



MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

September 16, 2019

5:00 p.m.

TAM Conference Room
900 Fifth Avenue, Suite 100
San Rafael, CA 94901

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Peter Pelham, Major Marin Employers (Chairperson)
Bob Burton, Southern Marin Planning Area (Vice-Chairperson)
Joy Dahlgren, Central Marin Planning Area
Scott Tye, West Marin Planning Area
Vince O'Brien, Bicyclists and Pedestrians Group
Kate Powers, Environmental Organizations
Kevin Hagerty, League of Women Voters
Allan Bortel, Marin County Paratransit Coordinating Council
Zach Macdonald, School Districts
Paul Premo, Taxpayer Group

Alternates Present: Jayni Allsep, Southern Marin Planning Area
Kay Noguchi, League of Women Voters

Staff Members Present: Li Zhang, Chief Financial Officer/Deputy Executive Director
Dan Cherrier, Principal Project Delivery Manager
Derek McGill, Planning Manager
Helga Cotter, Senior Accountant
Grace Zhuang, Accounting and Administration Specialist

Chairperson Peter Pelham called the Citizens' Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

1. Introductions and Welcome

Chairperson Pelham welcomed everyone.

2. Open Time for Public Expression

No comments were made.

3. Review and Approval of May 28, 2019 and June 17, 2019 Meeting Minutes (Action)

Chief Financial Officer/Deputy Executive Director Li Zhang stated that comments have been received from Alternate Nancy Okada and Member Paul Premo, and that Vice-Chairperson Bob Burton would likely submit changes to the minutes. Ms. Zhang confirmed that staff would incorporate all amendments into the final minutes.

Member Scott Tye moved to approve the May 28, 2019 and June 17, 2019 Meeting Minutes with the anticipated changes, Member Joy Dahlgren seconded the motion, which were approved unanimously.

4. TAM Staff Report (Information)

Ms. Zhang announced that she has assumed the rotating position of Deputy Executive Director (ED) after Dan Cherrier. She also announced that pending the TAM Board's approval of her contact at its September 26 meeting, TAM's new Executive Director, Anne Richman, will be joining TAM on October 1, 2019. Chairperson Pelham confirmed he considered Ms. Richman an excellent candidate, whom he interviewed as part of a panel, and Ms. Zhang discussed the Board's unanimous decision on the hiring of the new Executive Director at its August 15, 2019 meeting.

Ms. Zhang apologized on behalf of TAM ED Dianne Steinhauser for her absence. ED Steinhauser planned to attend but had to leave town due to a family emergency. Ms. Zhang noted that the members should have received invitations to a reception that will precede the September 26, 2019 Board meeting, and the official retirement party on October 10, 2019 to honor ED Steinhauser.

Ms. Zhang presented the TAM Staff Report. She provided an update on the Hwy 101/580 Connector Project and stated that the Board has approved a contract with Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc. for up to \$6 million for project initiation and environmental studies. Ms. Zhang explained that the contract should end in January 2024, and Principal Project Delivery Manager Dan Cherrier stated that the work should be completed by the middle of 2023, with additional time built into the contract. Ms. Zhang recalled that design options for the connector have already been presented to the COC and that Regional Measure 3 (RM3) is expected to provide funding. She noted that the two lawsuits against RM 3 have been dismissed and it is hoped that funds should be made available soon if no appeals are filed. In the meantime, Ms. Zhang stated that TAM will use Measure AA funds to begin the work.

In response to Member Kevin Hagerty, Mr. Cherrier briefly discussed the three design options that are being explored near the Bellam ramp. He confirmed that the connector would be for the northbound/eastbound section of Hwy 101 only, but that the design would complement a southbound/eastbound connector project should it be considered in the future. Mr. Cherrier and Chairperson Pelham discussed the final decision on the design, which Mr. Cherrier stated would be determined by the environmental process. He anticipated the environmental document would be drafted by late 2021.

Ms. Zhang provided an update to the North-South Greenway project. She stated that a contractor is expected to be hired by the end of this year with construction beginning in the Spring of 2020 with the project anticipated to be completed by the end of 2020.

Ms. Zhang announced that Marin Transit and TAM would conduct a joint Board meeting on September 26, 2019 prior to the TAM Board meeting. She explained that the Board members would hear a presentation on the FASTER (Freedom, Affordability, Speed, Transparency, Equity, Reliability) initiative, which proposes to put a 1% sales tax measure on the November 2020 ballot in the nine-county Bay Area. Ms. Zhang explained that the purpose would be to fund a seamless transportation system, and she discussed the need to raise the sales tax cap with Member Tye. She noted that TAM drafted a proposed project list to submit for funding, which was presented to the TAM Board at its July meeting. Mr. Cherrier noted that the proposal is also known as the "Mega Measure", and Ms. Zhang stated that more information could be found at www.fasterbayarea.org.

Mr. Cherrier discussed the polling results on the FASTER measure, noting that San Francisco was in first place, followed by Marin and then Sonoma. Solano and Contra Costa Counties showed the least amount of support. He stated that there is interest in the North Bay counties to include a 20% - 25% return-to-source element. He explained that the goal is to have a 15-minute transit headway within the core areas of the Bay Area and a half

hour headway outside of the core. Mr. Cherrier noted that Sonoma County Transportation Authority is proposing to renew its sales tax measure on the November 2020 ballot. Ms. Zhang noted that the FASTER project list would be discussed at the joint meeting on September 26, 2019.

Ms. Zhang reported that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) launched Plan Bay Area 2050, an update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that is undertaken every 4 years. She also reported that TAM has completed the Congestion Management Plan (CMP) update, which shows increases in transit ridership and bike and pedestrian activities.

Ms. Zhang discussed the Marin Commutes program and stated that staff would provide more detailed information at a future meeting to ascertain the effectiveness of the program. She also discussed the Drive Clean Marin event organized by Cool the Earth scheduled for Saturday, September 21, 2019, which is sponsored by TAM. Ms. Zhang reported on TAM's usual attendance of the Senior Fair on October 23, 2019, which she said has been an effective outreach event for the agency. She noted that TAM's Public Outreach Coordinator, Molly Graham, is available to discuss the agency's projects and programs with any interested organizations/groups upon the members request.

a) SMART Sales Tax Measure Renewal Status Report

Ms. Zhang reported that Chairperson Pelham asked staff to discuss Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit's (SMART's) sales tax measure that may be slated for the March 2020 ballot. She explained that TAM is not as involved with the process as the agency was with the initial SMART measure. Member Hagerty noted that the renewal of the ¼ cent tax measure will only cover operating costs and not capital expenditures if it is successful.

In response to Chairperson Pelham, Ms. Zhang confirmed that SMART has not responded to TAM's offer of assistance with the measure. Member Hagerty responded to Member Kate Powers and stated that the current measure expires in 2029 but that SMART's funds will be exhausted in 2024. Member Allan Bortel and Mr. Cherrier added that it will allow SMART more revenue to refinance its current bond and hopefully save on interest costs.

In response to Member Tye about the Board's decision on the TAM Reserve Policy, which was brought for the COC's review in June, Ms. Zhang confirmed the Board supported all the recommendations by staff and the COC. She noted that no representatives from Marin Transit (MT) attended the June Board meeting, but that MT General Manager Nancy Whelan told TAM Chairperson Judy Arnold that MT staff would not object to the Board's decision. Ms. Zhang thanked the COC again for its strong support and Vice-Chairperson Burton for delivering the strong message to the TAM Board at its June meeting.

Discussion of SMART continued, particularly on future plans for the Cloverdale extension. Member Hagerty reported that the Bicycle Coalition are concerned and might remain neutral on the Measure because SMART has not delivered on promises made in the initial measure. Member Vince O'Brien noted that bike paths have been constructed with funding from other agencies.

In response to Member Hagerty, Mr. Cherrier discussed the delay in opening the bike lane on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. He explained that a waterline needed to be relocated and that Caltrans would be undertaking structural repairs before the barrier is installed. Mr. Cherrier stated that the expected opening is early to mid-November. In response to Member Powers, Mr. Cherrier confirmed the path will be a multi-use path and will not be used by vehicles. Ms. Zhang confirmed the studies will ascertain whether the multi-use path could support mixed-use. Mr. Cherrier discussed three bridge studies that will be undertaken, including a foundation study and a traffic study to determine the effect of increased traffic flow into Marin if the multi-use path were to be used by vehicles. He confirmed that traffic count data was collected in May, which will be utilized in the traffic study.

Chairperson Pelham asked if a level of use by bicyclists must be achieved to determine whether the path continues exclusively as a multi-use path. Mr. Cherrier explained that Caltrans and Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) will evaluate use of the path during a 4-year pilot program, noting that a shoulder will not be available if a car has a mechanical issue. He stated that the shoulder is needed periodically for emergencies and that analysis indicates traffic will be backed up significantly if a problem occurs during the rush hour and no shoulder is available.

5. Update on Caltrans Planning Grant for Bus on Shoulder Feasibility Study (Information)

Planning Manager Derek McGill presented the staff report. Mr. McGill explained that TAM successfully applied for a grant from Caltrans to undertake a feasibility study on a Bus on Shoulder program, noting that California has few such systems in operation. He discussed transit services in the northern portion of Hwy 101, noting that the routes are used daily by 20,000 transit riders and 200,000 vehicles.

Mr. McGill stated that there is significant traffic delay in the morning peak hours from Roland Boulevard to Mission Avenue in downtown San Rafael; that 10,000 riders use Marin Transit and 10,000 use Golden Gate transit services. Mr. McGill explained that transit vehicles need to move more quickly through traffic to encourage use, and the study will evaluate whether transit services would be more predictable, more reliable and reduce travel time in the corridor with a Bus on Shoulder program. He stated that the study will primarily focus on the highway between San Marin Drive and Mission Avenue due to the existence of a shoulder for much of the route. Mr. McGill explained that the southern portion of Hwy 101 does not have a shoulder that is sufficiently wide to make a study feasible.

Mr. McGill discussed travel times for bus routes along the north corridor of Hwy 101 and confirmed that both the north and south corridor of the highway will be assessed, in response to Member Hagerty.

Mr. McGill discussed the role of auxiliary lanes that exist in the north corridor, noting that traffic flows more freely and that there are no plans to operate bus on shoulder in these segments. Mr. McGill also noted that auxiliary lanes often connect to existing bus stops, and that bus on shoulder would need to operate in short segments between the interchanges. In response to Vice-Chairperson Burton, Mr. McGill stated that a bus needs approximately 10 feet of shoulder width.

Mr. McGill acknowledged the need to understand how a bus on shoulder operation would integrate with conditions such as ramp metering and the Marin Sonoma Narrows. In response to Member Zack McDonald, Mr. McGill explained how the buses would affect sensors for the ramp meters.

In response to Member Premo, Mr. McGill discussed plans that are underway to adopt bus on shoulder projects in other counties, including the Hwy 680 corridor in Contra Costa and a project currently under construction in San Diego. He noted that Minneapolis and Kansas operate bus on shoulder programs.

In response to Chairperson Pelham, Mr. McGill stated that a bus would use the shoulder lane when traffic speeds were below 35 miles per hour and would operate at a lower speed than normal.

Mr. McGill explained how the feasibility study would include a conceptual design and operation system to move more quickly into developing the project phase with Caltrans. He discussed the need to assess ridership benefits for each transit route, determine whether the service would attract new transit riders and if additional services could be added if necessary. Mr. McGill explained the need for a public outreach process and implementation plan.

In response to Member Tye, Mr. McGill stated that Marin Transit, Golden Gate Transit and SMART would most likely partner with TAM in developing the Bus on Shoulder program, noting that the study will identify

the stretch of highway that would benefit from the program. Member Tye discussed the possibility of a bottle neck developing close to the new transit center with increased transit vehicles.

Mr. McGill confirmed MTC is involved in the planning stage, in addition to the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Caltrans. He discussed the \$308,000 grant for the feasibility study, with the required \$42,000 matching fund to be met by TAM's City/County Fees.

In response to Member Hagerty, Mr. McGill stated that the study should take 2 years, after which the agency will work with Caltrans on the environmental and design phase.

Member Macdonald expressed interest in ascertaining bus drivers' views for the Bus on Shoulder program, since they will be using the system. Mr. McGill stated that they would be included in the outreach process through the transit operators. He confirmed that only public agency buses could participate in the program.

In response to Member O'Brien Mr. McGill stated that the feasibility study will include data from other corridors to assess the benefits of bus on shoulder operations. Mr. Cherrier stated that the study will determine if express buses would benefit from using the shoulder lanes or should remain in the HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lane, and Mr. McGill confirmed that Marin Airporters buses will not be included in the bus on shoulder operation.

In response to Member Powers, Mr. McGill confirmed local agency fees would be used as a local match. He provided background information on how TAM chose to undertake the Bus on Shoulder study. Mr. McGill explained that the Board passed a resolution supporting changes to the HOV hours of operation based on the completion of projects that included Marin Sonoma Narrows and Bus on Shoulder, which TAM is now pursuing with the feasibility study. He stated that the support from other agencies and funding opportunities determine which projects move forward.

In response to Chairperson Pelham, Mr. McGill provided a timeline for the study. He stated that TAM will release an RFP (Request for Proposal) to hire a consultant team for the feasibility study, which he anticipates commencing in early 2020.

In response to Member Macdonald, Mr. McGill explained that CHP will be responsible for enforcing traffic rules that prohibit vehicles from using the shoulder lanes and he confirmed the lanes would be used in peak travel periods only.

In response to Member Bortel, Mr. McGill confirmed the existing pavement condition will need to be assessed to ascertain if it is suitable for bus travel.

Vice-Chairperson Burton commented on the high volume of vehicles that utilize the HOV lanes illegally, which he said would hold up buses using the shoulder lane. Mr. McGill confirmed that technology does not presently exist to determine which vehicles legally use the HOV lane.

The Committee recessed for ten minutes for a dinner break and reconvened with all members present with the exception of Member Hagerty.

6. Formation of the FY2018-19 COC Annual Report Development Sub-Committee (Action)

Ms. Li Zhang expressed a desire to form the Annual Report Sub-Committee early this year, consisting of 5 COC members rather than the usual 3 members. Ms. Zhang explained that the changes will allow the Committee to be involved in the report development process early on and make sure inputs and suggestions from the Committee can be incorporated into the final report.

Ms. Zhang discussed staff's proposal to restructure the report to communicate more clearly with the public, incorporating new design elements and funding charts. She also discussed the intention to expand the COC Annual Report to a full TAM/COC Annual Report, noting that both the COC and TAM produced separate annual reports in the past. Ms. Zhang stated that the COC portion would need to be clearly defined in order to meet the requirements of the Measure A/AA and Measure B Expenditure Plans.

Ms. Zhang asked the members for feedback on the proposed draft annual report outline and she also asked that 5 members volunteer for the sub-committee. Chairperson Pelham confirmed that Member Hagerty expressed a wish to participate.

In response to Member Tye, Ms. Zhang discussed the timeline for the Committee's work, noting that staff has already started working with a designer. She discussed the components of the draft report, which include two centerpieces incorporating a map showing projects and programs in the County and a list of TAM's accomplishments over the past 15 years. She explained that the 8½" x 11" report would consist of approximately 36 – 40 pages. Ms. Zhang stated that she anticipates one or two Sub-Committee meetings in October to discuss the design and text; that a draft report should be available in November and that a final draft would be ready for review and acceptance of the COC in December or January.

In response to Member Macdonald, Ms. Zhang stated that staff can be flexible about the Sub-Committee's meeting schedule. She anticipates at least one meeting with all Sub-Committee members meeting in person and possibly two further meetings that might take place as conference calls.

Member Bortel and Ms. Zhang discussed the inclusion of the Ramp Metering project in the report. Mr. Cherrier noted that this is not a TAM project, and Ms. Zhang stated that a suitable location might be found for the Ramp Metering project in the report because the project has significant impacts on the community.

Ms. Zhang discussed the components of the report that would remain the same, including the COC membership and letter from the Chairperson.

In response to Member Macdonald, Ms. Zhang stated that average Marin residents with no specific transportation project and program knowledge are the target readers and that it is hoped more interest will be generated by changing the presentation to a program and project-based report.

Member Macdonald asked if the public read the report, and Member Tye explained how he delivers them to schools and community centers. Vice-Chairperson Burton noted that the COC reports are made available at Mill Valley City Hall. Ms. Zhang explained that featured stories relating to transportation and COC members encourage the public to read the report, and that schools are interested in crossing guard information. She discussed the distribution list for the report, which includes Marin Transit, cities and towns, and libraries and school districts. She suggested the Sub-Committee might like to consider other means of distributing the report and discussed ideas of making the online report interactive.

It was suggested that City Managers can be asked to advertise the reports in their newsletters.

Member Powers discussed her support for redesigning the annual report to include all TAM's activities, which she believes could educate people about TAM's role in transportation issues, such as climate change and greenhouse gas emissions. Member Powers expressed the importance of online access to the report with links to TAM's projects and programs

Member Tye stated that TAM should consider producing a bilingual annual report, given that many of Marin Transit's riders are Spanish speakers, with which Member Macdonald expressed agreement. Ms. Zhang

discussed the difficulty of translating a large report and suggested that some of the content could be selected for translation, which most of the Committee agreed.

Following discussion, Ms. Zhang recruited 5 members for the sub-committee.

Chairperson Pelham moved to appoint Members Hagerty, Vogt, Macdonald, Bortel and Dahlgren to the FY2018-19 TAM/COC Annual Report Development Sub-Committee, and Vice-Chairperson Burton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Committee Member Hot Items Report (Information)

Member Kay Noguchi discussed a meeting on Hwy 37 with Senator McGuire on September 26, 2019 at the Hill Education Center, Novato.

Member Bortel reminded the members of the Senior Fair on October 23, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

8. Discussion on Next Meeting Date and Recommended Items for the Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2019.

Member Bortel moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m., which was seconded by Member Powers. The motion was approved unanimously.