

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

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)  
MEETING MINUTES**

**September 30, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT (Via Teleconference):** M. Adler, S. Appenrodt, J. Baker (Vice Chair), A. Barnes (Chair), I. Chan, B. Gomez (left at 6:48 pm), A. Juarez (arrived at 6:36), S. Johnston, N. Lacsamana, A. Madrid

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** A. Rivas, J. Castellanos, J. Epstein, A. Linehan, T. Dubost, D. Olmeda, K. Shanks, J. Lipps, J. Brook

**1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Andrew Barnes called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. ROLL CALL**

CAC Secretary Jean Brook called the roll. A quorum was present.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There were no comments.

**4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 26, 2020**

Vice Chair John Baker noted the following correction to the first statement by David Olmeda, Chief Operating Officer/Bus, under Item #5 Presentation: Transit 101:

David Olmeda, Chief Operating Officer/Bus, said that the actual frame or carcass of the tire itself ~~cannot~~ can be reused.

The CAC voted to approve the minutes as amended:

Motion/Second: Baker/Barnes

Ayes: Adler, Appenrodt, Baker, Barnes, Chan, Gomez, Johnston, Lacsamana, Madrid

Noes: None

Absent: Juarez

*Allie Juarez joined the meeting at 6:36 pm*

*Item #5 was heard following Item #7*

## **6. REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Barnes said he had no report.

## **7. SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE**

Ms. Rivas provided details from the following report on the most recent bus statistics:

### Ridership:

The total bus ridership (including weekends) for the month of August 2020 declined by (-65.0%), percent compared to last year, August 2019.

The average weekday bus ridership declined by (-68.2%), percent in the month of August 2020 compared to August 2019.

We noticed that poor air quality affected ridership the two last weeks but we are finally seeing a slight increase in ridership from where we were before we implemented RB133 on August 16th and resumed fare collection.

### Other:

I would like to recognize committee member Michelle Lewis who retired from the CAC, and had been a member since May 2018.

On August 16, 2020, service changes were implemented to provide more frequency on high ridership routes such as the ECR, 110, 112, and 281 to increase capacity. Other service adjustments included front door boarding, resumption of fare collection, enforcement of mask/facial covering, and issuance of mask on board buses. We continue enforcing face at all times onboard the buses and have not experienced any negative incidents regarding enforcement.

### OTP:

We exceeded our On-Time Performance goal of 85% at 86.6% for the month of August

### DNO:

I am happy to report that we only had 3 DNO schedules in the month of August

Nancy Lacsamana wanted to know if there was an increase since COVID started. Ms. Rivas said there had been a gradual increase over the last couple of weeks due to improved air quality and people starting to go into their jobs instead of working remotely. She said when schools start in-person learning, ridership is expected to increase.

David Olmeda, Chief Operating Officer/Bus, said that SamTrans compares months from the current year to the same months in prior years. He noted the current number of average weekday riders compared to pre-COVID.

Scott Johnston asked if passengers were permitted to open windows on the buses. Ms. Rivas said that the windows should remain closed due to filtration and air quality concerns. Mr. Olmeda said that at the start of the pandemic, operators were encouraged to open windows. He said that that philosophy has changed due to both the pandemic and recent fires, adding that the bus ventilation system is not designed to clean smoky air. He said they leave it to passengers and operators to decide whether or not to open windows.

*Bob Gomez left the meeting at 6:48 pm*

Alex Madrid asked about the policy for maintaining the pandemic capacity limits on the buses. Ms. Rivas said there is a social distance policy that is observed and that they rely on the operator to convey that the bus is at capacity so that another vehicle can be dispatched. She added that a group of riders in a single household is counted as one passenger for social distancing capacity purposes.

Ms. Juarez asked when fares started being charged again. Ms. Rivas said it was on August 16. Ms. Juarez asked how SamTrans ridership compares to Caltrain's ridership. Ms. Rivas said that Caltrain has suffered more in terms of passenger loss because they primarily serve commuters.

Chair Barnes asked about farebox receipts . Ms. Rivas said that the fare recovery rate fluctuates but was currently about 15 percent. She said that the federal government or state local taxes contributes the remaining 85 percent.

Mr. Olmeda said that SamTrans strives to balance its mission with public expectation. He said the District has performance parameters that MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission) requires it to meet. He said for parity reasons that if fixed route service were free of charge, the District's paratransit service—which is the most expensive service to operate—would also have to be offered at no cost.

Ms. Rivas announced that the Measure W Citizens Oversight Committee was seeking members and invited the CAC members to participate, with the deadline to submit applications being October 30. Ms. Lacsamana said she was considering applying and asked Chair Barnes about his past experience on the Oversight Committee. He said that he participated as part of the stakeholder advisory group.

## **5. PRESENTATION: SMCTD WEBSITE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Jeremy Lipps, Digital Communications Manager, provided a presentation.

Mary Adler asked how many hits per day the website receives. Mr. Lipps said that they did not do a daily count but that the site receives about 50, 000 hits or sessions per month.

Mr. Johnston said he planned to take transit from San Carlos to Sunnyvale, and asked if were possible to find routes on the SamTrans website that go beyond the boundaries of San Mateo County. Mr. Lipps said yes. Mr. Johnston asked if the servers would be dynamically linked to Google Maps. Mr. Lipps said that developers will be able to tap in a link other sites.

Mr. Madrid asked if there would be a search function in the mobile app. Mr. Lipps said the app currently does not have a route finder. He explained that the app depends on the route information it receives from the buses.

Iris Chan asked if there would be more detail on the site about individual bus stops, saying that she currently needs to call Customer Service for that information. Mr. Lipps said that they did not plan on showing all the bus stops on the online maps.

Ms. Rivas said that the buses are currently not providing paper copies of bus schedules during the pandemic, and that operators have been directing customers to the website.

Ms. Lacsamana commented that Google Maps incorporated SamTrans route information when she recently used it to plan a trip from Brisbane to San Jose.

Vice Chair Baker requested having a direct link to the trip planner at the forefront of the website, noting that LA (Los Angeles) Metro and San Diego each have a trip planning tool prominently featured on their sites.

Ms. Adler said that the site seems to know where all the bus stops are, which was confirmed by Mr. Lipps.

Chair Barnes asked if any members would like to volunteer to be on the website committee, and Mr. Johnston volunteered.

## **8. CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS**

Ms. Chan said she rode the bus on Labor Day Weekend.

Ms. Lacsamana noted that the Community Engagement Committee is currently on hold.

Ms. Juarez said her company has allowed employees to work from home through June 2021, and noted that she had not ridden transit for the last six months. She expressed her appreciation for the continued service and the operators.

Mr. Olmeda said that the data flow used for the mapping that is shown to the customer is also used by the District to dispatch, schedule, and monitor the buses. He said that there is an upcoming capital project that will improve cellular and mobile technology to increase the speed of communication between buses and the website.

## **9. LIAISON REPORTS**

### **a. SamTrans Board**

Vice Chair Baker provided an update on the Board's September 2 meeting.

He noted that the Board had approved the final FY 2021 budget.

## **10. NEXT MEETING**

Chair Barnes said that the next meeting will be held Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at 6:30 pm, via Zoom teleconference.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.