

**Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's
Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
Social Service Transportation Advisory Council
Paratransit Advisory Council Meeting**

MINUTES

**Tuesday, May 13, 2008
SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Downtown Santa Cruz**

Members Present: Lisa Berkowitz (Community Bridges), Tom Crain (Potential Transit User - Disabled), John Daugherty (SCMTD), Veronica Elsea (3rd District), Sally French (Hope Services), Clay Kempf (Social Service Providers – Seniors), Michael Molesky (Social Service Provider-Disabled), Robert Pesce (1st District), Barbara Schaller (Social Service Provider – Seniors), Catherine Patterson Valdez (CTSA - Lift Line)

Alternates Present: Donnella Bloebaum (Potential Transit User-60+), Debbi Brooks (Volunteer Center/Persons of Limited Means), Sandra Coley (4th District), Thom Onan (3rd District), Sam Story (CTSA-Lift Line)

Others Present: Ciro Aguirre (SCMTD), Barbara Flynn (Central Coast Alliance for Health), Tom Hiltner (SCMTD), April Warnock (SCMTD ParaCruz)

Staff Present: Lyle Broschat, Cory Caletti, Rachel Moriconi, Karena Pushnik

Excused Absences: Virginia Butz (Potential Transit User - 60+), Shirley Forsyth (2nd District)

1. Call to Order

Chair John Daugherty called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

2. Introductions

Introductions were made.

1. Oral Communications

- Barbara Flynn, representing the Central Coast Alliance for Health (Alliance), described recent changes in the agency's policy in regard to providing transportation for individuals needing dialysis treatment at any one of the six treatment facilities on the Central Coast, two of which are in Santa Cruz County. She explained that, because of state and federal funding cutbacks, the Alliance had recently ended its transportation supplement for most of these clients, with the exception of a minority of individuals who can meet the rigid Title 22 requirements of being physically unable to get in or out of a wheelchair by themselves or needing gurney transport to dialysis centers. Prior to May 3rd, the Alliance spent \$800,000 annually transporting clients to and from dialysis-treatment centers in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, with roughly 1/3 of the trips in Santa Cruz County. The cessation of this specialized medical rides program is the direct result of funding cutbacks at state level,

and Barbara estimated that 90% of these specialized users do not qualify for transportation assistance under state policy standards resulting in a significant need to find replacement transportation for these medically necessary trips. Further discussion clarified that statewide policy had ceased to include direct funding for dialysis treatment rides since the year 1999. Barbara Flynn noted that Alliance employees are also taking cuts in pay as a result of the funding shortfall and offered her contact information for people wishing to reach her (bflynn@ccah-alliance.org or 430-6552).

- Clay Kempf announced the Annual Meeting of the Seniors Council would be held at Holy Cross Church on Tuesday, May 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The focus will be on healthy ageing and lifestyles.
- Veronica Elsea discussed the importance of insuring that the development of future medical facilities be as accessible as possible to elderly and disabled individuals and those who must depend on public transit. Members agreed that the location and design of future medical facilities should reflect the needs of elderly, disabled, and public transit users, and that this would an excellent concern to bring to current and future County Supervisor candidates. **This item will be on the June E/D TAC agenda.**
- Michael Molesky announced the opening of a new wheelchair vendor (Hometown Medical Rehabilitation) in the Santa Cruz Galleria commercial complex on Front Street in downtown Santa Cruz.
- John Daugherty announced that April Warnock has been promoted to ParaCruz Supervisor.
- Tom Crain reported that he attended the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail meeting and that the project name has officially changed to the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network to incorporate links to other trails in the region.

2. Additions and Deletions

There were no additions or deletions.

3. Consent Agenda

Action: The motion (Molesky/Schaller) to approve the consent agenda was adopted unanimously.

- 5.1 Accepted thank you letter to Community Bridges for Transportation to Dragonslayers dated 4/8/08 from the E/D TAC
- 5.2 Accepted updated E/D TAC Roster, per RTC action on 5/1/08
- 5.3 Accepted letters to the Association for Monterey Bay Area Governments regarding the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

Items 6, 7, and 8 were postponed to later in the meeting.

9. Propositions 98 and 99

Rachel Moriconi provided an overview of Propositions 98 and 99 (June-2008), explaining that Proposition 98 was of special concern to the RTC, given its probable negative impact on transportation projects that might include private sector participation, such as toll roads, transit-oriented development, and rail projects. She summarized some of the issues addressed by Proposition 98, noting that projects that directly serve the public interest might be prohibited by this legislation. This proposition also would eliminate rent controls at all local levels, including mobile home parks, and would subject government to increased legal costs in the process of resolving market values for property taken by eminent domain.

Clay Kempf reminded members that one of the outcomes of the Senior Solutions Summit was a commitment to oppose the passage of Proposition 98, since the loss of local rent control options would unfairly impact seniors. In the case of mobile home parks, loss of rent control would also mean loss of equity in the physical structures because the sale of any unit would open the parcel lease to unlimited increases in price, perhaps even reducing the value of the units to zero. Members agreed that the passage of this legislation would negatively impact seniors throughout the county.

Action: The motion (Kempf/Crain), to recommend that the RTC oppose Proposition 98, was approved unanimously.

Clay Kempf explained that, if both Propositions 98 and 99 passed, then the legislation receiving the higher approval rate would supersede the other, and that Proposition 99 offered some assurance to seniors in regard to protecting their homes from loss through unreasonable application of eminent domain. Rachel added that Proposition 99 had been written and endorsed by local jurisdictions, recognizing the need for some reform to eminent domain laws. She also noted that this legislation would exempt public works projects, including transportation projects, though RTC staff is recommending a neutral position on this proposition. It was further pointed out that 99 is specific to protecting home ownership, in contrast with the much broader scope of 98.

Action: The motion (Kempf/Molesky), to recommend that the RTC support the passage of Proposition 99, was approved unanimously.

10. Local Review Committee for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 Grants

Karena Pushnik explained that, in the past, the E/D TAC had formed a local review committee to screen and score Section 5310 Grant applications (funding for elderly and disabled specialized transportation capital projects), and that now it was necessary to form a new review committee that will be representative of the elderly and disabled community. It is expected that, at a minimum, Community Bridges will be submitting a grant application this year. The E/D TAC was requested to determine the list of entities that should comprise this review committee.

Ms. Pushnik also noted that the Association of Monterey Bay Governments will take the lead on reviewing and scoring the grant applications received for Section 5616 – Jobs Access/Reverse Commute and Section 5317 – New Freedom funds and that a local scoring committee was not needed to review those grants.

Action: The motion (Elsa/Schaller), to recommend that representatives for the Section 5310 local review committee be solicited from the Transit District, Seniors Council, Center for

Independent Living, Seniors Commission and Commission on Disabilities, was approved, with two abstentions.

6. Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District's Section 5311 Application

Tom Hiltner, representing SCMTD, provided some background on SCMTD's application for federal rural operating assistance, through the Section 5311 grant application process. He explained that SCMTD staff tracks operating hours for rural routes on a regular basis, and is now requesting grant assistance for its operational budget.

Action: The motion (Kempf/Berkowitz), to recommend that the RTC adopt a resolution to approve the programming funds and the Transit District's 5311 grant application, was approved unanimously.

7. Transportation Development Act Funds for the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Rachel Moriconi explained to members that this is the first year the SCMTD's TDA claim has come before the E/D TAC for review. Since TDA funds are derived from sales tax revenues, these revenues may fluctuate, and therefore SCMTD's TDA claim may require future adjustments. Tom Hiltner, representative from SCMTD, discussed the TDA claim process, and reminded members that the District was currently nearing completion of its short-range transit plan, which would likely result in increased efficiency for the District.

Michael Molesky asked a question about improving the transit link between Santa Cruz and Watsonville and modifications to service in Watsonville, and Tom explained that this issue was analyzed in the short-range plan, and there would not likely be route cuts for this sector. Tom also stated that public hearings would precede adoption of the transit plan, and that members would have adequate notice (in June) to comment on the plan. **The E/D TAC requested that the Short Range Transit Plan be on the agenda for their June 10 or August 7 meeting agendas, depending on when the plan is released and comments are due.**

The highest priorities for the District remain the new Metrobase and the replacement of buses, though much will depend on the availability of revenues. Clay Kempf suggested that the transit planning consultants (Wilber Smith) should include the E/D TAC in its planning strategy.

Action: The motion (Kempf/Molesky), to recommend that the TDA and STA claims be approved, passed unanimously.

8. Transportation Development Act Funds for the Volunteer Center and Community Bridges

Karena Pushnik outlined the TDA claim process for these two non-profit agencies, noting that the City of Santa Cruz has again agreed to be the claimant for both. According the RTC Bylaws, 4.5% of TDA revenues are designated to Community Bridges, and .5% to the Volunteer Center. Claim projections for FY 08-09 have been reduced by approximately 4%, due to expected declines in sales tax revenues.

Action: The motion (Elsea/Kempf), to recommend that the TDA claims for the Volunteer Center be approved, passed with one abstention.

Catherine Valdez noted that the Community Bridges claim in the packet reflected the 4% reduction in estimated TDA revenues. However, based on the reduced rides now funded by the Alliance for Medi-Cal clients for dialysis appointments, she introduced a revised version of the TDA claim for Community Bridges shifting more of the TDA funds into medical rides by reducing funds for Taxi Scrip and reducing the number of non-essential rides, notably for elderly and disabled users of the local homeless shelter, which owns its own van and is currently training a driver.. Sam Story, from CB, sought clarification from the E/D TAC that the emphasis of service was moving in the direction of ensuring the availability of medical rides..

Clay Kempf suggested prioritizing taxi scrip over Elderday rides, and Catherine advised members that increased efficiency with Elderday rides would reduce costs of this program. It was also acknowledged that flexibility was needed in projected funding, given the fact of changing circumstances.

On the subject of administrative costs, the transportation program of Community Bridges pays for overhead and administration relative to their program only.

Members discussed the need to periodically review ride priorities, to insure that TDA revenues are being used most effectively, and that rides are provided in the most efficient ways.

Action: The motion (Elsea/Coley), to recommend that the revised TDA claim for Community Bridges be approved, with the priority being given to medical rides (linked to dialysis) and a continued quarterly review of ride statistics and costs by the E/D TAC, passed, with two abstentions.

11. Annual Report/Unmet Needs Process

Karena Pushnik explained that, rather than wait until the end of the fiscal year, staff now recommends that a public hearing be held to solicit input on the Annual Report and Unmet Needs List for Transit and Paratransit on June 5th, in Watsonville, at the RTC meeting. Input from the Unmet Needs List adopted by the Transit District will be included.

12. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Items for Future Meetings

- TDA Funding for City of Watsonville Curb Cuts (June)
- Taxi Regulation (June)
- Short Range Transit Plan (August)
- Review of Metro Service Policy, describing senior and disabled qualifications for transit identification passes
- Sidewalk Repair Requirement at Time of Home Sale
- Pedestrian Duties added to Bicycle Committee

Prepared by: _____ *Lyle Broschat, SCCRTC Staff*