

AGENDA ITEM III – A

YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 15, 2020

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

Present: Cardoza, Fletcher (Vice-Chair), Hudson, Leahy, Samayoa, Shaw, Sullenger, and Whiteaker (Chair)

Absent: None

II. Presentations

A. Next Generation Transit Facility Plan Consultant Presentation – Working Papers #1 and #2

Martin described the Next Generation Transit Facility Study which was made possible by a planning grant from Caltrans. The purpose of this agenda item is for the project consultant, WSP USA, to present the first two working papers for input from the board and public as part of the public engagement for this project. Martin introduced Alva Carrasco, Project Manager for WSP USA for this project. She then introduced members of her team: Manager of Bus Facilities and Senior Architect Jewels Carter, Northern California District Planning Manager Kristina Svensk, Transportation and Environmental Planner Naomi Batzer, and Transportation Planner Rafael Ruiz.

Carrasco first presented Working Paper #1 via a PowerPoint presentation, reviewing the existing site conditions at Yuba-Sutter Transit's maintenance, operations and administration facility at 2100 B Street in Marysville and the need for a replacement site to meet the agency's future needs. WSP USA began with 16 possible sites before narrowing them down to the top three ranked sites. She showed a video that is now available to the public that explains the reason for the project and provides a virtual tour of the top ranked sites.

Working Paper #2 reviews the design criteria for a future facility. WSP USA conducted interviews with Yuba-Sutter Transit and Storer Transit Systems staff regarding the functional requirements and operating characteristics of a future facility. WSP USA put together all the standards required of the facility, including staffing and vehicular circulation, and overlaid it onto several proposed sites to confirm the potential fit. Other requirements of a potential site included a sustainable facility design, room for future growth, infrastructure capacity for battery electric buses and/or the ability to support hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles.

Ms. Carrasco concluded her presentation with a review of the next steps in the project including the collection of public comments, the development of a financial plan and preparation of a final plan with a goal of early spring 2021 for completion.

Director Cardoza asked the price of the land located at Butte House and Harter Roads. Ms. Carrasco stated they were unable to obtain a specific cost for that location as no specific site on the large parcel was identified. Martin explained that the price of a Butte House and Harter Road site would vary depending on the amount of land required and the location of the parcel within the larger site but that site and the site on Onstott Road would be the highest prices of the sites considered. Director Cardoza asked if the price would be over \$2 million for the Onstott site. Martin stated that it would be over that, but that any site considered would have to be appraised and any sale would follow a typical public purchase process.

Director Hudson mentioned that the site adjacent to Yuba College is next to the Fire Academy and would most likely have to deal with occasional smoke from the training facility.

Director Shaw asked impact fees and construction costs were taken into consideration when ranking the sites. Martin stated that the financial analysis would review the development costs for each site and that Working Paper only includes the bare ground price for the site. The next step would consider those additional factors into the final ranking.

Director Fletcher stated that more information will be needed to give adequate feedback about the sites and stated that he most likely will visit the sites to get a better idea of considerations such as flooding. Martin responded that specific direction is not being requested at this time, but Board comments are invited to better assess each site and how they may or may not meet future needs.

Director Samayoa stated that this will be a long-term investment and that a large site is needed for larger buses, but he wondered what would happen if there is a shift to smaller vehicles in the future and how the new facility would be adjusted for that shift. Martin responded that a larger site could always be downgraded, but the priority right now is to replace the current facility which is already constrained for the current operation and must be replaced to accommodate zero emission buses if not the Caltrans highway expansion project.

Director Cardoza mentioned that the Onstott Frontage Road is not in good repair and it might need to be repaved if that site is selected. Martin responded that Washington Avenue on the north boundary of the same site is in a similar situation and both would need widening.

III. Public Business from the Floor

None.

IV. Consent Calendar

Director Cardoza made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Fletcher seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

V. Reports

A. Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) Blue Sky Projects Applications for FY 2020/2021.

Martin stated that the Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) is now accepting applications under the Blue Sky Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2020/2021. Due to the reduced amount of funding available this year and the recent extension of the current program through September 2021, staff is recommending that the new request be made for just six months of funding (\$72,000) to extend the existing program through March 2022. The second priority project is for another \$10,000 to help continue the expanded Live Oak Service for another year from March 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022. The applications are due for submission by Monday, October 19, 2020.

Director Fletcher made a motion to authorize submittal of the FRAQMD grant applications as proposed. Director Cardoza seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

B. Project & Program Updates

1. COVID-19 Impacts and Response

Martin discussed the ongoing COVID-19 response noting a need for Board input on a few issues. There has been no major operational or policy changes since the last meeting. Ridership has remained rather stable since the July 1st resumption of fare collection on the fixed route service.

As both communities are looking to open more as restrictions are eased, there is an anticipation of an increase in local fixed route ridership when schools begin to offer in-person classes especially at middle and high schools. In addition, the Alta California Regional Center expects to resume programs for their adult developmentally disabled clients in the next few weeks as well.

Even as they plan to reopen schools, the Marysville and Yuba City school district are not planning to provide much school bus service for middle and high school students any time soon. Since a large population of middle and high school students typically use the fixed route system, staff is concerned about the impact of being the only bus service available and how the current 12 passenger capacity limit might result in leaving lots of youth or developmentally disabled adults at bus stops.

The 12-passenger limit is not a requirement, but it is an industry best practice for social distancing purposes. While the state mandates that passengers and drivers on public transportation must wear a mask, the issue is always about enforcement. While Yuba-Sutter Transit does not have a “no mask, no ride” policy, passenger compliance has been estimated at around 70 percent. Waiving or increasing the on-board capacity limit to avoid a high number of passengers being left at bus stops might require a more aggressive face mask requirement. While face mask dispensers will soon be installed on all buses to encourage the use of face masks, the real concern is whether local law enforcement would cooperate to actively enforce the mask requirement.

Director Cardoza asked about an idea to put plastic shields between the seat rows for protection. Martin stated that the major concern with that approach is the installation and ongoing maintenance cost. He added that industry studies around the world have not shown that public transportation use presents any greater risk of COVID-19 infection than other activities.

Director Fletcher stated that since current practices appear to be working that they should remain as they are and revisit them when they are no longer effective.

Director Samayoa stated that he appreciates the proactive approach and recommended contacting the Bi-County Health Officer for her input, but that increasing the number of riders would be beneficial.

Director Leahy, noting that Yuba County schools will be able to open on October 21st, encouraged the idea of increasing the passenger capacity limit.

Director Whiteaker agreed with the recommendations to speak with Dr. Luu and keep the limits as they are until further action is needed.

Martin thanked the board for their input and stated that he would be following up on the recommendations as conditions dictate.

Martin also discussed the Yuba College Sutter County Campus Shuttle noting that Yuba College has announced that the Sutter Campus will be holding very few in-person classes for the spring semester so no

shuttle service will provided at least through the Summer 2021 semester. He continued that, due to the continued suspension of this service, a significant portion of the state funding that has been designated for this service will likely expire and be lost for local use before it can be spent. As a result, staff is now recommending that the service now be permanently cancelled and that the remaining funds be reallocated to other active projects. As proposed in a recent meeting with Caltrans, approximately \$190,000 would be moved to the Sacramento Commuter Service Expansion Program with the remainder to the Discount Pass Program. The program concept could still be revisited in the future when conditions are more favorable.

Director Cardoza asked if the program funding could instead be extended for another year due to the pandemic. Martin stated that he suggested that approach, but they are coming through the Air Resources Board and must be spent by the appointed date or they will revert back to the state. The consensus of the Board was to concur with the staff recommendation which can be accomplished administratively.

2. Bel Air Market Connect Card Sales Outlet to Close Saturday, November 7th

Martin stated that Bel Air Market will be closing their Customer Service Counter effective November 7th and will no longer be selling Connect Card products. This was a corporate decision that applies regionwide. This closure leaves the Administration Office in Marysville and the Yuba College Bookstore in Linda as the only local Connect Card outlets as both county libraries remain closed due to the pandemic. While Connect Cards can still be loaded on-line, the search is on-going for a new pass outlet location.

3. Annual Unmet Transit Needs Hearing – 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 27th

Martin stated that the Annual Unmet Transit Needs Hearing will be held on Tuesday, October 27th at 2pm. Director Leahy will be representing SACOG.

VI. Correspondence/Information

None.

VII. Other Business

Martin informed the board about a new funding and service opportunity that will now require separate action to be considered as an off-agenda item. The notice of funding available for the Public Transportation COVID Research Demonstration Grant Program was released on October 5th and applications for the \$10 million competitive program must be submitted by November 2nd, 2020. No matching funds are required. Micro-transit software and service vendor Via has just this week offered to prepare an application on behalf of Yuba-Sutter Transit to enhance and expand the weekday evening Dial-a-Ride service as a mobility on-demand program. It would combine our Dial-a-Ride service with their software to improve functionality while adding an hour to the existing evening weekday service to end at 10:30 p.m.

Director Samayoa made a motion that the need for action on this item arose after the posting of the agenda. Director Leahy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Director Samayoa made a motion to authorize the grant application as proposed. Director Cardoza seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 pm.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020 AT 4:00 PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTICED.

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