

# **BUS PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)**

## ***Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, November 17, 2021***

**Committee Members Present:** Brian Bailey-Gates, Dan Bell, Jon Horinek, Scott Kempf, Dave Troup, Fredi Bloom

**Committee Member Absent:** Valeria Sasser

**District Staff Present:** David Davenport, Senior Planner; Carolyn Derwing, Supervising Scheduler and Data Analyst; Carlena Natouf, Customer Relations Supervisor; Krystalyn O’Leary, Acting Director of Operations

**Guest Present:** Mohamed Osman, Marin Transit; Mike Combs; David Pilpel



1. **Roll Call:** Scott Kempf opened the meeting at 5:37 p.m. Five members were present and a sixth joined later, representing a quorum.
2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** The minutes for the May 19, July 21, and September 1 meetings were approved.
3. **Bus Stoppers:** Two topics were presented:
  - a. Dan Bell observed that Van Ness Avenue construction is progressing well and the new median bus stops have been named. He asked if Golden Gate Transit would update its maps to be consistent with Muni, and David Davenport said they would be updated in March 2022, which is when the new busway should open.
  - b. Dave Troup asked how potential cuts in federal aid could affect GGT and Marin Transit. Mr. Davenport shared background on a recent U.S. Department of Labor decision related to California’s Public Employees’ Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) that could negatively impact transit funding. The District could be ineligible for \$43.9 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding, \$16 million in additional relief funds, and \$7.7 million in capital funds. Mohamed Osman reported that Marin Transit is reviewing the issue, but it may be affected differently because of how its transit service is funded.
4. **New Business:**
  - a. Route Renumbering Plan and December 2021 Service Changes: Mr. Davenport reported that GGT bus routes will be renumbered effective December 12. Routes 27, 30, 40, 54, 70, and 72 will become 132, 130, 580, 154, 150, and 172, respectively. Route 101 will not change. In addition, the Route 172 trip arriving in San Francisco at 6:20 AM will be cancelled and replaced with a trip arriving at 8:50 AM. Mr. Kempf asked why Route 70 was renumbered 150 rather than 170, and Mr. Davenport explained that the change puts the route into geographic sequence.
  - b. New E-Bike Policy: Krystalyn O’Leary shared a GGT policy change effective December 12. The policy allows e-bikes on buses with front racks with some size restrictions. In addition, e-bike batteries will be prohibited inside buses. Fredi Bloom asked about bike

rack access, and Ms. O’Leary said they would remain first come, first served. Mr. Bell asked if more Gillig buses, which have front racks, would run in place of MCI buses, and Mr. Davenport stated that Gillig buses are being put into service as warranty issues are fixed. Mr. Kempf asked if the luggage bay bike rack restriction would be enforced by drivers, and Ms. O’Leary expressed optimism that drivers would be trained on the issue and on-bus decals would be updated. Mr. Kempf also asked if there had been requests to allow e-bikes on GGT buses, and Carlena Natouf confirmed that the District had received several requests. Mr. Osman added that Marin Transit would update its policy to be consistent with GGT.

- c. Bay Area Council Return to Transit Survey: Mr. Davenport presented findings from the Bay Area Council’s latest Return to Transit Survey, which showed a potential return of office workers over the first few months of 2022. Hybrid schedules are expected to be most common. Brian Bailey-Gates shared that his employer’s office return date after Labor Day was pushed back to October 17, and more people may return in January. Mr. Kempf said his employer made him a permanent remote worker and observed that companies are making real estate decisions that may shrink the office workforce. Mr. Bailey-Gates added that his company subleased one of its office floors. Ms. O’Leary noted that traffic is picking up, and Mr. Kempf said that travel time improvements would be necessary to make transit service attractive again. Ms. Natouf noted that the District started receiving requests for commute bus service, and staff is following up with specific questions. Ms. O’Leary announced that the District is hiring new drivers, and Mr. Davenport mentioned that more drivers would be needed to expand service.
- d. All Aboard Bay Area Transit Marketing Campaign: Mr. Davenport shared details of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s latest marketing effort to encourage transit ridership. Mr. Davenport also shared supplemental marketing the District undertook to support the All Aboard Bay Area Transit campaign. Mr. Kempf asked if ridership has increased, and Mr. Davenport responded that there has been improvements to Saturday ridership but overall ridership remains flat.
- e. BPAC Chairperson/Vice Chairperson Election: The annual election for chair and vice chair was held. Mr. Davenport noted that the election occurs every November for a one-year term starting in January, and no term limits exist. The committee voted unanimously for Mr. Kempf and Mr. Bailey-Gates to serve another term as chair and vice chair, respectively.
- f. 2022 Meeting Schedule: The committee agreed to hold meetings the second Wednesday of every other month in 2022, skipping the summer, like usual. Mr. Davenport reported that there would be no holiday conflicts. Meetings will continue to be held on Zoom, starting at 5:30 PM, until a time when in-person meetings starting at 6:00 PM can be held once again.

**5. Announcements:** None.

**6. Members’ Forum:** Two topics were presented:

- a. Mr. Kempf asked for an update on the San Rafael Transit Center relocation project. Mr. Davenport reported that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) comment period closed, and the project consultant is now preparing responses to comments.

- b. Mr. Bell asked for future updates on the transit funding issue Mr. Troup brought up as a Bus Stopper, and Mr. Davenport agreed to provide updates to the committee as necessary.

**7. Public Comment:** Two comments were received:

- a. David Pilpel thanked the District for accommodating his request to post the *Golden Gate Gazette* on its website as a PDF, and asked that future editions also be posted as a PDF.
- b. Prospective member Mike Combs observed that bus stop changes along Van Ness Avenue often are not updated online. Mr. Davenport said the District has been challenged with a lack of notification of construction changes and indicated that it takes at least one week for changes to appear on Google Maps and the Transit app once staff is aware of them. Ms. Natouf suggested using the District's website in this case, as its alerts are updated very quickly.

**8. Adjournment:** Mr. Kempf adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Members were advised that the next meeting is scheduled to take place Wednesday, January 19, 2022, via Zoom.