

AGENDA ITEM III – A

**YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 15, 2024**

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

Present: Bains (Vice Chair), Blaser, Flores, Fuhrer, Hudson, Pasquale (for Kirchner) and Shaw
Absent: Buttacavoli, Kirchner (Chair)

II. Public Business from the Floor

None.

III. Consent Calendar

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

IV. Reports

A. Mid-Year Budget Report for FY 2024 and Budget Preview for FY 2025.

Executive Director Mauk noted that the agenda packet included a copy of the Mid-Year Budget Report which covers the first half of the fiscal year and projections for the remaining six months of FY 2024. 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. Mauk noted that this report also looks forward to the potential budget issues for FY 2025.

Mauk stated the year end operating revenues and expenses are in good shape with our FY 2024 expenses projected to be below budget by approximately \$21,000 due in part to lower-than-expected administrative costs. The capital budget had assumed significant expenses for the environmental and preliminary design work on the new facility, but that effort was delayed until we obtained more funding, and the new front runner buses that were ordered in 2021 arrived about 2 weeks ago.

Mauk stated that looking forward to FY 2025, we expect federal funding for public transportation to remain steady and Transit still has \$545,000 available from the last round of Covid related federal funding. Local Transportation Fund (LTF) revenues have traditionally been used to balance the budget after all other revenue sources have been applied. For FY 2024 \$4 million in LTF revenue has been budgeted for that purpose, which is about 50% of the combined available funds from our four member jurisdictions.

Mauk stated the initial four-year contract with Storer Transportation ended in September and we are in the first of two, two-year options which will carry through September 2026. There is a cost escalator built into each year based on CPI but capped at no more than 4%.

The temporary construction easement for phase two of the Binney Junction project is scheduled to begin September 2024. Additional funding for the new facility was awarded last year which brings the total to \$41

million secured to date. Mauk stated that the work associated with the staffing agreement with the Regional Waste Management Authority is winding down significantly and will likely end by 2025.

Director Shaw commended staff on the budget and projections for FY 2025 but asked if there were any upcoming issues that could cause problems with the budget. Mauk stated there are no anticipated issues with our operating or capital budget.

The Board directed staff to proceed as proposed.

B. Mid-Year Performance Report for FY 2024.

Mauk stated that the attached report provided a detailed breakdown of ridership and service hours for the first half of FY 2024. System wide ridership was up 13% compared to the same period last year. The local fixed route service was up 14.2%, DAR was up 4.4% and the Sacramento Commuter was up 8.1%. In general ridership continues to grow steadily post pandemic in conjunction with a reduction in service hours.

C. Project & Program Updates.

1. Potential Surplus Commuter Bus Sale to Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) and Fixed Route Bus Lease to Eastern Sierra Transit

Mauk stated we just got back the third bus we leased to YARTS which needed repairs due to an accident.

Mauk reported that Yuba-Sutter Transit was contacted by RABA with interest in purchasing the two MCI buses the Board approved for surplus in December. RABA is in the process of taking over operation of the Amtrak thruway bus route between Redding and Stockton with stops in Marysville and Sacramento and are looking for buses to support that service. Since the buses were purchased with federal funds, we have the responsibility to return FTA's share of what is considered the fair market value. Staff plans on preparing an item for board consideration in March to authorize a preferred action.

Director Bains inquired about how we ensure fair market return if we don't go to auction. Mauk stated that if the buses went to auction, the fair market value is the highest bid price. However, to determine a potential direct sale price, the staff is conducting market research and will pursue an appraisal from a dealer.

Mauk reported that Eastern Sierra Transit (EST) recently inquired about leasing or purchasing a few of our fixed route buses. They are currently short on buses and lead times on new buses are long. Since we have reduced our fixed route service and plan more reductions in the fall of 2024, we do have fixed route buses to spare. Mauk stated he was not comfortable selling any of the newer buses because they are well short of their useful life. EST is only interested in 2019 models or later, so the conversation is centered on leasing, which could bring additional income and reduce operating costs. The staff is anticipating a lease price of no less than \$3,500 a month for about two years. Staff will work with Eastern Sierra Transit to prepare a written proposal for Board consideration at a future meeting.

Director Hudson asked about the fair market value of the fixed route buses. Mauk stated the aftermarket is limited and finding a comparable bus is difficult. Staff will reach out to dealers to hopefully get an appraisal for the buses.

2. Caltrans Binney Junction SR70 Project Phase 2 Easements

Mauk reported that discussions are ongoing with Caltrans about phase two of the Binney Junction project which will start in September. The phase two TCEs will cover twenty-eight months and we have also confirmed from the latest plans that the area included in the two TCEs will encompass all but thirteen bus parking spaces in our yard, effectively displacing about forty buses.

Mauk stated that as a result, we will have to operate all our fixed route services (local and commuter) from an alternate location, keeping only DAR and rural routes at our B Street facility. The current area we are leasing from the Yuba County Airport will not be available for phase two which means an alternate site will need to be secured. The main parking lot at the Yuba County Airport has been proposed as a potential location and staff went to the airport with Caltrans staff to assess the site. The space identified is big enough but will require security fencing, additional lighting, security camera surveillance and a trailer with restrooms for operations staff working at the location. Mauk stated that the potential additional operational costs are still being worked out but the internal estimate for the term of the TCE would be north of \$500,000 not including site upgrades. Caltrans is also pursuing a shorter construction timeline.

Director Fuhrer suggested finding a location in Yuba City, Director Hudson suggested developing the land purchased for the new facility. Director Blaser suggested the property across the street from the new facility and Director Pasquale suggested reaching out to Yuba College. Mauk responded that we will suggest all of these locations to Caltrans staff.

3. NextGen Transit Facility Project

Mauk reported that an environmental and 30% design RFQ has been developed, drafted and planned for release by March 1, 2024. The current cost estimate is \$1 million which will be paid with monies from a SACOG grant. The staff has developed a scope of work and engaged two consultant firms that hold State contracts to provide project management and procurement support for the NextGen project which will be a 3–4-year contract estimated at \$500,000. Staff is expecting to bring a draft of Professional Services Agreement for consideration at the May board meeting.

4. NextGen Transit Plan Implementation

Mauk noted the six front runners that will support the new micro transit services have been delivered.

On staffing, we have been working with Sutter County on the recruitment for the open Program Analyst position and we have received 61 applications. Staff is still evaluating the applications currently.

We have developed a statement of work and have distributed to several State contract holders for marketing support. We are anticipating a two-year contract with an optional third year and the budget estimate is approximately \$85,000 per year.

Yuba-Sutter Transit is forming a Microtransit Working Group including representatives from Freed, the Senior Center, and front-line staff including drivers and dispatchers. The working group will discuss details of the demand-response service roll out, such as fares, ADA services, and Title VI policies among others. The first meeting will be on March 12th at the Senior Center.

Director Fuhrer asked if we will be changing the fares under the NextGen Transit Plan. Mauk stated this is yet to be determined but there was a recommendation in the NextGen Plan for fare increases in later phases.

V. Correspondence / Information

None.

VI. Other Business

Mauk reminded Board members that their Form 700 is due by April 1st and Monday, February 19th, the office will be closed for the President's Day Holiday.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 pm.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2024 AT 4:00 PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTICED.