built before the ADA regulations were established. He was told that GGT was complying with California regulations prior to implementation of the federal ADA requirements, so they are safe. Mr. Siemens was assured that these old buses would be the first ones replaced when the District took delivery of the new buses to be ordered soon.

8. **ACA Member Announcements/Comments; Public Open Time**. The committee took some time to remember Russ Bohlke. Mr. Katz explained that Russ suffered a severe injury playing football on the Cal team in the early '50s and was active early on public accessibility issues. Cynthia Petersen stressed what a tireless advocate he had been to help make transportation available and accommodating to people with disabilities. One of the first ACA members in 1979, he was chair or vice chair for many of the 30 years he served the group, and was directly involved with the District's ADA compliance. Jean Hunter remembered Russ's sense of humor. Craig Yates was thankful for all that Russ taught him about advocacy.

It is now time to recruit new ACA members. Sandra Gordon has missed six consecutive meetings and will have to be removed from membership. Members indicated recruiting signs are not visible to the disabled on the buses, so Mr. Katz will inform Marketing to post the signs near wheelchair stations on buses and ferries. The recruitment message is always included in the Transit Guide. Mr. Branson said he would make sure the WSW newsletter, "Silver Express", would post a notice also.

Mr. Yates proposed instituting an award in Russ Bohlke's name for assistance to people with disabilities, perhaps a "Russ Bohlke Exemplary Service to the Disabled Community" award presented by ACA. Staff agreed to investigate renaming the "Award for Exemplary Service to Seniors and Persons with Disabilities" in Russ's honor.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.