

**AGENDA ITEM III – A**

**YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 17, 2022**

**I. Call to Order & Roll Call (4:00 P.M.)**

In the absence of Chairman Hudson, Vice-Chairman Kirchner called the meeting to order.

Present: Bains, Blaser, Buttacavoli, Fuhrer, Gilchrist (for Hudson), Kirchner (Vice-Chair), Micheli and Shaw  
Absent: Hudson

**II. Public Business from the Floor**

None.

**III. Consent Calendar**

Director Bains made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Shaw seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**IV. Reports**

**A. State Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Grant Application.**

Martin discussed the State Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant application. Staff has been working with the consultant AECOM and have had two consultations with CalSTA regarding this program and is recommending moving forward with this grant application. Between \$500 to \$600 million is available for this round of TIRCP funding for programming over the next five years. The consultations with CalSTA and AECOM were to determine if the project is eligible for funding, if it would be worthwhile to pursue at this time, and to make the application as competitive as possible. CalSTA did state that the project is eligible for funding and that the inclusion of zero-emission buses (ZEBs) would make it more competitive.

The current proposed project components include approximately \$10 million for the facility and \$4 million for three replacement commuter buses, which are already in the schedule to be replaced in the next few years. Based on this allocation, CalSTA's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction tool indicates that this project could reach cost efficiency figures that would make it competitive with previously awarded projects in rural areas. The three ZEBs would be commuter buses would allow for connections to the State intercity rail network in downtown Sacramento. Applications are due on March 3, 2022.

Director Bains made a motion to adopt Resolution 1-22 authorizing the Executive Director to submit a TIRCP grant application as proposed. Director Shaw seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**B. Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Grant Application for a Regional Contactless Fare Payment Program.**

Martin discussed the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, which runs the Capitol Corridor trains between Placer County and the Bay Area. They are also submitting a TIRCP grant application and part of their proposed

grant scope of work would pay for a contactless payment system for those bus systems that connect with their rail system in downtown Sacramento. As a result, they have requested that Yuba-Sutter Transit allow such a system to be added to our fleet of commuter and local fixed route buses and, if so, provide a letter of support for their application. This project would allow Yuba-Sutter Transit to leverage regional funds for a next generation fare payment system. This system makes it possible for passengers to tap either a bank card or a smartphone to pay their fare and eventually even make a reservation for a trip and pay for the whole trip in advance. This system is part of the state-wide CalSTA vision and they are the agency who will be approving the TIRCP awards. If awarded, the cost to Yuba-Sutter would be negligible as the grant would pay for these devices to be installed on all commuter and local fixed route buses. SacRT has already installed these devices on their light rail trains as a pilot project and are now looking to expand it systemwide. Martin noted that this system provides some protection in case the Connect Card system becomes obsolete.

Director Buttacavoli made a motion to endorse the CCJPA project concept and authorize the Executive Director to sign a letter of support for a related TIRCP grant application as proposed. Director Micheli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**C. U.S. Department of Transportation Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program.**

Martin presented the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program application. This would be the second round of funding through this program as Yuba-Sutter Transit unsuccessfully applied for \$20 million in 2021. Due to the recent infrastructure bill, the amount of funding has increased from \$750 million to \$1.5 billion this year and the maximum amount that can be provided to any one state has increased from \$100 to \$225 million. The April 14<sup>th</sup> due date for applications has been advanced by three months over last year making the schedule very compressed. Staff is continuing to work with the AECOM consultant team on this application which will be similar to what was submitted in the last cycle.

Director Bains stated that he attended a presentation at the SACOG board meeting this morning on this program from the U.S. and California Departments of Transportation and he was pleased to know that Yuba-Sutter Transit was applying for funding.

Director Shaw asked if new letters of support would be needed from the member jurisdictions for this round or would the previous letters be sufficient. Martin stated the letters of support are custom written for each application and that staff would be pursuing the jurisdictions and other partners for new letters of support.

Director Bains made a motion to authorize the submittal of a 2022 RAISE grant application as proposed. Director Buttacavoli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**D. Ad Hoc Committee of the Yuba-Sutter Transit Board of Directors for the Comprehensive Operational Analysis/Short-Range Transit Plan (COA/SRTP).**

Martin stated that staff is recommending that the Board establish an ad hoc committee for the Comprehensive Operational Analysis/Short Range Transit Plan due to the significance of the plan for the future of Yuba-Sutter Transit. This would provide an opportunity for early policy input and in-depth Board knowledge during the process. The ad hoc committee would be involved in the review of consultant proposals as well as more in-depth progress reviews outside of regular board meetings. Staff is recommending that two to three members be appointed to serve on the committee.

Directors Blaser and Kirchner volunteered, and Director Hudson was appointed pending his acceptance. [Note: Director Hudson later accepted the nomination.]

**E. Mid-Year Budget Report for FY 2022 and Budget Preview for FY 2023.**

Martin stated that the Yuba-Sutter Transit JPA requires that a preliminary draft budget be brought to the Board by the end of March and have a budget adopted by the end of May each year. This allows for the jurisdictions to know how much funding is needed from each of them for their own budget process. The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a mid-year budget report and to look ahead at the issues that will need to be addressed in FY 2023. Martin noted that expenses to-date are below budget and that income is above budget, due primarily to the fact that we are operating four percent less service hours in FY 2022 compared to FY 2023 which accounts for approximately \$320,000 in savings.

Director Shaw asked with businesses opening back up if Yuba-Sutter Transit is looking at an increase in service. Martin stated that he regularly meets with Renick House, Storer Transit General Manager, regarding service demand and staffing needs as it will take 60 to 90 days to add drivers if ridership increases to where additional buses are needed. The most significant cuts were made to the commuter service where 30 percent of the schedules were eliminated while the only other cut to scheduled service was a reduction in Route 2 from half hour to hourly service on weekdays. Renick House stated that Storer is constantly hiring and interviewing for new drivers and could fill the service hours as needed.

Director Shaw stated that it would be difficult to know what service should look like in the future since no one knows when offices will be reopening. Martin stated that it is important to continue to communicate with riders to know when people will return to riding the bus. He noted that several peer systems are having trouble maintaining their existing routes due to issues with drivers being out sick, but Yuba-Sutter Transit has not yet had this issue.

Martin stated that one of the major issues for the upcoming budget is the facility project. Another will be bus replacements as the older diesel buses need to be replaced and there is no way to charge electric buses. Staff is continuing to work with Caltrans about the Highway 70 project and how it will affect the facility. Also, the continuing administration staff agreement with the Regional Waste Management Authority will also be changing this next fiscal year as the agreement will be moving to a month-to-month relationship.

**F. Mid-Year Performance Report.**

Martin stated that the Mid-Year Performance Report has been provided along with a graph to show the difference between pre-pandemic numbers and current ridership numbers.

**G. Local & Rural Route Fare Free Holiday Service Report.**

Martin stated the funding from the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) was authorized to provide several free fare events which have to-date included free fares over the two-week holiday season of Christmas and New Years for the last two years, during the one-week Thanksgiving period last year and during the week of the Yuba-Sutter Fair last year. Because ridership normally drops significantly over the course of a month and during major holiday periods, staff determined that this loss was 40 – 55 percent less than what would be expected without free fares. During the Yuba-Sutter Fair week, ridership increased by 20 percent, so the program had a positive impact. For this reason, staff is exploring ways to extend this program as the current funding will be fully expended with another free fare week for the Yuba-Sutter Fair this year.

Director Buttacavoli asked why the week of the Yuba-Sutter Fair was chosen to be a free fare event. Martin stated that the Fair asked Yuba-Sutter Transit to be a sponsor and this is draw to get people to ride the bus for the first time.

## **H. Project & Program Updates**

### **1. COVID-19 Impact & Response**

January continued the year-over-year systemwide monthly ridership growth trend in average weekday ridership that started in July 2021 and took off in August. Average systemwide weekday ridership in January was up 45 compared to January 2021.

### **2. Next Generation Transit Facility Project (Grant Awards & Submissions)**

As expected, the \$30 million State AHSC grant for the Regional Housing Authority, which included \$8.5 million for the new transit facility, was officially awarded on January 26, 2022. A State TIRCP grant application is now being prepared for submission by March 3, 2022. This will include approximately \$10 million for the facility as part of an approximately \$14 million request with the balance being for three ZEB replacement commuter buses. A second RAISE grant application which would be due on April 14, 2022, is now being considered. The 2021 RAISE grant application for \$20 million was unsuccessful. Award notices are expected soon on Yuba-Sutter Transit's \$14 million application from the 2021 round of FTA Buses & Bus Facilities Program. If unsuccessful, the 2022 round of funding from this annual program is expected to open soon.

As previously noted, the new Infrastructure Investments & Job Access Act requires a Zero-Emission Fleet Transition Plan to be eligible for future awards from certain FTA sponsored programs. Staff is working to develop a new plan for Board consideration if necessary.

### **3. Administrative Assistant I/II Recruitment & Selection**

Twenty-five applications were received for the vacant Administrative Assistant position and ten candidates were invited to a screening interview on Monday, February 14, 2022. Four finalists are participating in a second interview and facility tour on Tuesday, February 22, 2022. Hopefully, the new staff person can be introduced at the March 17<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

### **4. Regional Waste Management Authority (RWMA) Staff Transition**

The RWMA Executive Director position is open until filled, but several quality candidates did apply before the first review date. All three will be interviewed by the member jurisdiction administrators on March 4<sup>th</sup>. The target start date for this position is April 1, 2022.

The RWMA Management Analyst I/II position will open this week with applications due on March 29, 2022. Assuming the Executive Director is on-board by April 1, 2022, this 2<sup>nd</sup> RWMA position could be filled as early as May 1<sup>st</sup>. While these hires will change Yuba-Sutter Transit's 34-year relationship with the RWMA, we will continue to provide basic administrative services for the foreseeable future on a monthly basis, including providing a phone number, mailing address, financial services, and consulting staff support. A proposed amendment to the existing consulting agreement will be on the agendas for both agencies in March.

**VII. Correspondence/Information**

**A. Letter received January 31, 2022 from Marysville People First.**

Marysville People First is a local advocacy group for people with disabilities. Martin stated that he contacted their contact person and has accepted an invitation to attend their meeting on April 15, 2022.

**VIII. Other Business**

None.

**IX. Adjournment**

Director Buttacavoli moved to adjourn. Director Bains seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 pm.

**THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022 AT 4:00 PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTICED.**