

**San Mateo County Transit District (District)
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, California**

**Minutes of Community Relations Committee Meeting /
Committee of the Whole**

April 3, 2024

Committee Members Present: B. Esser (Chair), R. Mueller

Committee Members Absent: P. Ratto

Other Board Members Present Constituting Committee of the Whole: D. Canepa, M. Chuang, M. Fraser, J. Gee, R. Medina, J. Powell

Other Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: A. Chan, K. Jordan Steiner, D. Olmeda, J. Cassman, S. van Hoften, D. Santoro, J. Brook, D. Seamans

9.a.1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Brooks Esser called the meeting to order at 2:29 pm.

9.a.2. Approval of Minutes of the Community Relations Committee Meeting of March 6, 2024

Motion/Second: Chuang/Powell

Ayes: Canepa, Chuang, Esser, Fraser, Gee, Medina, Mueller, Powell

Noes: None

Absent: Ratto

9.a.3. Appointment of Member Representing Multimodal Riders to the Citizens Advisory Committee

The Board approved the appointment of Max Mautner to the Citizens Advisory Committee, representing Multimodal Riders, for a term expiring April 30, 2027.

Motion/Second: Medina/Gee

Ayes: Canepa, Chuang, Esser, Fraser, Gee, Medina, Mueller, Powell

Noes: None

Absent: Ratto

9.a.4. Accessible Services Update

Tina Dubost, Manager, Accessible Services, said they had held a quarterly meeting the prior week with mobility ambassadors.

9.a.5. Citizens Advisory Committee Update

John Baker provided a summary of the March 27 CAC meeting, which included a presentation on the Bus Stop Improvement Plan.

9.a.6. Paratransit Coordinating Council Update

Ben McMullan, PCC Chair, said they had a March outreach to the Commission on Disabilities and said they plan to do outreach at senior centers to look for new membership.

9.a.7. Monthly Performance Report | February 2024

Ana Rivas, Director of Bus Transportation, provided the latest performance statistics. She said ridership increased 19.1 percent for all modes since February 2023 and that the bus maintenance team achieved their goal of less than one service call per 25,000 miles.

9.a.8. Adopting the Code of Conduct and Enforcement Policy for Use of District Services

Michelle Louie, Title VI Social Equity Administrator, and Ms. Rivas provided the presentation on the SamTrans Code of Conduct and Enforcement Policy for all passengers and members of the public using SamTrans, Redi-Wheels, RediCoast, Ride Plus, and other District services and facilities, including at bus stops and stations. She said the goal is to ensure that all District services is operated in a safe manner and that respectful decorum is maintained and to deter disruptive or dangerous behaviors and minimize the risk of harassment and assault against bus operators. She said the It would establish passenger expectations and establish enforcement mechanisms to promote a safe and welcoming environment while using District services and property.

Director Marie Chuang asked at what point would an instigator be removed from the bus for the safety of the operator and passengers. Ms. Rivas said the operator contacts radio control, who contacts the transit police or local law enforcement and that the response is fairly quick to remove someone from the bus for the safety of all.

Director David Canepa asked how chronic offenders are handled. Ms. Rivas said if it is a regular occurrence, supervisors can be present at the scene. She said they also can impose a ban on problem riders.

Vice Chair Jeff Gee asked if there was an incident reporting requirement. Ms. Rivas said they have started tracking incidents and are currently drafting an SOP (standard operating procedure). David Olmeda, Chief Operating Officer, Bus, said they are proposing adding barriers to buses to protect operators. He said they have field supervisors that are on call to help at a moment's notice.

Committee Member Ray Mueller suggested having penalties for violations rather than just removing a problem rider from the bus. Mr. Olmeda said law enforcement will pursue enforcement based on the action itself and if it falls under the penal code.

Chair Marina Fraser commended staff on their presentation.

Director Chuang asked if part of the operator training includes how to enforce the Code of Conduct. Mr. Olmeda said it was part of the 10-week training for the bus operators. He said that now that they have a Code of Conduct, they will continue to see how effective that is.

Ms. Louie said the SOP will now be incorporated into the training.

Committee Member Mueller suggested having a fine be imposed by a jurisdiction on violators of the Code of Conduct, aside from any criminal charges. Joan Cassman, Legal Counsel, said they would need to collaborate with the District Attorney's office to look into how to levy any fines. She proposed that the District could have an internal administration procedure where SamTrans itself could levy a fine and said that this would be brought back to the Board for consideration at a later date.

Director Canepa asked how the District communicates to other operators about incidents for the sake of awareness. Mr. Olmeda said there is not a set process for sharing this information. He said they share information as it occurs and said they would look into how to communicate it.

Committee Chair Esser asked if there is language that riders are on video, which Mr. Olmeda confirmed there is. Committee Chair Esser asked if other agencies had similar policy. Ms. Louie said there was quite a bit of consistency with the policies of other agencies, both locally and statewide.

Public Comment:

Marlon Jonathan Herrera Sanchez said he supported having a Code of Conduct, noting the number of incidents with disruptive passengers.

Randy Shannon said he had been a victim of an incident on Route 292. He said some of the stops have been removed.

Geoff S. asked if SamTrans had looked at the operator safety barriers that Muni (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency) and A/C (Alameda County) Transit had installed on their buses.

Ms. Cassman proposed that the District could have an internal administration procedure where SamTrans itself could levy a fine. She said they would have further discussion on the matter and bring it back to the Board.

Motion/Second: Chuang/Gee

Ayes: Canepa, Chuang, Esser, Fraser, Gee, Medina, Mueller, Powell

Noes: None

Absent: Ratto

9.a.9. Approving an Update to the Public Comment Process

Ms. Louie provided the presentation on the Public Comment Process, which included the following:

- Update the process with more modern and relevant methods of public participation
- Clarify when the Board will hold a public hearing in addition to giving the public an opportunity to comment at public meetings
- Reduce barriers to public participation and increase public engagement in decisionmaking processes

Public Comment:

Marlon Jonathan Herrera Sanchez said SamTrans should hold meetings at places such as churches and community centers where the public can voice their concerns about SamTrans.

Motion/Second: Gee/Powell

Ayes: Canepa, Chuang, Esser, Fraser, Gee, Medina, Mueller, Powell

Noes: None

Absent: Ratto

9.a.10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:31 pm.

An audio/video recording of this meeting is available online at <https://www.samtrans.com/about-samtrans/video-board-directors-cac-and-measure-w-coc>. Questions may be referred to the District Secretary's office by phone at 650-508-6242 or by email to board@samtrans.com.