

AGENDA ITEM IV – A

YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 15, 2019

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

Present: Bradford (for Fletcher), Cardoza, Leahy (Chair), Samayoa, Shaw, Sullenger and Whiteaker

Absent: Fletcher and Hudson

II. Public Hearings & Presentations

A. California Air Resources Board (CARB) Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) Regulations.

Martin conducted a PowerPoint presentation on the California Air Resources Board's Clean Transit regulation and how it applies locally. Yuba-Sutter Transit would qualify as a small transit system and would follow the applicable regulations. It is the intent of these regulations that all transit systems would operate only zero emission buses (ZEBs) by 2040. Martin noted that the first major procurement requirement is that 25% of all fleet purchases by zero emission by 2023 (2026 for Yuba-Sutter Transit) and that this requirement is based on the order date, not the delivery date.

Director Cardoza asked how the price for ZEBs would differ from the buses that are now in the fleet. Martin explained that the additional cost would be approximately \$200,000 to \$350,000 and up per bus depending on the type of bus and the type of power supply used (battery electric vs. hydrogen fuel cell electric). This does not include the cost for charging infrastructure which is a major issue for Yuba-Sutter Transit's current facility.

In this regard, Martin noted that Caltrans has approved a grant for the next generation transit facility study. Staff is now waiting for the grant agreement and the notice to proceed, but the hope is to present a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Board consideration as early as next month. The proposals would be for completing a transit facility from the ground up including the selection of sites that are considered resilient to climate change.

Martin continued to state that the first status report is due to the state in March 2021 and that the first purchase mandate will be for orders placed on or after January 1, 2026. The current bus replacement schedule could be adjusted to move allow for a new facility to be completed as late as 2030 when all future fleet purchases would need to be ZEBs.

Director Bradford inquired as to the difference in fuel costs between diesel, hydrogen and electric. Martin responded that he has heard recent reports for one operator that is experiencing electric charging costs that are double what diesel costs and other reports are that hydrogen costs about seven times the cost of diesel.

Director Cardoza asked if there was any estimate on how much the current transit location might be worth. Martin stated he has no idea what the facility might be worth, but approximately \$5 million has been invested in the facility including the original purchase price and two major remodels.

III. Public Business from the Floor.

None

IV. Consent Calendar

Director Whiteaker made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Samayoa seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

V. Reports

A. FREED Center for Independent Living Senior Transportation Voucher Program memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Martin presented the extension of the current MOU with FREED for the Transportation Voucher Program which has been amended to include the July 1st increase in the Dial-A-Ride fare from \$2 to \$3.

Director Whiteaker made a motion to authorize the execution of the FREED Dial-A-Ride Voucher MOU as proposed. Director Bradford seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

B. 2018/2019 Yuba County Grand Jury Report Response.

Martin presented a draft response to the Yuba County Grand Jury Report regarding their recommendation to extend Route 3 in the Johnson Park neighborhood of Olivehurst to add a new bus stop on the corner of Olive and Martel. Route 3 is one of the busiest routes and consistently struggles with on time performance especially during school hours and the existing Johnson Park bus stop on the corner of Evelyn and Martel is one of the top ten busiest bus stops in the system.

The Grand Jury recommendation was made in an effort to place a bus stop closer to both Lindhurst and South Lindhurst High Schools and to improve the safety of students walking from the bus stop to these campuses. A report from the Yuba County Sherriff Department stating that there were 479 calls in the Johnson Park area in the previous year was used to establish the risk to students in that area. Reviewing the same report, staff discovered that many of the calls were not criminal in nature, including welfare checks and traffic stops, and that 53 percent of the 479 calls were actually outside the weekday school hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In addition, no comparison was done to determine that this call volume was any higher than other Yuba County neighborhoods.

Regarding the distance for the students to walk from the bus stop to the campus, staff found that the most common access point to the campus is through the back gate from the north end of Evelyn and that a new stop at Olive and Martel would only be a gain of approximately 200' to 500' feet in comparison to the existing stop. In addition, there is

no sidewalk at the proposed location so a significant investment would be required for student safety. In addition, extending the route to serve the proposed stop would add seven to nine minutes of running time especially during peak school hours to further impact a route that is already struggling with on-time performance. This would require either trimming stops or shortening the route elsewhere or adding additional vehicles which would increase operating costs.

While appreciating the Grand Jury's concerns and interest in the service, staff concluded that slight decrease in walking distance and any presumed increase in safety does not justify the cost and operating impact of the proposed bus stop.

Director Cardoza made a motion to authorize the submission of the 2018/2019 Yuba County Grand Jury Report Response as proposed. Director Bradford seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

C. Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) Blue Sky Grant Projects for FY 2019/2020.

Martin stated that applications are now being accepted for up to \$250,000 in Blue Sky Grants from FRAQMD. Applications are due on October 15th with grant awards scheduled for December 2nd.

Martin noted that most of the grant funding in the past has been used for the Discount Monthly Pass Program and staff would recommend that this again be the priority. Since the July 1st increase in cash fares, there has already been a dramatic increase in the sale of discount monthly passes and that is anticipated to continue. As a result, approximately \$140,000 would be need for this program next year. Other project concepts include the purchase and installation of bus stop benches and the support of expanded Live Oak service. Based on Board input, staff will prepare draft applications for approval consideration at the September meeting.

Director Whiteaker approved the preparation and submittal of the annual grant applications. Director Cardoza seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

D. FY 2019 Annual Performance Report.

Martin noted that the Annual Performance Report extends an overall declining ridership trend for a fourth year, but that ridership on the Sacramento service is up for the second year after several years of flat ridership. Several factors that should help increase ridership in the coming year include the end of traffic from the Camp Fire debris clean-up program, the replacement of 11 fixed route buses and the addition of the free shuttle program for the Sutter campus of Yuba College.

Director Shaw asked if any market analysis had been done to determine reasons for the ridership decrease. Martin answered that no such work has been done locally, but that similar or worse decreases have been experienced in the region and nationwide. Some of the reasons cited include an improved economy, ease of buying a car, broader availability of driver's licenses and ridesharing services like Uber and Lyft, but such services are probably not having an impact on our services. Martin noted that service reliability and service quality are still the keys to attracting and retaining passengers.

Director Samayoa stated that he worries that the services we provide are not meeting the needs of the local population. He asked about pilot projects that we are considering for new ways to serve the community. He suggested that there could be other service opportunities out there and that maybe another venue would be the best approach to determine what is needed. Martin responded that funding will be requested this year to update the 2015 transit plan and this would be the place to explore what is happening in other transit systems and what could be beneficial for our community.

E. Project & Program Updates.

1. July 1st Fare Increase, Fare Policy Changes and Sacramento Service Expansion

Martin noted that the early response to the July 1st fare and service changes has been positive so far with no significant impact with overall ridership down just over 1 percent from last July. On the positive side, compared to July 2018, local fixed route pass sales were up 28 percent for the general public and 24 percent for discount passengers. Fixed route revenue was up 20 percent and Dial-A-Ride revenue was up by 41 percent.

2. Service Contractor Transition Process

Martin stated that the transition process is well underway with approximately 85 percent of the current Transdev employees applying with the new contractor Storer Transit Systems. Current employees have until September 1st to apply with Storer to retain their seniority.

3. CAD/AVL Program Implementation

Martin stated there are continued issues with the Computer Assisted Dispatching (CAD) system, but he hoped that it would be ready for a Board demonstration in October or November. The Doublemap bus tracker app is working, but some system bugs still need to be worked out including problems with the voice announcement system.

VI. Correspondence/Information

None

VII. Other Business

None

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

**THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2019
AT 4:00PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS**