

BUS PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)

Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, September 1, 2021

Committee Members Present: Brian Bailey-Gates, Scott Kempf, Dave Troup, Fredi Bloom

Committee Members Absent: Dan Bell, Jon Horinek, Valeria Sasser, Arthur Young

District Staff Present: Mike Abegg, Acting Director of Scheduling and Service Development; David Davenport, Senior Planner; Hitham Hamdon, Acting Superintendent of Transportation Operations; Carlena Natouf, Customer Relations Supervisor

Guest Present: David Pilpel

1. **Roll Call:** Scott Kempf opened the meeting at 5:41 p.m. Four members were present, which did not represent a quorum.
2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Approval of the meeting minutes for the May 19 and July 21 meetings was deferred due to the lack of a quorum.
3. **Bus Stoppers:** Dave Troup recently observed a Golden Gate Transit bus idling 10-15 minutes at San Rafael Transit Center. David Davenport indicated that buses are not scheduled to be at the transit center for more than five minutes, so it could have been early, in which case passengers would be on board and the engine would be left running.
4. **Ongoing Business:**
 - a. Clipper START Means-Based Fare Program Update: Mr. Davenport shared that the trial of the region's means-based fare program, known as Clipper START, will be extended 18 months. The program started in July 2020 and will now run into 2023. Fredi Bloom said she would share the news. Mr. Kempf asked about the program's advertisements, and Mr. Davenport said it is marketed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Carlena Natouf added that program information is available at the San Rafael Transit Center's Customer Service Center.
5. **New Business:**
 - a. September 2021 Service Changes: Mr. Davenport reported on Golden Gate Transit service changes effective September 12. Route 27 will be extended to San Anselmo Hub, early morning weekend service will be added to Route 30 so Route 70 no longer has to serve Sausalito, and weekday peak trips will be added to Routes 40 and 101. Mike Abegg added that weekday morning trips on Route 40 will be adjusted to improve on-time performance.
 - b. Real-Time Crowding Data: Mr. Davenport informed the committee of the District's new ability to track bus crowding. On-board equipment is used to estimate whether a bus is not crowded, has some crowding, or is crowded. Ms. Natouf announced that the feature



is available to the public too as of September 1, and the information can be accessed by using the Transit app. Mr. Davenport added that the Transit app still has the “Go” feature, which can provide additional crowd-sourced information for each bus.

- c. **San Francisco Street Project Update:** Mr. Davenport provided an update on various San Francisco street projects that will benefit Golden Gate Transit bus service. First, the construction of bus rapid transit lanes on Van Ness Avenue will be substantially complete by the end of the year, with testing slated for early 2022 and an estimated opening date of spring 2022. Second, high-occupancy vehicle lanes will be striped on Lombard Street later in the month, and HOV lane hours will be in effect weekdays from 5 AM to 8 PM. Finally, the temporary bus lanes on Mission Street were made permanent, and street striping and bus stop improvements will be made later this year. In addition, the bus lanes will be extended from Third Street to First Street. Brian Bailey-Gates asked if any projects were running ahead of schedule, and Mr. Davenport responded that nothing was ahead of schedule due to COVID traffic reductions but additional delays to Van Ness Avenue have been avoided. Mr. Kempf expressed appreciation that projects were underway to support GGT operations.
6. **Announcements:** Mr. Davenport announced that the draft environmental impact report for the San Rafael Transit Center replacement project is in circulation, and online public meetings are scheduled for September 14 in English and September 15 in Spanish.
7. **Members’ Forum:** Two topics were presented:
 - a. Ms. Bloom asked if a recruitment effort for new BPAC members would be made, and Mr. Davenport indicated that ads were placed in the upcoming fall editions of the Transit Guide and *Golden Gate Gazette*.
 - b. Mr. Kempf reported that the District was mentioned in Dick Spotswood’s recent column about managing SMART, relocating the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, and dealing with a long-term reduction in commuting. He observed that these were interesting topics. He also noted recent news coverage about the conflict between unionized and non-unionized bus drivers. Mr. Kempf and Mr. Bailey-Gates said they have had consistently positive interactions with Golden Gate Transit drivers. Mr. Kempf asked if any capital projects are underway, and Mr. Davenport reported that the District is finally updating bus stop signage to reflect service changes implemented throughout the pandemic.
8. **Public Comment:** David Pilpel stated that Marin Transit recently discussed extending its contract with the District. He requested that ridership reports to the Board of Directors be split between regional and local passengers, and observed that ridership by time of day could be more balanced in the future. Mr. Abegg indicated that regional and local ridership is more balanced now than it was pre-pandemic.
9. **Adjournment:** Mr. Kempf adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Members were advised that the next meeting is scheduled to take place Wednesday, November 17, 2021, via Zoom.