



MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

March 15, 2021

5:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85464420644?pwd=S0E3Z2t4YzZNNDErbHJrRFUyN3BYdz09>

Webinar ID: 854 6442 0644

Passcode: 291566

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present:

Peter Pelham, Major Marin Employers (Chairperson)
Joy Dahlgren, Central Marin Planning Area
Charley Vogt, Northern Marin Planning Area
Vince O'Brien, Bicycle & Pedestrian Groups
Kate Powers, Environmental Organizations
Kevin Hagerty, League of Women Voters
Allan Bortel, Marin County Paratransit Coordinating Council
Zack Macdonald, School Districts
Paul Premo, Taxpayer Group

Alternates Present:

Kay Noguchi, League of Women Voters
Jeffrey Olson, Central Marin Planning Area
Veda Florez, Northern Marin Planning Area
Nancy Okada, Environmental Organizations
Kingston Cole, Taxpayer Group

Staff Members Present:

Anne Richman, Executive Director
Li Zhang, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer
David Chan, Manager of Programming and Legislation
Dan Cherrier, Principal Project Delivery Manager
Denise Merleno, Executive Assistant
Derek McGill, Planning Manager
Grace Zhuang, Accounting and Administration Specialist
Helga Cotter, Senior Accountant
Joanne O'Hehir, Administrative Assistant
Molly Graham, Public Information Officer
Scott McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner

Chairperson Peter Pelham called the Citizens' Oversight Committee (COC) meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

1. Introductions and Welcome

Chairperson Pelham asked Senior Accountant Helga Cotter to conduct the roll call. Ms. Cotter did so and confirmed that a quorum was present. Ms. Cotter stated the meeting order rules and instructions for the public to provide comments.

2. Open Time for Public Expression

No public expression was received.

3. Review and Approval of January 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer Li Zhang noted that changes provided by Member Paul Premo through email will be incorporated into the final minutes. Chairperson Pelham asked the committee to send any changes to Ms. Zhang before the meeting to keep the meeting more concise. Member Charley Vogt moved to approve the January 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes, Member Kevin Hagerty seconded the motion, and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

4. TAM Staff Report (Information)

Executive Director (ED) Anne Richman presented the staff report. She recalled the Citizens Oversight Committee Meeting exactly one year ago, which took place right before the day of the Shelter-in-Place Order. Some members were in attendance in person and others used Zoom or called in for that meeting.

ED Richman provided an update on the Bike Share Program that TAM is undertaking with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA). She stated that TAM released a survey for the general public to provide input on the location of the bikeshare pods near SMART (Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit) stations. Approximately 350 surveys have been received and the survey is open through Friday, March 19, 2021. ED Richman noted that Bolt Mobility has acquired GOTCHA, who will be the new Bike Share Program provider.

ED Richman reported that TAM would be releasing a survey relating to the Highway 101 Interchange and Approaching Roadway Study on the 12 interchanges connecting to Hwy 101. She noted that the Measure AA Expenditure Plan included the need for the study, which began in July 2020, and that an analysis of existing conditions is currently underway.

ED Richman provided an update on the Northbound US-101-Eastbound I-580 Direct Connector Project. She stated that the Stakeholder Working Group has met 4 times since last summer to provide community input on design alternatives. She discussed the importance of equity in the project analysis and the need for public engagement in the process.

ED Richman discussed the completed Safe Pathways project around Fifth Avenue/River Oaks Road near Sun Valley Elementary School in San Rafael, which was funded by Measure A. She also discussed San Rafael's Third Street Rehabilitation Project, which received funding from both Measure A and Measure AA and is currently in design stage with construction anticipated to begin during the summer.

ED Richman then reported on the East Blithedale Ave. Project in Mill Valley, which is partly funded by sales tax funds. This project is in the design phase and is also anticipated to begin construction this summer.

ED Richman discussed the replacement of the off-ramp (a bridge over the canal) from Northbound US-101 into Central San Rafael by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The ramp will be closed over a period of 3 weekends during the spring and summer.

ED Richman reported on the Town Hall Meeting by Senator McGuire regarding State Route (SR) 37, which will take place on April 15, 2021. The meeting will be attended by Caltrans and partner agencies and will provide an opportunity for the public to comment.

ED Richman discussed a Senate Bill 1 (SB1) funded program, called the Active Transportation Program (ATP), which funds bicycle and pedestrian projects. Applications for five projects from Marin were submitted but were

not successful in obtaining state funding. Those applications will be submitted for consideration for regional funding from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The available funding from California Transportation Commission (CTC) is \$220 million and \$37 million from MTC.

ED Richman discussed an executive order from the Governor to leverage transportation funds to help meet California climate goals. She stated that the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) released a Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) last week, which proposes changes in transportation investment to support a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. ED Richman noted that there is an opportunity to provide comment on the Plan and the Plan will be adopted by CTC in the summer.

ED Richman discussed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) of 2021, which provided funding throughout the Country for transit. She noted that Marin Transit, SMART and Golden Gate Transit received funds from the CARES Act and that MTC would be meeting next week to discuss the distribution of CRRSAA funding. ED Richman reported that Congress signed the American Rescue Plan Act last week, which will also provide transportation funding.

ED Richman stated that TAM announced the Crossing Guard of the Year, Meredith Groves, at the January 28, 2021 Board Meeting. Ms. Groves was highly recommended by the Bolinas School District.

ED Richman reported that Caltrans District 4 announced Dina El-Tawansy as the new Director, noting that the previous District Director transferred to Southern California. ED Richman stated that Director El-Tawansy has served as the Deputy Director of District 4 for approximately 18 months.

ED Richman concluded her report with a discussion on TAM's Legislative Platform, which is adopted annually by the TAM Board. This year's platform is consistent with prior years and focuses on 6 priorities, including acquiring state funding for projects, addressing mobility & meeting state climate change mandates, leveraging regional partnerships, enhancing multi-modal options, seeking efficiencies and pursuing federal funding opportunities.

Alternate Veda Florez asked staff if lighter-weight bikes could be included in the Bike Share Program for older citizens. She also asked staff to clarify the members of the Northbound US-101/Eastbound I-580 Direct Connector Project Stakeholder Working Group.

In response, ED Richman stated that it would not be possible to include peddle bikes in the e-bike program, which she acknowledged are lighter than e-bikes. Senior Transportation Planner Scott McDonald stated that e-bikes could be docked easily in the parking slots and will not require lifting. ED Richman confirmed the members of the Stakeholder Working Group represent over 20 different community interest groups, including non-profit organizations, businesses and neighborhood associations. All members are volunteers.

Alternate Florez asked staff to ensure the definition of disadvantaged communities includes sub-categories that are not based solely on location or race.

Alternate Kay Noguchi thanked staff for providing the Legislative Platform document, which she found helpful in clarifying the complexities of transportation issues.

In response to Member Kate Powers, ED Richman confirmed that a major roads category was not included in Measure AA. She stated that funds from Measure A were used for San Rafael's Third Street Project and Mill Valley's Blithedale Project. Ms. Zhang explained that \$2.35 million for the Major Road projects has been taken off the top for more than 10-years under Measure AA for major road projects that funds were promised under Measure A to ensure funding commitments to those projects are fully met.

In response to Member Powers, ED Richman confirmed that the SR37 Segment B, congestion relief project, is currently under environmental review; that public outreach has not yet commenced on the interim project for Segment A, and that Caltrans is working on an environmental document for the whole corridor. She stated that one of the goals of the April 15 Town Hall meeting is to impart information on the different projects. Member Powers also expressed her appreciation for receiving the Legislative Platform document.

In response to Member Allan Bortel, ED Richman confirmed that Regional Measure (RM) 3 is still under litigation at the State Supreme Court since last Fall and a final decision might be reached by Fall of 2021. She also confirmed the environmental review for the new Transit Center in San Rafael is ongoing, although a location has not yet been selected.

In response to Member Premo, ED Richman stated that an Executive Order from the Governor's Office modified the Brown Act to allow public meetings to be conducted through Zoom webinars during the pandemic. ED Richman explained that potential new legislation will allow public meetings to continue being conducted through webinars.

5. Election of Vice-Chairperson (Action)

Chairperson Pelham nominated Member Hagerty as Vice-Chairperson, which was seconded by Member Vogt. No further nominations were made, and the motion passed unanimously.

6. TAM Electric Bike Study (Information)

Senior Transportation Planner Scott McDonald presented this discussion item regarding the TAM Electric Bike Study. Mr. McDonald discussed TAM's support for electric bikes (e-bikes) through the Alternative Fuel Program (AFP) under Measure B Category 3.3, which included an incentive program that allowed public agencies to purchase e-bikes, and electric vehicle (EV) promotion at EV events. Mr. McDonald stated that the Study has been developed to explore other opportunities to promote e-bikes.

Mr. McDonald discussed the different e-bike classifications: Class 1 are low speed, pedal-assisted e-bikes; Class 2 are throttle-assisted e-bikes, and Class 3 e-bikes are peddle-assisted and can gain speeds of up to 28 miles per hour (mph). He confirmed that batteries should hold sufficient charge for a bike trip to and from a destination in Marin County, and the cost of e-bikes are generally \$3000 or more. Mr. McDonald stated that Marin County Parks allows e-bikes to operate on paved bike paths, public roads and parking lots, but not on unpaved trails; that Marin Municipal Water District allows e-bikes on public roads only, and Golden Gate National Recreational Area (GGNRA) allows e-bikes to operate anywhere bikes are allowed. E-bikes are also prohibited on buses and ferries due to weight and safety concerns, but they can be taken on SMART trains. Mr. McDonald noted that TAM and SMART are partners in the Bike Share Program.

Mr. McDonald discussed TAM's Electric Bike Study that reported a high growth rate in e-bikes and 70% of e-bikes sold are Class I bikes. The results showed that 70% of users are male, although 50% of the riders of Class 1 e-bikes are female, and that two-thirds of e-bike riders are over the age of 45. The Study also showed that 97% of e-bike purchases were made by bike owners opting to buy an e-bike for reasons that included replacing car trips, recreation and exercise, overcoming terrain and the desire not to arrive at work sweaty. Mr. McDonald stated that over half the trips were work or school related, which potentially replace vehicle trips, the average trip length is 4 miles and daily e-bike trips is about 1055 trips. Vehicle mile trips (VMT) replaced by e-bike trips could be as high as 2.6 million miles per year, 4.2 million in 5 years and 6.1 million in 10 years.

Mr. McDonald discussed the barriers that were identified through the Study. He noted that e-bikes are unsuitable for long-distance trips, are more expensive than traditional bikes and cannot be maintained at regular bike shops. However, the Study noted that Marin's topography is listed as a main reason for purchasing an e-bike and that families are purchasing cargo e-bikes. The study also revealed that e-bike purchasers include those

who have physical limitations. Mr. McDonald stated that demand for e-bikes has increased to the extent that current inventory is insufficient.

Mr. McDonald discussed concerns that were identified in the study, which included secure parking and the weight of e-bikes, and the need to improve e-bike transit, such as encouraging more people to ride e-bikes and provide more bike lanes. He concluded his report with a brief description of e-bike use in Europe and Asia and a summary of the advantages of e-bikes.

Member Vogt thanked staff for the e-bike discussion. He stated that the report was excellent and commended Mr. McDonald for his presentation. Member Vogt discussed his pleasant surprise by the number of e-bikes purchased for commuting purposes and he commented on the reductions in VMT as a result of e-bike use.

Member Powers also thanked Mr. McDonald for the great report. She asked staff if the number of e-bikes that used the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge bike lane were counted in traffic studies and requested clarification on where Class 3 e-bikes could be ridden. Mr. McDonald stated that 70% of e-bikes are Class 1 and that Class 3 bikes are rarely seen but should be ridden only in the roadway with vehicles. Member Vogt stated that he rode his Class 3 e-bike on roadways and paved trails but not on unpaved trails.

Alternate Florez commented on the need for more secure parking at transit locations, which TAM should factor into transportation needs, and she expressed support for protected bike lanes. Alternate Florez also discussed the need for secure bike charging stations.

In response to Member Bortel, Mr. McDonald confirmed that most fully charged e-bike batteries hold sufficient charge for a ride to and from a destination in Marin. He confirmed the Study indicated that secure parking was of more concern to riders than bike-charging facilities. Mr. McDonald stated that chargers require a standard outlet without the need for significant infrastructure. He noted that TAM incentivized the use of e-bikes by public agencies through funds from the AFP under Measure B.

In response to newly elected Vice-Chairperson Hagerty, Mr. McDonald confirmed that the grant for the Bike Share Program with SCTA mandates the use of e-bikes to provide connectivity along the SMART corridor. Member Vogt stated that a State Legislator is proposing a \$1,500 tax credit for e-bikes purchases.

Alternate Florez and Mr. McDonald discussed the equity issue for e-bikes. Mr. McDonald stated that 20% of e-bikes in the Bike Share Program will be allocated to disadvantaged communities and areas where there is a community-based transportation plan. There were also outreach programs with these communities to make it accessible to a wide range of people.

Chairperson Pelham thanked Mr. McDonald for the presentation. He discussed the difficulties relating to those who have not previously used an e-bike and asked if an education component has been considered. Mr. McDonald stated that the Bike Share Program could consider this as part of the outreach phase.

7. Review the Measure A/AA 1/2-Cent Transportation Sales Tax and the Measure B \$10 Vehicle Registration Fee Revenue Projections and the FY2021-22 Annual Budget and Strategic Plan Development Schedule (Discussion)

Ms. Zhang presented the staff report, which asks the committee members to review and provide comments on the Measure A/AA 1/2-Cent Transportation Sales Tax and the Measure B \$10 Vehicle Registration Fee Revenue Projections and the FY2021-22 Annual Budget and Strategic Plan Development Schedule. Ms. Zhang stated staff is recommending two changes this year: make concurrent the Annual Budget development and Strategic Plan update processes and merge the two separate Measure A and AA Strategic Plans. Ms. Zhang stated that the Annual Budget and Strategic Plan were on similar timelines but not totally synchronized in the past, but staff has consolidated the discussions on the two processes and stated that members will be asked to review

the Draft Budget and Strategic Plan at the May meeting, which she anticipates should be adopted by the TAM Board at the June 24, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Zhang discussed sales tax revenue, which she stated is dependent on economic factors such as employment rate and per capita income. She noted that the national unemployment rate decreased to 6.3% in January 2021 from 15% in April 2020, and that California's unemployment rate of 10.3% in 2020 is expected to drop to approximately 7% in 2021, 5% in 2022, and 4.1% in 2023 based on the most recent University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) forecast.

Ms. Zhang discussed California home sales, disposable income, the effects of stimulus funds on the recovery of the economy, and retail sales, which she noted decreased in March 2020 when the pandemic started but have increased in the past 6 months and are projected to stabilize in FY2021-22. Ms. Zhang reported that Marin's simple taxable base helps this County, and that many (but not all) the County residents are not suffering significant financial difficulties due to the County's demographic and income level. She also reported that the work from home arrangement may be generating more revenue locally, and that savings from travel were spent on home improvement projects. However, the food and transportation sectors have been negatively impacted.

Ms. Zhang discussed TAM's projected annual sales tax revenue in March 2020, before the Shelter-in-Place Order, of \$27.5 million, and the adoption of a revised revenue projection of \$24.5 million at the TAM Board meeting on May 28, 2020. Based on the current economic conditions and sales tax collection, she confirmed staff is recommending that the Board reinstates the sales tax revenue level of \$27.5 million for FY2020-21 and also adopt the same level for FY2021-22. Additionally, staff is recommending an annual 2% growth rate after FY2021-22 for the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Zhang discussed revenue projections for Measure B, the \$10 Vehicle Registration Fee. She noted that there was a 2% reduction in registered vehicles in Marin County in 2020 compared to 2019, and that staff is recommending reducing the projected revenue level for FY2020-21 from \$2.4 million to \$2.32 million based on the most current information on vehicle registrations. Staff is also recommending a budget level of \$2.3 million for the development of FY2021-22 budget and the Strategic Plan, noting that future travel patterns and vehicle demand remain uncertain as people continue to work from home.

In response to Member Vogt, Ms. Zhang confirmed that shortfall in Measure B funds will be approximately \$100,000 and that carry over funds could be used to make up the shortfall.

Alternate Florez stated that it made sense to combine Measures A and AA Strategic Plans and she asked if there would be opportunities to amend the revenue projections in the future. Ms. Zhang confirmed that staff could bring forward any significant changes to the current projections during the quarterly financial reports. She confirmed the Board would need to approve any significant changes to the budget.

In response to Member Powers, Ms. Zhang stated that there are sufficient Measure B carryover funds to ensure cuts will not be necessary to the programs. She confirmed that prior carryover funds have been committed to the EV program, so that the program will not be impacted. Ms. Zhang confirmed that review of the Measure B Expenditure Plan was postponed to 2023 when the economy might be more stable.

8. Committee Member Hot Items Report (Discussion)

Alternate Jeffery Olson commented on increased housing development in Marin, which might include 1,300 residential units at Northgate, in addition to outdoor dining in downtown San Rafael, which will contribute to a lack of parking facilities.

Member Vogt commented on the lack of universal EV charging stations at Vintage Oaks Shopping Center and added there were 20 brand new Tesla EV charging stations but only 2 universal EV charging stations. He had

alerted City staff about the need of more universal EV charging stations and was happy to report that as a result, 10 new universal EV charging stations will be added at the shopping center.

Vice-Chairperson Hagerty drew the members' attention to a public meeting on April 27, 2021 by the Marin Coalition, where Dennis Mulligan, General Manager for Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District, and Nancy Whelan, General Manager for Marin Transit, will provide a presentation on the Future of Public Transit.

Alternate Florez noted that MTC will review and vote on the Plan Bay Area 2050 Implementation Plan at its May meeting. She stated that the Plan is available on MTC's website should the members wish to review the document.

Member Powers provided a brief report on Marin Transit's Board Meeting on February 10, 2021. Discussions included acquisition of a property at 3000 Kerner Blvd, San Rafael, for \$3.25 million, along with cost from appraisal and title, and improvements, for a total of \$3.62 million, which will be funded from capital reserves. The acquisition solves the problems of maintaining contracts with four different vendors and parking buses at different sites.

Member Powers also reported on Marin Transit's Board Meeting on March 15, 2021, which she was not able to attend. She stated that discussions included an expectation that ridership levels will not return to pre-pandemic levels in 2021 or 2022, and that ridership is down 60% for fixed routes and 74% for Demand Response services. Marin Transit will plan for projected fare losses and the need to restructure fares and prioritize services.

In response to Member Bortel, Ms. Zhang confirmed that the Annual Report is scheduled to be reviewed by the TAM Board at the March 25, 2021 Meeting. She noted that the report will be available in electronic format.

a. Recruitment of the Southern Marin Planning Area Member/Alternate

Ms. Zhang asked the members to let staff know if they could recommend suitable candidates to fill the member and alternate positions of Southern Marin Planning Area. She stated that candidates must be residents of Mill Valley, Sausalito, Tiburon, Belvedere, or Marin City.

In response to Member Vogt, Ms. Zhang confirmed that there is no deadline to fill the positions and she stressed the importance of finding the right candidates.

b. Expiration of Member Terms

Ms. Zhang stated the positions that are due to expire this year have been highlighted in the packet and will be advertised on TAM's website. Applications will be sent to the members/alternates whose positions are expiring at the end of May. Ms. Zhang stated that the TAM Board will appoint members/alternates to the COC at the May 27, 2021 Board Meeting. She confirmed that the member/alternate seats of 6 positions were expiring, and each term is 4-years.

In response to Member Vogt, Ms. Zhang confirmed that the members are required to reside in the planning area they represent on the COC.

Member Bortel expressed concern that there has been no representation from West Marin Planning Area for a long time. Ms. Zhang reported on a conversation she had with Member Scott Tye during which he confirmed he is reviewing the packets and will rejoin when in person meetings resume.

In response to Chairperson Pelham, ED Richman stated that staff will continue to follow CDC and state guidelines to determine when in person meetings could be possible and expects hybrid meetings, with both in person and remote participation, may be necessary. ED Richman confirmed that staff still work remotely.

9. Discussion of Next Meeting Date and Recommended Items for the Agenda

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 17, 2021. Items planned for the meeting would include review of the Draft Annual Budget for FY2021-22 and the combined Measures A and AA Sales Tax Strategic Plan.

In response to Alternate Noguchi, Ms. Zhang stated that staff members have different opinions and mixed feelings about returning to the office. ED Richman stated that the agency will also monitor the actions of TAM's partner agencies and stakeholders when considering how staff will transition back to the office.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

DRAFT