

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

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2004 ~ 1:30 pm
SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Downtown Santa Cruz

Members Present: Lisa Berkowitz (CTSA - Community Bridges), Sandra Coley (4th District), John Daugherty (SCMTD), Clay Kempf (Social Service Provider – Seniors), Michael Molesky (Social Service Provider – Disabled, County), Robert Pesce (1st District), Bob Yount (MASTF)

Alternates Present: Scott Bugental (1st Supervisorial District), Steve Paulson (SCMTD)

Others Present: Bryant Baehr (SCMTD), Sam Storey (CTSA), Les White (SCMTD)

Staff Present: Karena Pushnik

Excused Absences: Michael Bradshaw (Social Service Provider – Disabled), Gail Stevens (Social Service Provider – Seniors)

Chair Michael Molesky called the meeting to order at 1:36 pm.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The attendees introduced themselves.

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Lisa Berkowitz announced that the Meals on Wheels program will again join with local florists for a fund raiser. For each person volunteering to deliver flowers on February 13 and 14, the program will receive \$5.

Sam Storey announced that Elderday was being transferred from Community Bridges to Salud para la Gente in order for the Elderday program to continue to qualify for federal medical provider status.

Karena Pushnik noted that Lois Canales will attend future meetings representing the Volunteer Center.

Sandra Coley, Pajaro Valley Transportation Management Agency, announced that 300 day passes have been distributed through the “Ride the Bus, Gus” program of Going Places/Making Choices. Approximately 25% of the passes are going to elderly individuals.

Camille Pierce requested that Regional Transportation Commissioners receive the E/D TAC schedule of meetings for the year and be invited to attend. Staff will follow up with this.

3. Additions and Deletions

There were none.

4. Consent Agenda (Bugental/Daugherty - unanimous)

- 4.1 Approved minutes of December 9, 2003 meeting (items distributed at the meeting are attached)
- 4.2 Accepted SCCRTC December 03 and January 04 Highlights/Schedule
- 4.3 Accepted Transportation Development Act fund projections as of Nov 03
- 4.4 Accepted Letter from Gail Stevens to SCCRTC
- 4.5 Accepted Letter from MASTF to E/D TAC dated 12/17/03 regarding support
- 4.6 Accepted Article from 12/19/03 Santa Cruz Sentinel titled Metro advocacy group still thriving
- 4.7 Accepted Article from Winter 2003 CalACTION newsletter titled Reauthorization: Several versions under consideration but tax and revenue projections necessary for funding
- 4.8 Accepted Article from Winter 2003 CalACTION newsletter titled 2004 Legislative Program
- 4.9 Accepted agency Updates (other than items on the regular agenda)
 - 4.9.1 Volunteer Center
 - a. First Quarterly Report for the FY 03-04
 - 4.9.2 Private Operators
 - 4.9.3 Consolidated Transportation Services Agency
 - a. Revised FY 03-04 TDA Claim
 - b. Fourth Quarterly Report for the FY 02-03 TDA Claim
 - 4.9.4 Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District
 - 4.9.5 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

5. ADA Paratransit (ParaCruz)

Bryant Baehr distributed a staff report for the January 23 transit board meeting which outlined a plan for transition of the operation of ParaCruz from its current service delivery model to a blended (broker) service delivery model. Under this plan the transit district would perform the call center/reservations/scheduling and customer service components and contract the ride delivery and vehicle maintenance functions to other entities. By opening the provision of service to more vendors, it is hoped that there will be more competition will affect costs. SCMTD can provide vehicles for the service and will have a total of 29 accessible vehicles by the end of the year. The blended/brokerage option was recommended by staff over the existing model where the transit district contracts out all paratransit components or the model where the transit district takes in-house all paratransit components.

Costs for the three options were presented, with Mr. Baehr acknowledging that there are five main variables -- including projected number of rides, rides/per hour and cost of rides/hour -- assumptions about each can greatly affect the totals cost estimates. Currently ADA Paratransit rides account for 52% of the total rides provided by Lift Line and ADA Paratransit funding is 17% of the Community Bridges budget.

Clay Kempf asked why the costs for the scheduling software (Trapeze) were not included in the costs. Mr. Baehr answered that \$325,000 is available in State Transit Assistance (STA) funds for capital costs.

Michael Molesky asked how driver/operator sensitivity will be ensured. Mr. Baehr answered that it will be a contractor requirement and is included in the ParaCruz policies and procedures.

Scott Bugental asked whether the transit board should have more time to review this complex issue with far reaching effects. Mr. Baehr answered that he was responding to board/management direction initiated by the letter from Community Bridges requesting an additional \$450,000. Mr. Baehr also noted that the current contract does not end until June 2005.

Scott Bugental noted that the difference between the existing and the brokerage option is about \$100,000 within the 5% margin of error.

Michael Molesky asked what the transit district would do if there were no bids from service operators. Sandra Coley asked whether the district had a fail safe or back up plan. Mr. Baehr responded that the district may need to quickly transition to the in-house model.

Karena Pushnik asked how many additional staff would be needed. Mr. Baehr answered that 10 to 14 new people plus office space and supplies are needed and are included in the cost estimate. The existing human resources, finance and information technology departments can handle the additional staff without expanding.

Sam Storey noted that brokering would further segregate ADA Paratransit service and requested that the transit district continue to consider grouping rides. He also asked whether the contract would be for one-year or multi-year. Mr. Baehr answered that it would be multi-year.

Clay Kempf wondered whether legal risks of the proposed option had been assessed. Mr. Baehr answered that he will have a legal review performed.

Scott Bugental requested that the transit district consult with the 1992 Paratransit Implementation Plan about advertising and noticing requirements for changes to ADA Paratransit.

Action (Bugental/Yount, w/ Daugherty abstaining): The E/D TAC encourages the SCMTD not to change the current ADA Paratransit service structure until after the specialized transportation public hearing is held and conclusions from the task force are presented.

6. February 5 Public Hearing Regarding Paratransit

Karena Pushnik provided an overview of the plan for the hearing to be held at 4:00 pm on February 5 at the County Government Center. Lisa Berkowitz noted that it will be difficult and complex for some people to get to the hearing. She distributed a draft of a survey to be distributed to people that receive meals at home and those attending senior meal sites. The committee provided suggestions for the survey. Bob Yount volunteered to videotape people who may not be able to attend the meeting. It was recommended that videotaped testimony be limited to 2 or 3 minutes, as is usually the norm for public hearings.

The committee brainstormed about entities that should be included in the stakeholder/task force list. The following representatives were suggested (one or more from each category):

- Representative(s) from agencies/groups working with seniors and people with disabilities (see Attachment 2)
- Representative(s) from funding agencies (SCMTD, Medical/Alliance, SCCRTC, Francie Newfeld)
- Decision maker(s)
- Users
- Representative from skilled nursing facilities
- Representative from a statewide agency such as the California Association for Coordinated Transportation, is an organization that facilitates an exchange of specialized transportation ideas
- Representative(s) from citizen's advisory committees like the Metro Accessible Transportation Services Forum and the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
- Representative for out of county transportation needs such as the Red Cross or host agency (Community Bridges)

Committee members discussed the need for empathy for the user in the paratransit discussions and the need to reverse the perception that the system is "funder friendly and user hostile."

7. Review of date/time and agenda items for next meeting

The committee decided that they would like to continue with the regularly scheduled meeting on February 10 at 1:30 pm.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Prepared by: _____

Karena Pushnik, SCCRTC Staff

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