

**West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting Minutes: October 24, 2014**

Members Present: Janet Abelson, Chair (El Cerrito); Tom Butt, Vice-Chair (Richmond); Sherry McCoy (Hercules); Joe Wallace (AC Transit); Cecilia Valdez (San Pablo); Zakhary Mallett (BART); Roy Swearingen, (Pinole); Maureen Powers (WestCAT)

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

Location: El Cerrito City Hall, 10890 San Pablo Avenue (at Manila Ave), El Cerrito CA

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

Consent Calendar

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

3. **Minutes of September 26, 2014 Board Meeting.**
4. **Monthly Update on WCCTAC Activities.**
5. **Financial Report for September 2014.**
6. **Payment of Invoices over \$10,000.**
7. **FY15 Master Cooperative Agreement No.15W.TDM with CCTA.**

Regular Agenda Items

8. **East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) Measure J Program 13 Application – West Contra Costa County Trail Rehabilitation Projects.**

ACTION: *Director McCoy* motioned to approve the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) Measure J Program 13 Application for West Contra Costa County Trail Rehabilitation Projects. Seconded by *Director Powers*. Passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION: *Jim Townsend of EBRPD* gave a presentation on the projects that EBRPD was seeking support for in West County.

Director Powers stated that she uses the Pinole Trails quite often and wondered if there would be any future extension going south to Pinole Shores and Bay Front Park.

Jim Townsend stated that the Pinole Bay Trail Project will include a grade-separated bridge over the railroad tracks and will extend from Pinole Shores Park to Bayfront Park.

Director Swearingen stated that Pinole has been waiting for a bridge there for many years because it has been difficult to get the railroads to move tracks.

Director Mallett asked questions about a few crossings and connections in West County that were of concern to him.

Jim Townsend replied that the areas that *Director Mallett* had concerns about were not included in the EBRPD Master Plan.

9. High Capacity Transit Investment Study

ACTION: *Director Mallett* motioned to authorize the release of the RFP contingent on receiving the expected amount of funds from MTC. If this did not occur prior to the December 12, 2014 WCCTAC Board Meeting, staff would return to the Board for more direction. Seconded by *Director McCoy*, Passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION:

ED Nemeth recommended adjusting the Study's scope of work to fit the available budget, with certain aspects being implemented only if more funding became available.

Director McCoy stated that the Board wanted to do a full study and she questioned the urgency of starting before the final budget was known.

ED Nemeth stated that if the Study starts soon, some conclusions could help inform policy makers when considering projects they might want included in a possible Expenditure Plan. If we delay too long, we may lose that window.

Director McCoy asked what part of the scope the ED was considering eliminating or scaling down. She also wanted to know what amounts had been set forth for each category in the project.

ED Nemeth stated that there was a cost associated with each task but they are merely estimates or a placeholder for what staff believes the cost will be. The estimates for tasks don't represent a formal budget.

Director McCoy stated her preference would be to wait for a funding decision from MTC instead of sending a message that we have enough money to move forward. She continued, stating that West County has not done a study in quite some time and that we are behind other regions.

Director Mallett asked *ED Nemeth* if he had confidence in being able to identify alternative funds in the event MTC does not come through.

ED Nemeth shared that there may be some other possibilities.

Deidre Heitman (BART staff) stated that she had been in conversation recently with MTC staff and that they needed time to evaluate our proposal. She stated that she had a high degree of confidence that we will see some level of funding commitment from MTC in the next several weeks.

Director Mallett stated that he agreed with *Director McCoy's* concerns about reducing the scope. He supported moving forward with an assumption that we will get funds.

Director Wallace asked what the timeline was to start the work.

ED Nemeth stated from the time that the RFP was released until the time a consultant team could start work might be approximately three months.

Directed Wallace asked what would happen if MTC didn't provide any funds.

ED Nemeth stated that it might mean that certain tasks would need to be streamlined or that staff might need to return the Board to consider other funding ideas.

Director McCoy stated that she wasn't sure that the study would consider how long it might take to implement certain projects and what the relative costs of particular transportation solutions might be.

ED Nemeth replied that one of the study's big tasks would be to estimate the capital and ongoing operation costs of any transit improvement. It would also attempt and explain differences in how long it might take to implement projects. Alternatives would be evaluated against criteria, which might including things like cost, comtability with local and regional goals, etc.

Chair Ableson stated that she would like to see public outreach meetings held in different cities across West County.

Director McCoy wanted to make sure ferry service was added to scope.

Director Powers commented that she believed that staff and transit partners could work together to prioritize some task in the scope, which would allow for some flexibility.

Director McCoy commented that since *Deidre Heitman* stated that we should receive some sort of funding commitment from MTC in the next few weeks, that we should

revisit this issue at the December meeting to see where we stand instead of taking action now.

Vice Chair Butt stated that, given the long lead time for an RFP, we should move forward with the assumption this is a funded study. If we find out months down the road that MTC is not going to contribute, then we will decide what to do and make adjustments accordingly.

Director McCoy expressed concern that this might send the wrong message and asked what would be the downside of waiting a month or two.

Vice-Chair responded by saying that, given the holiday season, the whole RFP process could end up taking longer than usual. As a result, delay now could be compounded.

Director Powers agreed with *Vice-Chair Butt* and stated that if we allow for some prioritization in the scope instead of using words like “optional”, it would send a different kind of message.

Chair Abelson commented that it bothers her that at the last meeting the Board approved a contingency of \$100k, but that it's not being referred to that way. She said that we should start the study when it is fully funded that way we don't have to worry about committing money that is not there.

Director Swearingen worried about waiting too long. He noted that one can always find a reason to delay something, but the result is that things don't get done. He said that this study should not be delayed.

Director Valdez stated we should move forward, prioritize elements in the scope as needed, and also work towards getting funding from MTC at the same time.

Director McCoy agreed with *Chair Abelson*.

Director Mallet proposed a compromise. He suggested that staff be given authority to release the RFP, but only if a commitment for the funding sought from MTC comes through. That could prevent unnecessary delay. If the funding does not come through before the next Board meeting in December, staff could bring this item back for more direction.

Chair Abelson supported the compromise. She also asked staff to make a few scope changes. She stated that while we should coordinate with the Capitol Corridor, that they did not need to be part of the Project Management Group. She recommended adding light rail to the examples of technologies to evaluate. She requested that staff make sure that the travel analysis also considers travel *within* West County. And lastly,

she recommended that if there are going to be six public meetings, that they all should be held in different cities.

10. Contra Costa County Health Services Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Program.

ACTION: None. Information only.

DISCUSSION: *Coire Reilly* from the County SRTS program gave a presentation on the Caltrans funded SRTS program and plans for the next five years in West County using the recent \$700,000 of new funding.

Director Valdez asked if the SRTS staff had met with the City of San Pablo staff to ensure coordination with the City's Obesity Prevention program. *Mr. Reilly* stated that they are working with each City's staff.

Director Swearingen asked if Shannon School in Pinole has received attention since they need help after numerous collisions and impediments to walking and biking. *Mr. Reilly* stated that some principals reject efforts to encourage walking and bicycling because the school is not located in a safe area for these activities.

STANDING ITEMS

11. Other Information.

- a. Letter to CCTA Executive Director with June 27, 2014 Summary of Board Actions
- b. Acronym List

Board and Staff Comments – None

- a. Board Member Comments, Conference/Meeting Reports (AB 1234 Requirement), and Announcements
- b. Report of CCTA Representatives (*Directors Abelson & Butt*)
- c. Executive Director's Report

12. Other Business.

13. Adjourn.
