

AGENDA ITEM IV – A

YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 16, 2023

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

Present: Bains – Arrived at 4:03 p.m. (Chair), Blaser, Buttacavoli, Fuhrer (Vice-Chair), Hudson, Micheli, Pasquale (for Kirchner), and Shaw – Arrived at 4:04 p.m.

Absent: Kirchner

II. Presentation

A. Yuba-Sutter NextGen Transit Plan Draft Service Recommendation.

Mr. Kumar discussed the deployment cost and schedule for the plan if approved as proposed including the various deployment phases, service changes, and capital and operating costs.

Phase 0 would start in 2024 and include implementation of the new Roseville Service and consolidation of the existing Sacramento Commuter Service. This phase would also include selection of a technology vendor for the new Community On-Demand service and the recruitment of two new staff positions – a Transit Technology Manager and a Community Relations Manager.

Phase 1 would start in FY 2025 and include implementation of the Yuba City Community On-Demand Zone which would replace the current Routes 2 and 5 and streamline the current Route 1. As part of this service change, the weekday span of service would be increased to 8:00 p.m. and the current Weekday Evening Dial-A-Ride service would be eliminated. During this phase, the procurement of ten electric cutaway vehicles would be initiated in preparation for later stages of the Community Service. No additional operating costs are expected in Phase 1 except for the new positions and the new technology.

Phase 2 would start in FY 2026 and would result in the replacement of the fixed routes in Marysville and Linda (Routes 4 and 6) with two new On-Demand Zones. With the expansion of the on-demand service, the current Dial-A-Ride service for ADA eligible passengers would be comingled with the on-demand service. No additional operating costs are expected in Phase 2 except for the new positions and the new technology.

Phase 3 would start in FY 2027 and include implementation of the last On-Demand Zone in Olivehurst. Depending on the success of the new Roseville service, this phase could include a second morning and afternoon Roseville schedule.

Mr. Kumar then summarized some of the cost assumptions that have been included in the implementation schedule.

- Expanding weekday service to 8 p.m. (\$300,000 per year)
- New Microtransit Technology (\$168,000 per year)
- Additional Staffing (\$250,000 per year)
- Inflation (\$260,000 per year)
- New Operations Contract Effective October 1, 2027 (\$150,000 per year)

At the March Board meeting, Mr. Kumar expects to have a draft plan that will cover the financial, marketing and implementation plan in more detail.

III. Public Business from the Floor

None.

IV. Consent Calendar

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

V. Reports

A. Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) AB 2766 Grant Agreement.

Martin stated that authorization is now being requested to execute the FRAQMD Grant Agreement #VF23-01 for \$100,000 to extend the Discount Monthly Bus Pass Program for one year through March 2024.

Director Shaw made a motion to authorize execution of FRAQMD Grant Agreement #VF23-01 as proposed. Director Micheli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

B. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5339(b) Buses and Bus Facility and/or Section 5339(c) Low or No Emission Funding Program Application.

Martin stated that Yuba-Sutter Transit unsuccessfully applied under this program in both 2021 and 2022 for the NextGen Transit Facility project for federal funding toward the design and construction of the new transit facility. He noted that while the 2022 application was rated as “highly recommended” in all six categories, only about 20 percent of the applications were funded.

Martin is now recommending that the Board authorize a third application under this same program. Staff will rewrite the highly rated 2022 application with the support of AECOM for the specific technical aspects of the project which should cost less than \$10,000. Applications are due April 13, 2023 with award announcement no later than June 27, 2023.

It was the consensus direction of the Board to move forward with the proposed application.

C. Mid-Year Budget Report for FY 2023 and Budget Preview for FY 2024.

Martin noted that the agenda packet included a copy of the Mid-Year Budget Report which covers the first half of the fiscal year while looking forward through the remaining six months of FY 2023. Reminding the Board that the Yuba-Sutter Transit JPA requires that a preliminary draft budget be submitted to the Board by the end of March and that a final budget be adopted by the end of May each year, Martin noted that this report also looks forward to the potential budget issues for FY 2024.

Martin stated that our year end operating revenues and expenses are in good shape with FY 2023 expenses running about 4.25 percent below the amount budgeted (\$376,000) due to a lower number of service hours being operated and lower than expected cost of fuel. The capital budget had assumed the start of the environmental and design work on the new facility, but that is being held off until we can obtain more funding and the buses that are on order will not be delivered until this summer so they will be in the FY 2024 budget.

Looking forward to FY 2024, federal funding for public transportation increased significantly following the 2021 Infrastructure Investments & Jobs Act which will assist with the new facility and the introduction of zero emission buses. Federal COVID-19 relief funds will all be expended this year. Local Transportation Fund (LTF) revenues have traditionally been used to balance the annual budget after all other revenue sources have been applied. For FY 2023, \$3.9 million in LTF revenue has been used for that purpose which is about 40 percent of the combined available funds from the four member jurisdictions. This is significantly lower than the previous five-year average of 51 percent.

Martin noted that the initial four-year contract with Storer Transportation will expire this year, but we have two two-year options the first of which would need to be exercised by May 1, 2023. While this issue is expected to be discussed at the March meeting, if we don't exercise the first option, we will have to go out to bid which will likely be more costly. He also noted that we still need additional funding for the new facility, but two grants are pending and a third will be submitted in April 2023 and the related zero-emission bus purchase mandate we will be working through all future budgets. Finally, the staffing agreement with the Regional Waste Management Authority will end on or before June 30, 2023, which will impact the FY 2024 operating budget.

Director Fuhrer asked if a customer rides from Olivehurst to Marysville and then rides from Marysville to Olivehurst is that two events? Martin responded that this would be two trips as every boarding is a trip.

Director Fuhrer also wanted to know if the \$17 cost per passenger trip shown in the System Fact Sheet was higher or lower than using competitors like Uber or Lyft. Martin stated that this figure is an average for all trips provided and the cost varies significantly by service type. The cost is much cheaper for the local fixed route service where ridership demand is denser, but the cost is much higher for the Dial-A-Ride service where we pick up people at their house and take them where they want to go.

D. Mid-Year Performance Report.

Martin stated that for the first time since the pandemic started, January ridership increased from December. In fact, despite the torrential rains early in the month, average weekday ridership in January was now up to 75 percent of what it was in January 2020. Through the first half of the year, systemwide ridership was just 57 percent of what it was pre-pandemic though this figure varies significantly by service. The local fixed route service was at 64 percent, Dial-A-Ride at 54 percent, and the Sacramento service was at 26 percent of pre-COVID levels. In general, ridership continues to grow after a 29 percent increase from FY 2021 to FY 2022 and another 14 percent increase through the first six months of FY 2023 over the same period in FY 2022.

E. Project & Program Updates.

1. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Commuter Bus Lease Proposal

Martin stated that Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) in Merced County recently inquired as to the possible lease of up to three of our commuter buses for use in their service to Yosemite National Park. They have ordered new buses, but they will not arrive until after the season is over. Since we have reduced our commuter service, we have buses available so this would result in additional income and reduced operating cost as we would transfer the insurance for these buses to YARTS. We are looking at a lease price of \$5,000 - \$9,000 per month per bus depending on who is responsible for the repair of major components (engine, transmission, etc.) and we are currently paying about \$500 per month to insure each bus. We have asked YARTS to prepare a written proposal for Board consideration at the March meeting.

Director Buttacavoli asked if we might still have some liability even if the buses are being insured in their name. Martin stated that we would have an agreement with YARTS that would indemnify Yuba-Sutter Transit during the time that they are in their control.

2. Next Generation Transit Facility Project (Grant submissions)

On January 25th, we submitted a grant to SACOG for \$3.5 million for environmental and design work for the new facility. Another grant for \$13.7 million was submitted on February 10th to the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) that would include \$9.3 million for facility construction and \$3.5 million toward the cost of ten zero-emission microtransit vehicles. SACOG grant award announcements are expected in May and CalSTA grant award announcements are expected by April 23rd.

3. Executive Director Recruitment (Brochure link: <https://online.fliphtmls.com/iamax/fdem/>)

Martin noted that a link to the recruitment brochure was provided in the agenda packet and the first review of applicants will be on March 8th. We hope to have one or more applicants available for an interview with the Board at the April meeting.

VII. Correspondence / Information

None.

VII. Closed Session

A. Conference with Real Property Negotiators (Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8)

B. Public Employee Performance Evaluation (Pursuant to Government Code Section 54597)

The Board adjourned to closed session at 4:46 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 5:06 p.m. and stated that there was no reportable action from the closed session.

VIII. Other Business

None.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 pm.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023 AT 4:00 PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTICED.