

## Transit Paratransit Coordinating Committee

### MEETING AGENDA

**May 20, 2013 1:30-3:00 PM\*\***

Sonoma County Transportation Authority  
SCTA Large Conference Room  
490 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 206  
Santa Rosa, California 95401

#### ITEM

1. Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of Minutes: April 1, 2014 – **DISCUSSION / ACTION\***
4. Roundtable Updates
  - 4.1. Transit / Paratransit Operators
  - 4.2. Other Entities
5. Paratransit Efficiency Report (Michael Ivory) – **DISCUSSION\***
6. New Members – **DISCUSSION**
7. Other Business / Comments / Announcements
8. Adjourn – **ACTION**

\*Materials attached.

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The next **SCTA** meeting will be held June 9, 2014  
The next **TPCC** meeting will be held July 15, 2014

Copies of the full Agenda Packet are available at [www.sctainfo.org](http://www.sctainfo.org)

**DISABLED ACCOMMODATION:** If you have a disability that requires the agenda materials to be in an alternate format or that requires an interpreter or other person to assist you while attending this meeting, please contact SCTA at least 72 hours prior to the meeting to ensure arrangements for accommodation.

**SB 343 DOCUMENTS RELATED TO OPEN SESSION AGENDAS:** Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the **Transit Paratransit Coordinating Committee** after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Sonoma County Transportation Authority office at 490 Mendocino Ave., Suite 206, during normal business hours.

Pagers, cellular telephones and all other communication devices should be turned off during the committee meeting to avoid electrical interference with the sound recording system.



# TRANSIT-PARATRANSIT COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

## Meeting Minutes of April 1, 2014

### ITEM

#### 1. Introductions

Meeting called to order at 1:37 p.m. by Vice Chair Stan Gow in Chair Battenberg's absence.

*TPCC Member Attendees:* Stan Gow, Vice Chair; Bryan Albee, Sonoma County Transit; Larry Hall, CCB Homeless Task Force; Michael Ivory, City of Santa Rosa; Joe Rye, Petaluma Transit; Tracy Repp, Area Agency on Aging; Terry Scussel, Whistlestop Wheels.

*Guest Attendees:* Dubii, citizen; Linda Picton, Occupy Transit.

Staff: Diane Dohm, Nina Donofrio.

#### 2. Public Comment

Dubii and Linda Picton addressed safety concerns at the Transit Mall; both by reports and as eyewitnesses of incidents. Dubii also reported the removal of a bus stop sign for Route 48 in Cotati. Joe Rye explained that this was removed by Sonoma County Transit due to safety concerns, but noted that there is a bus stop across the street.

Ms. Picton reported on recent grassroots activity and public engagement to identify issues with the Transit Mall and public transit in general, and cited the need for improved interaction and engagement with the public by the Bicycle Police at the Transit Mall.

#### 3. Approval of Minutes: January 21, 2014 – **DISCUSSION / ACTION\***

Approved as submitted.

#### 4. Roundtable Updates

##### 4.1. Transit / Paratransit Operators

#### *Petaluma Transit:*

Joe Rye reported that paratransit ridership has increased dramatically over the last two years, and fixed route ridership has been experiencing steady growth.

The maintenance facility/shop is virtually complete, with only a few issues left to resolve.

Two replacement vans were ordered in February, and delivery is expected in the fall.

In response to the Committee's inquiry as to the reason for the increase in paratransit ridership, Mr. Rye said this is not conclusive, but it is possible this may be connected to the large percentage of senior housing and natural aging of the population.

#### *Santa Rosa CityBus:*

Mike Ivory announced that paratransit ridership is down .38% and that this has helped alleviate the severe overbooking of service. This may be due in part to the impact of an efficiency study that was conducted, and negotiating changes in times of service with local agencies.

Fixed route ridership has decreased 16%. This could likely be attributed in part to revamping of the transfer policy in February; at that time almost 35% of fixed route trips were transfer trips (free). Fare box recovery is up to 21% and on-time performance is 84%.

Six new paratransit vehicles were delivered. Bob Cuneo noted that he enjoyed riding on the new van; however, he said the wheelchair latches on the side seats will likely need repair before too long, citing a recurring problem with these on these particular vans.



Mr. Scussel added that Whistlestop Wheels had to have seat belts for the wheelchairs replaced on all their vans because they were too short; the exhaust system needed to be replaced on these vans, and side view mirrors also needed to be replaced, as these did not meet California specifications. He referred Mr. Ivory to the representative for the manufacturer/distributor to resolve issues with the wheelchair latches on the new paratransit vans and offered to provide him the representative's contact information.

Mr. Ivory offered to report on the Paratransit Efficiency Study at a future meeting, at Ms. Dohm's request.

Mr. Ivory next announced that staff met with Redwood Empire Industries, who have adjusted their schedule in order to accommodate paratransit service to their facility. Mr. Ivory reported that he will be on the agenda for their monthly Service Vendors Meeting to address scheduling issues with providing service.

Mr. Ivory next reported that staff has contacted the North Bay Regional Center, the Earle Baum Center of the Blind, and other agencies to address the issue of scheduling service. He noted that the possibility of providing a shuttle service from the Transit Mall to the Earle Baum Center is being considered.

#### *Sonoma County Transit:*

Mr. Albee announced that paratransit ridership has increased 4% to 6% for the year, with some recent record-setting days, and fixed route service has increased approximately 2%.

On Earth Day, April 22, a new fleet of 40 ft. CNG vehicles will begin service. This will result in retiring nine 2000 and 2002 vehicles.

Approximately two weeks ago the CNG fueling expansion project was completed.

The Cotati Intermodal Facility is projected to be completed in early May. This will be the first finished SMART rail facility along the initial operating segment for SMART in Sonoma County. Sonoma County Transit's part in the project is construction of the Park-and-Ride Lots, traffic signalization, and bus turnouts. The City of Cotati is constructing a small vehicle building which is projected to be completed in June. SMART is anticipated to install the rail

platform in May. Rail service is projected to begin in 2016; these recent activities put the project ahead of schedule. The facility will initially open as a Park-and-Ride Lot.

Staff is ordering two new 30 ft. CNG buses. These will replace two 2003 vehicles for service in Sonoma Valley. Mr. Albee noted that new paratransit vehicles were added to the fleet the previous year and that no new paratransit vehicles are anticipated to be order during the coming year.

#### 4.2. Other Entities

##### *Whistlestop Wheels:*

Terry Scussel reported that staff is working on improving on-time performance. This is now close to 90%.

##### *Area Agency on Aging:*

Tracy Repp announced that the Sonoma County Human Services Department, the umbrella agency to the Area Agency on Aging, will assume administration and day-to-day operations of Sonoma Access beginning in March, 2015, following expiration of the current grant. Staff applied for grant funding in January and recently received the official award of the two-year grant. In addition to the administrative and operating costs for Sonoma Access, grant funding will help in establishing a consortium of partners.

Ms. Repp invited all resource agencies/operators participating in Sonoma Access to be part of this consortium; regular meetings are scheduled, to which the public is also invited. Ms. Repp invited all Committee members to attend. She reported that the first meeting took place February 1 and was very successful, with good attendance by a diverse group of participants from different sectors of the community.

Goals of this consortium are to identify and resolve gaps in the County in providing service and coordinating transportation countywide.

The next consortium meeting is scheduled for May 13, 1:30-3:00 p.m. at the Santa Rosa Transit office at 45 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa.

Ms. Repp added that the next monthly Transportation and Mobility Committee meeting is scheduled for April 8.

Mr. Ivory added that one of the dialysis facilities confirmed their participation in the consortium.

#### **5. Coordinated Claim - DISCUSSION / ACTION\***

Mr. Albee referred to the March 19 draft Coordinated Claim and reported that this was reviewed and approved by the Transit Technical Advisory Committee and will be presented to the SCTA Board for final approval at their April 8 meeting.

Mr. Albee explained that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) established the Transportation Development Act (TDA) and State Transit Assistance (STA) funds. The Coordinated Claim is an annual procedure showing funding contributions and allocation among local transit operators.

Mr. Albee next summarized TDA funding and contributions; \$21,210,000 is being distributed, which is an 8% increase over the previous year, and evidence of a rebounding economy. This figure represents a positive trend and a return to 2007 TDA funding levels. 1.93% of this funding (\$408,763) is allocated to Article 3 Bicycle and Pedestrian projects. The remaining \$20,029,387 is allocated to transit operators under an established formula based on population. Mr. Albee noted that Sonoma County Transit funding includes support for Cloverdale Transit local service, Healdsburg Transit local service, and Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) coast service.

Mr. Albee next summarized STA funding and cited past concerns regarding its viability (approximately four years ago this funding was suspended for a period of six months, in the course of the State budget process). Legislation has since helped protect this funding for transit. He explained the breakdown of allocation, by transit operator, based on population, as well as distribution of prior-year funds available for allocation, by transit operator. These formulas also have not changed.

Following Board approval at the April 14 meeting, transit operators will develop their individual claim.

In response to questions, Mr. Albee explained that the possibility of restoring local Sunday service to Cotati will be examined next fiscal year. This service was eliminated in 2009.

Motion by Bob Cuneo, seconded by Mike Ivory, to recommend approval of the Coordinated Claim by the SCTA Board of Directors. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **6. Other Business / Comments / Announcements**

Ms. Dohm announced that the SCTA is embarking on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan process, which will be likely be ongoing over the next 1½ years. Janet Spilman will be giving a presentation at a future Committee meeting on the plan process and participation in it.

Ms. Dohm reported that she had researched the question of whether members can be added to the Committee and reported that more members can be accepted to the Committee. She explained that she would be drafting an application form to be completed by the candidate and which will then be reviewed by the Committee. This will be presented to the Board for their approval. She said she would report back with more information on how interested parties can apply at the next Committee meeting.

##### **6.1. Santa Rosa CityBus unveils bus locator system -**

<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20140127/articles/140129613>

Mr. Ivory added that real-time signage at the Transit Mall is under development. This has been a highly successful system in responding promptly to passengers' inquiries about the location and arrival of their bus. The mobile application allows the passenger to enter a text message of the bus stop number and then get a response showing what routes stop there and when. Another option is to select "Where's My Stop?" to get location, route, and ETA for the bus.

Discussion followed regarding accessibility of the system for the visually impaired. Mr. Ivory noted that information will be available in Braille at bus stops and, further in the future, the system will have screen reader capability. He noted that nationwide there are very few

systems that go to any great extent to make bus stops fully accessible. Staff has implemented a five-year accessibility plan and will be meeting soon to address the issue of making bus stops accessible; e.g., determining how to prioritize the upgrading of bus stops, how many to upgrade and when, and how much funding will be allocated to this project. Staff will present a plan to City Council in May, and work on this will begin in earnest in July.

Mr. Ivory agreed to arrange to meet with the Technology Users Group at the Earle Baum Center of the Blind to explain and demonstrate in greater detail how the Next Bus system works.

Ms. Picton expressed the need for greater coordination and collaboration between the agencies. She also nominated Dubii as a possible grass roots advocate and candidate for membership to the Committee.

Mr. Cuneo confirmed with Ms. Dohm that if Dubii is interested in Committee membership she could apply now and continue attending meetings pending official membership on the Committee.

Mr. Ivory added that a link at the City website, "My Santa Rosa," provides the option for passengers to be notified in advance when their bus is due to arrive, and can be set as a recurring reminder.

## **7. Adjourn – ACTION**

2:40 p.m.