

**West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Meeting Minutes: April 25, 2014**

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**Members Present:** Janet Abelson, Chair (El Cerrito); Gayle McLaughlin (Richmond); Sherry McCoy (Hercules); Joe Wallace (AC Transit); Aleida Chavez (WestCAT); Cecilia Valdez (San Pablo); Zakhary Mallett (BART); Roy Swearingen (Pinole); Courtland Boozé (Richmond)

**Staff Present:** John Nemeth; Joanna Pallock; Danelle Carey; Valerie Jenkins; Kristopher Kokotaylo-Legal Counsel;

**Location:** San Pablo Council Chambers, 13831 San Pablo Avenue, San Pablo, CA 94806

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**1. Call to Order and Self-Introductions – Chair Janet Abelson**

**2. Public Comment.** None

**Consent Calendar**

**ACTION:** *Director Wallace* moved to ADOPT Consent Calendar. Seconded by *Director McCoy*. Passed unanimously.

**ACTION:** *Director Valdez* requested a correction to Item #3; the attendance roster for March 28, 2014 WCCTAC Board Meeting.

**ACTION:** *Director Swearingen* moved to show *Director Valdez* was not in attendance for the March 28, 2014 WCCTAC Board Meeting. Seconded by *Director Wallace*.

**3. Minutes of March 28, 2014 Board Meeting.**

**4. Monthly Update on WCCTAC Activities.**

**5. Financial Reports for March 2014.**

**6. Amendment to Measure J Program 12 to Allow Use of Contra Costa Transportation for Livable Communities (CC-TLC) Funds for Matching Active Transportation Program (ATP) Grants.**

**7. Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee**

**DISCUSSION**

**8. Train Horn Noise Resolution.** *Moved to next month's agenda.*

**9. Contra Costa Mobility Management Plan – Additional Comments.**

**ACTION:** *Director McCoy* motioned to approve additional comments on the Contra Costa Mobility Management Plan from WCCTAC. Seconded by *Director Wallace*. Approved unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** *Director McCoy* thanked the members of the staffs from the cities of Richmond, El Cerrito and San Pablo for their collaborative memo and revised budget. She stated that all of the local concerns were captured with a plausible alternative offered.

*Chair Abelson* commented that the Mobility Management Plan was based on a “suburban model” and did not sufficiently address West County, which is more of an “urban model”. She stated that there were a number of recommended programs that West County is already doing, such as in-person assessments.

*Director Boozé* asked *ED Nemeth* to clarify what the salary would be for the Manager position in the Contra Costa Mobility Management Plan.

*ED Nemeth* stated the Mobility Management Plan had proposed a new organization called a Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA), which would be a nonprofit. The MMP proposes an Executive Director with a salary of approximately \$140,000 as well as an Administrative Assistant. *ED Nemeth* stated that the three cities, as an alternative, suggested that funds be used to hire an individual housed within CCTA at a salary of approximately \$80,000 per year.

## **10. Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) Needs Assessment Report.**

**ACTION:** *Forward WCCTAC comments and any additional comments to the CCTA Board*

**DISCUSSION:** Due to equipment challenges, Board members had a chance to make a correction to the minutes showing *Director Valdez* was not at the March 28<sup>th</sup> Board meeting (see under Consent Calendar above). Other items also were discussed while waiting for equipment to be set.

*Chair Abelson* referred to Item 14 in the packet and asked to have a copy of the votes from the TAC included in the next Board packet.

The time to address equipment issues also allowed for *Director Wallace* to thank the City of El Cerrito for hosting the AC Transit Board meeting in April. He noted that the large turnout of the public attended to comment on the need for more frequent service in West County. He specifically noted that the line 72 has to pass up people waiting for the bus because the buses are full.

*Chair Abelson* also noted recent CCTA business items including the release of PDA grant funds and salary ranges for CCTA staff.

*Ms. Julie Morgan* of Fehr & Peers presented the Safe Route to School (SR2S) Needs Assessment Report. The purpose of the assessment was to better understand current SR2S activities and to estimate the amount of funding needed in the future to comprehensively address SR2S needs in public schools.

*Director Boozé* asked whether there was any money that could go towards police officers and schools for security.

*Ms. Morgan* stated the current cost of the program did not include security in and around schools. It is focused on getting kids to school using alternative modes.

*Director Boozé* asked if the program could be expanded because of the issues kids face with security.

*Director Valdez* stated that last year she attended a SR2S conference in Sacramento. She explained a program that was simple and inexpensive where disposable cameras were given to students and they were asked to take photos of their route to school to show the problems they saw from their prospective.

*Director McCoy* said that she understood that these are the types of programs that the school districts would put forth in requests for funding.

*Ms. Morgan* responded that the capital projects are sometimes about school sites, and programs can also come from the schools. For example the PTA of a school could voluntarily develop a program or the school could reach out to an established program provider such as the County's Health Services SR2S efforts. If the County had room, they could add the school to their program.

*Director McCoy* inquired if private schools would be available for funds. *Ms. Morgan* stated that it would depend on the way CCTA structured the program. Private schools could work through their city. If there were going to be improvements on public right of way, then the city would be the eligible entity for requesting funds from CCTA.

*Director McCoy* asked about the time frame for the prior expenditures of \$16 million on SR2S. *Ms. Morgan* answered it was eight to 10 years.

*Director McCoy* commented that eight to 10 years was not a good estimate since this is not a one size fits all effort. For the capital projects and educational programs, the assumption in the report is that everyone would want the same thing. However, different areas might have a need for different types of programs. She pointed out that only \$16 million was spent the past eight to 10 years but the remaining cost for typical projects was \$102 million. *Director McCoy* also stated that it would be better to state figures with a range.

*Ms. Morgan* clarified that, in regards to the \$16 million, it was a constrained number and that amount of money was spent because that was what was available. From the TAC's perspective, many members felt it was an understatement of the actual amount needed. She stated that if they were pivoting off what had already been spent, then the actual need would still be a lot greater than that.

*Director McCoy* stated that the memo should have stated that expenses were "constrained" and that the reason the "need" number is so high is because a lot of the need has not been met but could be met in the future. She also stated that, for programs, it appears that we are assuming every school would want bus programs, crossing guards etc.

*Director McCoy* also stated that she liked *Director Valdez's* comments about students having cameras to identify what their needs are on their specific route to school. This could be very helpful in developing programs for the future instead of just relying on adults who see the world differently.

*Ms. Morgan* agreed that cameras were a great idea. She stated that things like bus programs and transit programs may not be needed or desired in all parts of the county.

*Director McCoy* stated that the program cost estimate is on an annual basis, whereas the capital is a nonspecific time frame. She feels that it would be helpful to have some sort of rough time estimate for capital projects.

*Director Chavez* asked if this included all high schools in Contra Costa County. *Ms. Morgan* answered yes. *Director Chavez* asked if she had reached out to the TransForm, the SR2S program coordinator in Alameda County. *Ms. Morgan* stated that they did reach out to TransForm to obtain information about the cost for typical programs. She stated that this information helped inform program costs in Contra Costa County.

*Director McLaughlin* asked if 160,000 was the actual total student population from the 217 public schools and whether there was a sense of how many of those students walked to school or were dropped off by parents. *Ms. Morgan* stated that she didn't know, but that schools receiving direct program support from County Health Services track that information to see what proportion of students walking or biking changed from when the program started.

*Director McLaughlin* continued that she also liked what *Director Valdez* mentioned about giving cameras to students. She shared that the City of Richmond has been involved with TransForm, and SR2S. She stated that she is also involved in another nonprofit committee in North Richmond that received a grant and gives kids an opportunity to give input on their school travel experiences.

*Director Swearingen* stated that there seemed to be duplication in the numbers. He stated that the Mayor of Richmond brought up a good point of how many people would be affected percentage-wise. He stated that there may not be a need for all the improvements in all

schools, but that it would be difficult to know without actually doing an evaluation at each school. He stated that there should be a more in-depth study.

*Director Swearingen* wanted to know if there was any intent to take students who use AC Transit, WestCat and other transit agencies and place them on yellow buses. *Ms. Morgan* stated that this was not being planned.

*Director Swearingen* asked if it would take eight to 10 years to complete capital improvement projects. *Ms. Morgan* stated that this timeframe was for already completed construction projects. She said that looking ahead, they did not have a time frame for capital improvements.

*Director Boozé* stated that when they come back with research, to look at some type of security program to go along with the camera program for kids walking to school. He stated that he comes out of North Richmond and most of the kids there walk to school.

## **11. Countywide Transportation Plan – Public Outreach Effort**

**ACTION:** Information only; EMC Research will return for more detailed analysis on polling data at a later date.

**DISCUSSION:** *Mr. Alex Evans* from EMC Research provided an overview of their February 2014 polling research completed as part of CCTA's Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) efforts. The polling data is being used to help inform both the CTP and a transportation expenditure plan for a future sales tax.

*Mr. Evans* presented a PowerPoint slideshow with information extrapolated from a survey of Contra Costa County households, divided by statistically valid populations of each subregional area. He described programs and projects that are of interest to voters. Voters want projects that are ambitious and cross county borders. Synchronized traffic lights on major arterials were the number one most desired project. He showed Slide 11 with specific information on a BART extension in the I-80 corridor and said that it polled extremely well. Bus-only lanes were also ranked high in West County, along with improvements to San Pablo Dam Road.

*Director McCoy* referred to slides on a BART extension. She stated that the data showed that an East County BART extension is more popular than an I-80 BART extension countywide. *Mr. Evans* replied they both do well in their local sub-regional areas.

*Director McCoy* asked about the statistical validity of the polling. *Mr. Evans* said that they did a survey that was representative of the county, so from their perspective the goal was to produce a random sample that represents opinions at the county level.

*Chair Abelson* asked if it would be possible to get a printout of all the information for West County from the first and second survey. *Mr. Evans* said he would provide that at a later date.

*Director Chavez* stated that she assumed *Mr. Evans* had worked out the specific survey questions with CCTA beforehand. However she did not see any questions for express buses. *Mr. Evans* said that he would get back to her on this.

*Chair Abelson* asked if this information confirmed that a new expenditure plan would get the necessary two-thirds vote. *Mr. Evans* replied that it's close but not guaranteed. He stated that voters are happy about kept promises under Measure C and Measure J. He said trust is critical to passing a new measure.

*Director Chavez* stated that West County transportation needs are diverse and very different from other parts of the County. So, in order to get more support for a sales tax measure extension, the questions should reflect those needs very carefully. She stated she understood that one geographical area may support a BART extension while another area might support the BRT express buses.

*Mr. Evans* responded by saying the Authority is currently in the process of working on the CTP and that to some degree, it will include projects that will likely be in the Transportation Expenditure Plan (TEP). The focus on getting projects into the CTP and making sure these projects meet certain standards, so that when you get to the TEP process next year there are viable projects to include.

*Director Chavez* stated that she would encourage including express buses in polling questions.

*Director Valdez* agreed with *Director Chavez* and *Chair Abelson* and asked to see the demographics of the people polled because there are different markets and needs in the communities from residents versus voters.

*Mr. Evans* stated that he would be happy to do that. He added that one thing to keep in mind is that the voting population during the Presidential election was very different than the general population. He noted that when you are talking about voters, you're talking about a different demographic than you when you consider all residents. *Chair Abelson* asked if both would be shown. *Mr. Evans* stated he would show what residents looked like, as compared to voters, but that the voters in the survey were very representative of both the County and West County.

*Director Boozé* echoed *Director Valdez* in stating that he would also like to see the demographics as well. *Director Boozé* said he rarely has anyone talk to him about taxes, but in the last two months, his constituents call and send him emails because they are livid over rising taxes. He asked how this sentiment is going to affect a new tax measure.

*Mr. Evans* said voters, when told how their tax money had already been spent and shown what you are going to do if given additional tax dollars, are more supportive. Secondly, they are also finding that transportation conditions get worse as the economy improves which improves the environment for requesting additional revenue for transportation improvements. *Mr. Evans*

stated that Contra Costa County and Alameda County both have authority from the State to add a ½ cent above the current limit.

*Chair Abelson* stated that earlier in the meeting she had asked *Director Wallace* to talk about what audience members stated at the last AC Transit Board Meeting held at the City of El Cerrito. She paraphrased *Director Wallace's* comments that for the transit dependent people it's: "the buses are full, there aren't enough buses going to where the people need to go to work".

*Director Mallett* commented that when he saw this polling presentation at the CCTA meeting, he took notes on the difference in popularity of different transportation ideas in different places. He stated that there may be different mentalities in different geographic areas which creates this variance. He concluded that, statistically, the most important thing is getting a good enough sample size.

**12. High Occupancy Transit Corridor Study.** Moved to next meeting.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

**13. Conference with Real Property Negotiators Next meeting.** Moved to next meeting.

### **STANDING ITEMS**

#### **14. Other Information**

- a. Summary and Minutes of recent Technical Advisory Committee meetings
  - March 13, 2014 TAC Meeting
- b. Acronym List

**15. Board and Staff Comments - None**

**16. Other Business**

**17. Adjourn.**

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