

**SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT
1250 SAN CARLOS AVENUE, SAN CARLOS, CALIFORNIA**

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING – NOVEMBER 7, 2012**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: K. Adler, L. Chow, D. Cruz, S. Curry, K. Gilbert, M. Hall, S. Koya, J. McKie, T. Miller, S. Price, M. Pye, P. Ratto (Chair)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: A. Chow, T. Collette, P. Loranger

SAMTRANS STAFF PRESENT: T. Bartholomew, K. Cheema, M. Eshelman, E. Harris, R. Haskin, P. Lee, N. McKenna, C. Patton, E. Proctor, S. Sanchez (MV Transportation)

Chair Peter Ratto called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jackie Gallo, South San Francisco, said she and her mother do not own a car and depend on Route 292. She said the proposed cuts to Route 133 would mean the route would not go to Serramonte Shopping Center, but asked if the bus will continue to stop at Kaiser Hospital on Hickey Boulevard in Daly City.

Claudia Crook, Brisbane, said she is concerned about the proposed changes on Route 292. She is a Brisbane resident and Route 292 is their lifeline. She works in San Francisco and the proposed changes are difficult for passengers who do not take it during normal work hours as it does not allow for flexibility of staying in the city. She said the recommendation is for the line to end at Arleta Avenue and Bayshore Boulevard. This is not the best neighborhood and from a logistic standpoint buses cannot turn around or layover. Ms. Crook said during non-peak hours, Route 292 would run hourly and if she misses her bus home she has no other alternative if the bus terminates at Arleta Avenue and Bayshore Boulevard. She asked what is staff's goal and idea of public transit by taking away a route used by many.

Nancy Lacsamana, Brisbane, said Route 292 is a lifeline. There are a lot of service employees and tourists that use this route. She said Route 292 has the fourth highest ridership and serves a community need. She asked staff reconsider the proposed changes to Route 292.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee (L. Chow/Koya) approved the minutes of October 3, 2012; Hall and Price abstained.

**PRESENTATION - OFFICE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE AND MARKETING
PROJECTS OVERVIEW**

Executive Officer, Customer Service and Marketing Rita Haskin said:

- The division's Work Plan supports the San Mateo County Transit District's Strategic Plan, is aligned with the budget and needs to be flexible.

Saundra Curry arrived at 6:35 p.m.

- Notifications include:
 - Take Ones
 - *Rider's Digest* (onboard and online)
 - Onboard electronic message
 - Improvements to come for notifications include:
 - Onboard audio announcement (pilot program)
 - Pre-trip inspection by the bus operators for *Rider's Digest* on their bus
 - News release
 - Mention in *Rider's Digest* the date of the next change
- Connecting with Customers
 - This is a nine month program where each month staff will visit one key transit stop to thank customers and answers questions.
 - Allows employees to connect with the people who ride the service.
- Group Travel Pilot
 - 18-month pilot program
 - Advance sales to groups of 25 or more
 - Receive 20 percent discount
 - Allows for improved operations

Sonny Koya said the audible announcements are a big plus. Ms. Haskin said this is just a pilot program because some people may not like the announcements.

Mr. Koya said some of the buses have old literature and schedules on them. Ms. Haskin said when there is a systemwide change it is a collaborative effort. A few days before a change, maintenance staff will start pulling the old information off the buses at night when they are cleaning them. The bus operators are responsible for putting the new timetables on their buses. If it is *Rider's Digest* or generic document maintenance will put them on all the buses.

Kris Adler arrived at 6:47 p.m.

Kathy Gilbert congratulated staff on the 511.org soft launch. She asked what the frequency of the announcements is. Ms. Haskin said it hasn't been decided but asked for suggestions from the CAC.

Ms. Gilbert asked who would use the advance sales program. Ms. Haskin said it could be school trips, seniors or boy scouts. Ms. Gilbert asked if this information will be on the website. Ms. Haskin said staff will be promoting it starting the beginning of the year. The form and information is on the website at SamTrans.com/grouptravel.

Ms. Gilbert asked if there will be announcements made to customers about the Connecting with Customers events. Ms. Haskin said the information is on the website and staff will also be using social media to publicize them.

Sondra Price asked what fits the passholder. Ms. Haskin said paper passes, day passes and change cards.

Saundra Curry asked what the significance of the wrist band is. Ms. Haskin said it is a “thank you” for customers, and the color was chosen to be sure it wasn’t associated with a gang.

Ms. Curry asked what a Take One is. Ms. Haskin said it is a leaflet on the bus in a very bright color.

Ms. Curry asked if the announcements will have an explanation of what *Rider’s Digest* is. Ms. Haskin said something very brief will be said.

Margaret Pye said she was not able to make 511.org work. Ms. Haskin said SamTrans real-time on 511.org launched on October 31, but only a limited number of people were informed of it. She said there is also a web component under the transit tab and SamTrans isn’t there yet. On the 511.org home page there is a button for real-time departure and to then click on SamTrans.

Ms. Price asked if the user can state the stop. Ms. Haskin said yes.

Ms. Pye asked why staff isn’t going to the Palo Alto Transit Center for the Connecting with Customers promotion. Ms. Haskin said the area does not have a lot of SamTrans activity. She said events have already been held in East Palo Alto and Pacifica.

Ms. Pye asked how often *Rider’s Digest* is published. Ms. Haskin said it is published three times a year and coincides with runbook changes. She said the old ones are pulled from the buses the week after the change and new ones are placed on the buses two weeks before the change.

Ms. Pye asked what type of ticket will be given for group travel. Ms. Haskin said it depends. It may be a Day Pass or a letter to present to the bus operator. She said all money is collected ahead of the trip.

Lisa Chow said it is great staff focuses on marketing and outreach. She asked if there are any plans to use Twitter and social media more. Ms. Haskin said key upcoming route information is given at Connecting with Customers events and also on a card with Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Ms. Chow asked about the public process for changes. Ms. Haskin said for runbook changes, staff gets feedback from operators and customers.

Ms. Chow said a more continuous stream of communication on routes needs to be in the racks on the buses.

Kris Adler said he has the 511.org application on his phone. He recently used 511.org for Routes KX and 390 from Menlo Park and the arrival times are always one minute before the scheduled arrival. Ms. Haskin said this is good feedback so staff can look into the accuracy of the information before the full launch of the campaign.

Tryn Miller thanked Ms. Haskin for all the details provided in the presentation and asked if she was allowed to wear a SamTrans shirt. Ms. Haskin said she was welcome to come out to Connect with Customers events and wear whatever she likes.

Ms. Miller asked if Ms. Haskin could explain the group travel program. Ms. Haskin said it is where a group of people travelling together can purchase their tickets ahead of time and get a discount.

Ms. Curry said she called in a late bus and the customer service representative said a bus is noted only when a person calls in and states it late. Ms. Haskin said staff tracks on-time performance carefully and a bus is not considered late until it is five minutes passed its arrival time.

Chair Ratto said he likes the idea of audible announcements. He said San Francisco Muni does theirs about every 10 minutes and in multiple languages. Chair Ratto said he tried the 511.org system and he could not find the southbound stop at 5th Avenue and El Camino Real in San Mateo. He said his experience has been quite positive though with the system.

Ms. Curry asked why, on the timetable for Route 390, Amherst and Winklebeck streets are used instead of Jefferson. Manager, Operations Planning Eric Harris said because it is closer to the Redwood City Caltrain Station.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ratto asked Mr. Koya to summarize his memo to staff on Route 292.

Mr. Koya said he attended the Pacifica, San Bruno and South San Francisco public meetings for the SamTrans Service Plan (SSP). He said at the South San Francisco meeting 72 people attended. He said a lot of interest has been raised in South San Francisco and Brisbane because sometime next year there will be a reduction in service to Route 292 to operate only during the hours of 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. Mr. Koya said between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. there will be no service to San Francisco. He said there is great interest in what is going to happen to this route. Route 292 is a lifeline and needed by many people. Mr. Koya said all the riders of Route 292 are asking SamTrans to reconsider the changes and eliminations to this route. People felt there was not enough information put out about the meetings and due diligence was not met. He said this should be discussed in more detail at the CAC level before it goes to the Board.

Ms. Chow said all the comments are very enlightening about Route 292 and supports the issues raised. She said the safety concerns should be addressed.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR (cont'd)

Chair Ratto said the weekend of October 6-7 was a big weekend for transit. He said all transit agencies saw increased ridership for the Giants parade on October 31.

SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE

Planner, Michael Eshelman distributed a report on staff's rationale of using a 40-foot bus versus an articulate bus on Route 390 at 5:46 p.m. He said a 40-foot bus seats 40 passengers and an articulate seats 60 passengers. Mr. Eshelman said there are only a couple of instances over a three month period that exceeded 40 people. He said staff is constantly making sure articulated buses are assigned to El Camino Real.

Ms. Curry asked if the same analysis was done for the Route KX ridership that departs at the same time as the Route 390. Mr. Eshelman said yes, and also for the other routes this bus operates during the day.

Mr. Koya said next year Route 391 will be eliminated into San Francisco. Mr. Eshelman said that is one of the proposals under consideration and staff is meeting internally to discuss all the feedback received from the SSP outreach.

Ms. Pye asked why Routes KX and 390 depart Palo Alto so close together. Mr. Eshelman said Route KX is hourly and Routes 390 and 391 are half-hourly.

Ms. Price and Ms. Curry left at 8:00 p.m.

Director of Bus Transportation Chester Patton reported:

- September performance:
 - Average weekday ridership was 46,110; a 2.5 percent decrease.
 - On-time performance was 86 percent.
 - Complaints were high at 242 complaints for the month.
 - Miles between road calls was 23,053.
 - Tokens continue to be popular with youth riders.
 - There were six missed schedules for the month.
- The runbook is a schedule period. There are three a year: January, summer and August. The next runbook change is January 13 and people should see new material in December about the changes.
- Weekend Route ECR is performing well with no bunching, and on Sunday, November 4, the on-time performance was 96 percent.
- Follow-up items from last month:
 - Advertising revenue was \$645,000 last year and staff anticipates \$665,000 for the coming year.
 - Staff worked directly with Mr. Koya on his question about flat files.
 - A work order has been issued to place a bench on the sidewalk at El Camino Real and Oak Grove in Burlingame.
 - A work order was issued for permanent signage at Aragon High School and one has been installed.
 - Decommissioned railroad tracks at Bayshore Boulevard and Geneva Avenue: Bus Superintendent Karambir Cheema has received confirmation from the California Public Utilities Commission Crossing Engineers Office that this location is exempt and was referred to Daly City for posting an exemption sign.
 - Right turn lane for Route 292 at Industrial: staff is working with Muni and waiting for approval from the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority Board to make this change.
 - Inquiry on complaints and numbers: staff will be making a presentation next month to the CAC on the complaint system and how they are tracked.
 - Combining Muni and SamTrans bus stop signage at Lake Merced and Font: an agreement has been reached and the permanent signage is in place.

- Information on 511.org real time: as discussed earlier the soft launch was just done.
- Staff will be back in February for more discussions on the SSP.
- Pictures of semi-seats on Grand Avenue in South San Francisco were shown.

CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS

Ms. Miller said she likes taking the bus and it gives her a chance to talk to customers and operators. She feels the operators need to be a bit more courteous to customers. She said she likes when the operators allow her time to sit down before they pull away from the stop.

Mr. Adler thanked Mr. Patton for the bus advertising information. He is interested in interior advertising, the numbers for this advertising and the cost for those ads. He said Alameda County had a ballot measure for transit and it very narrowly was defeated. Part of the service changes through the SSP will be financial and to clean up the service. SamTrans is still operating on a loss with the BART debt and people have to get passionate about saving the bus line it is equally important to be passionate about having a dedicated funding source for transit in the county.

Ms. Pye distributed a SamTrans *Bike on Buses* brochure and said SamTrans doesn't print them anymore. She asked who is responsible for cleaning the Palo Alto Transit Center. Ms. Pye said she was bumped from the bus because she was the third bike. She asked if it would be helpful to provide staff with data on when she is bumped or what bike rider she is. Mr. Patton said it would be great to keep a log or she can call in a complaint saying she was bumped.

Chair Ratto said he attended the public meeting in Daly City and it was well attended. Most of the people were concerned about the school trips on Route 122.

Daniel Cruz said on November 5, there was a detour on Route 292 from the San Mateo Caltrain Station onto Delaware. MV Transportation Operations Manager, Silverio Sanchez said it will be occurring another day or two and MV has operators at the bus stops to inform customers of this detour.

Ms. Gilbert said staff's responsiveness to CAC comments and requests is outstanding. She said the Connecting with Customers wristbands have "thank you" in Spanish, but should have also been in Tagalog.

Mr. Koya asked if Route 292 could be agendized for December. He said there needs to be a feasibility study on Route 292. Mr. Koya said staff should ask the State and Federal government for more operating money. He said people in Brisbane are asking for an outreach meeting in their community. He said many did not see the notices and don't understand what is happening with Route 292. Mr. Koya said it wasn't convenient for Brisbane residents to go to South San Francisco for the public meeting. He said Brisbane is an important community.

Judy McKie said she has been taking Route 292 and it has always stopped at the San Mateo Caltrain Station, and the other day it just bypassed the stop. She asked the driver why he didn't stop and the driver said because no one pulled the buzzer. Mr. Patton said that operators sometimes make a stop to avoid running early, but passengers must activate the stop request signal to ensure the bus operator stops.

LIAISON REPORTS

a. SamTrans Board - Peter Ratto

- Board proclaimed October as Disabilities Awareness Month.
- Presentation on District's Outreach Messaging by Executive Officer, Public Affairs Mark Simon
- August average weekday ridership for all modes increased 4.4 percent.
- Two public hearings were held: the discontinuation of the BART Plus Ticket and the elimination of two unproductive fixed-routes. The Board will take action on these two items at the November meeting.
- A Resolution of Appreciation was presented to Rich Napier, Executive Director of the City/County Association of Governments who will be retiring at the end of the year.
- Twenty-five year and 20-year Safe Worker Awards were presented.

b. SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee - Tom Collette – no report

c. Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee - Peter Loranger – no report

d. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board - Andy Chow – no report

e. Senior Mobility Action Plan - vacant

Mr. Patton reminded the CAC the holiday reception will be next month at 6 p.m. before the start of the meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held December 5, 2012, at 6:30 p.m., 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, California 94070.

Adjourned at 8:53 p.m.