

WCCTAC
West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes, 29 May 2009

Members Present: Maria Viramontes, Chair (Richmond); Janet Abelson (El Cerrito); John Gioia (Contra Costa County); Tom Hansen (WestCAT); Jeff Ritterman (Richmond); Roy Swearingen, Vice-Chair (Pinole); Kris Valstad (Hercules). Absent: Tom Butt (Richmond), Genoveva Calloway (San Pablo), Joel Keller (BART), Joe Wallace (AC Transit).

Staff Present: Christina Atienza, Nancy Cuneo, Valerie Lipscomb, Joanna Pallock, John Rudolph, Linda Young; Peter Engel, CCTA; Michael Rodriquez, Meyers Nave.

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

1. Call to Order Self-Introductions. Chair Viramontes convened the meeting at 8:04 a.m. All present introduced themselves.

2. Public Comment. There were no comments from the public.

CONSENT CALENDAR

ACTION: Director Ritterman moved to adopt all items of the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Director Abelson and carried unanimously.

- 3. Approved Minutes and Summary of April 24, 2009 Board Meeting.**
- 4. Approved Summary of the May 14, 2009 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting.**
- 5. Received Staff Reports.**
- 6. Received Information pertaining to AB 1234 Ethics Training for Local Officials.**
- 7. Received Announcement of Release of Draft Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.**
- 8. Received Information pertaining to CCTA's Response to Comments on the CTP; and Approved Addition of Area-Wide Action to the West County Action Plan.**
- 9. Received Update on Sales Tax Revenue Receipts.**
- 10. Approved Change in EPS's Scope of Work in Preparation for the STMP Strategic Plan.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

11. AB 744 (Torrico) Regional Express Lane Network Update

ACTION: Upon motion by *Director Abelson*, seconded by *Director Ritterman*, and carried unanimously, the Board authorized WCCTAC leadership to carry forward in its approach to the state Senate with a recommendation to vote NO on AB 744 unless the three amendments authorized by the WCCTAC Board in April 2009 are included; and if the amendments are not

included, to allow an opt-out provision for I-80 in West County; further, to ask cities in WCCTAC's JPA for letters and resolutions in opposition to AB 744; and to direct WCCTAC staff to produce the text of these resolutions.

DISCUSSION: *Chair Viramontes* thanked *WCCTAC Director Janet Abelson, former WCCTAC Director Maria Alegria, CCTA Commissioner Newell Arnerich, WCCTAC Director Ed Balico* and others for their assistance in obtaining appointments with legislators in Sacramento. The Chair explained recent developments in the bill's progress through state legislative committees.

Director Ritterman asked about the availability of technical experts to testify to WCCTAC concerning the benefits and costs of High Occupancy Toll Lanes. Staff expressed the view that some experts who appear in the media may be associated with particular technologies that may be under consideration within roadway improvement plans throughout the Bay Area, including HOT Lanes.

Director Ritterman inquired whether the concept of allocating 50% of HOT Lanes revenues was still part of the HOT Lanes proposal under discussion in Sacramento, and about the schedule. *Chair Viramontes* said that the issue of 50% for transit will not be debated in the Assembly, only in the Senate, and that the issue should go to the Senate floor within several weeks. In order to oppose AB 744, if WCCTAC's three amendments are not adopted, Senate democrats will need to work with Senate Republicans.

In response to *Director Hanson's* question about the nature of Senate Republicans' opposition to HOT Lanes, *Chair Viramontes* replied that Senate Republicans are not convinced the HOT Lanes will pay for themselves. *Vice-Chair Swearingen* observed that where HOT Lanes have been implemented in other parts of the country, agencies are losing money. *Chair Viramontes* said that drivers in Minnesota, for instance, are enraged at having to pay a fee for use of an uncongested roadway, which is what happens when agencies run HOT Lanes 24/7, as MTC is proposing to do with the Bay Area HOT Lane Network. *Chair Viramontes* added that in her opinion the Bay Area HOT Lane Network will not pay for itself even if the lanes are operated 24/7, as MTC proposes to do.

Director Ritterman suggested that agencies should have evidence that the concept works before they implement HOT Lanes, and that the burden of proof should not fall on those who do not think HOT Lanes are a good idea.

12. Measure J Student Bus Pass Program

ACTION: Upon motion by *Director Gioia*, seconded by *Director Abelson*, and carried unanimously, the Board adopted implementation Alternative #3 developed by the SBPP Subcommittee; requested from CCTA allocation of Measure J funds dedicated to the program for the first quarter of FY 2010; authorized use of a portion of Measure J funds for the last quarter of FY 2009 to recover unreimbursed costs of up to \$25,000 associated with the administration of the Lifeline Student Bus Pass Program; and agreed to work with WestCAT to develop a youth pass.

DISCUSSION: *Ms. Joanna Pallock* presented an overview of Program 21b, the Measure J West County Low Income Student Bus Pass Program. Ms. Pallock directed attention toward the three alternatives proposed on Page 12-2 of the agenda packet.

Director Gioia expressed the views that the Student Bus Pass Program should be as simple as possible, with no specified distance limitation; that after-school programs are an important component of student travel; and that WestCAT's fare structure might include a youth pass if adult fares are adjusted.

Director Swearingen noted that alternative schools address the needs of students who are most at-risk, and expressed support of the student bus pass program in that students who can attend classes and graduate are less likely to contribute to crime. *Mr. Robert Thompson*, WestCAT, noted that adjustments to fares must be done carefully, as reductions in fare revenues could lead to reductions in service.

13. Board Retreat Summary, Draft FY 2009/10 WCCTAC Work Plan, and Draft Operating Budget

ACTION: Upon motion by *Director Abelson*, seconded by *Director Swearingen*, and carried unanimously, the Board authorized staff to send letters to WCCTAC members notifying the jurisdictions of WCCTAC's FY 2010 dues structure, and asking staff to return to WCCTAC in June 2009 with a balanced budget proposal.

DISCUSSION: *Ms. Christina Atienza* presented an overview of Attachments to Item # 13, including (Attachment A) FY 2009 Major Accomplishments, (B) FY 2010 Proposed Work Program, (C) Summary of FY 2009 Expenditures and FY 2010 Proposed Budget, (D) FY 2010 Draft General Operations Budget, and (F) FY 2010 Proposed Member Dues.

Director Abelson noted that public finances continue to spiral downward, and any initiative that requires an outlay of money will require heightened scrutiny in light of difficult economic times.

Chair Viramontes said that the details involved in achieving a balanced budget do not have to be scrutinized today, and that off the top of her head she could think of several ways to save some money in the near-term, including (1) programming the Greenprint project over two years instead of one year, (2) holding off until mid-year review and news from Sacramento before adjusting staff salaries, (3) assigning staff time to specific Measure J projects, where applicable, instead of WCCTAC Operations.

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

14. Correspondence/Other Information

a. Incoming

- May 21, CCTA, Items approved by the Authority on May 20

b. Outgoing

- May 11, letter to Congressman Miller, Confirming Federal Eligibility of Marina Bay Parkway Grade Separation Project
- May 18, letter to Ms. Nina Rannells of WETA, Comments on Draft Transition Plan

c. Workshops/Conferences/Events

- None

d. News Articles

- May 6, East Bay Express: Bay Area Toll Roads Could Lose Money
- May 16, San Francisco Chronicle: Officials Eye Weekend Carpool Lanes on I-80
- May 11, The New York Times: In German Suburb, Life Goes On Without Cars
- May 12, The New York Times: Finding a Detour to Earn a Living in Indonesian Traffic Jams

15. WCCTAC Board and Staff Comments

16. Other Business

17. Adjournment. Chair Viramontes thanked the board for its close attention to tasks, and at 9:45 a.m. adjourned WCCTAC until 8:00 a.m. on June 26, 2009.