



MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

May 17, 2021

5:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

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MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Peter Pelham, Major Marin Employers (Chairperson)
Kevin Hagerty, League of Women Voters (Vice-Chairperson)
Joy Dahlgren, Central Marin Planning Area
Charley Vogt, Northern Marin Planning Area
Paul Roye, Ross Valley Planning Area
Vince O'Brien, Bicycle & Pedestrian Groups
Kate Powers, Environmental Organizations
Zack Macdonald, School Districts
Paul Premo, Taxpayer Group

Alternates Present: Kay Noguchi, League of Women Voters
Jeffrey Olson, Central Marin Planning Area
Nancy Okada, Environmental Organizations
Kingston Cole, Taxpayer Group

Future Member/Alternate: Stephen Burke, Southern Marin Planning Area
Debbie Alley, Southern Marin Planning Area

Other Agency: Lauren Gradia, Marin Transit Director of Finance and Capital Programs

Staff Members Present: Anne Richman, Executive Director
Li Zhang, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer
David Chan, Manager of Programing 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.

Chairperson Pelham acknowledged that Member Joy Dahlgren had decided to step down as the representative for the Central Marin Planning Area after May 31 and thanked her for serving on the COC for more than 12 years. Member Dahlgren expressed her impression of quality of work by staff and COC over the years and she will miss everyone.

Chairperson Pelham welcomed Mr. Stephen Burke and Ms. Debbie Alley, who joined the COC meeting as public. Mr. Burke and Ms. Alley will be appointed by the TAM Board as the Member and Alternate representing Southern Marin Planning Area respectively at the May 27 board meeting.

Introductions were made for all panelists on Zoom.

2. Open Time for Public Expression

No public expression was received.

3. Review and Approval of March 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes (Action)

Vice-Chairperson Kevin Hagerty moved to approve the March 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes and Member Charley Vogt seconded the motion, and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

4. TAM Staff Report (Information)

Executive Director (ED) Anne Richman presented the staff report by starting with the May 12 Bike to School Day and May 21 Bike to Wherever Day. ED Richman noted that there are no energizer stations this year but local bike shops will be distributing musette bags.

ED Richman reported that the San Rafael Third Street Rehabilitation project and the Mill Valley East Blithedale Rehabilitation project will begin construction soon and the cities are requesting allocation of \$11.6 million and \$1.2 million sales tax funds respectively, which will be approved by the TAM Board on May 27.

ED Richman reported that for the Marin 101-580 Direct Connector project, a series of Stakeholder Working Group meetings have been hosted via Zoom for the last 10 months and the next one will be on May 18 at 3 pm.

ED Richman reported that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) approved \$75.7 million in federal funding as backfill of the Regional Measure 3 (RM3) funding for the construction of the Marin-Sonoma Narrows (MSN) project, since RM3 is tied up in litigation currently. The funding package included the State Bill (SB) 1 funding and Measure AA sales tax funds as well. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) also approved \$3.5 million for the MSN Right of Way (ROW) phase last week.

ED Richman reported that TAM is ready to release for a Call for Projects later this month for \$1.25 million. Funding will be provided by Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) and Transportation Development Act (TDA) for the FY21/22 and FY22/23 cycles. The TFCA funds are from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) for projects that reduce emissions and the TDA funds are from MTC for Bicycle and Pedestrian projects.

ED Richman noted that Federal Congressional Committees are accepting “community projects” requests (formerly known as Earmarks). TAM has submitted requests for several projects: Corte Madera Central Marin Gap Closure, San Rafael Canal Crossing Planning Study, Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) Street Smart and the State Route (SR) 37 project.

ED Richman noted that the Golden Gate Bridge Highway Transportation District (GGBHTD) Board will consider approval of the alternates for the relocation of the San Rafael Transit Center on May 21 and the

draft environmental document is expected to be released in June for public comment and be finalized by the end of 2021. TAM has provided funding and participated in the project development process.

ED Richman reported that the SR 37 Town Hall was hosted on April 15 by State Senators Bill Dodd and Mike McGuire, with representative from various transportation agencies and over 500 attendees.

ED Richman stated that MTC staff will present a status update at the TAM Board meeting on May 27 on Plan Bay Area 2050, the region's Long Range Transportation Plan, which was under development for 3 years. Additional workshops will be held to seek more public input, and MTC is expected to approve the plan in the summer.

ED Richman noted that Clipper Card, the regional transit fare card, is available on Apple Pay now and expected to be on Google Pay soon. Users can use it on iPhone and can transfer plastic card balances. Clipper also launched a Mobile App with real time transit and trip planning.

In response to Alternate Kay Noguchi regarding moving the transit center to Larkspur or other locations other than San Rafael, ED Richman stated that one of the main functions of the Transit Center is to connect a lot of local routes for Marin Transit and Golden Gate, which mostly happens in San Rafael. ED Richman also stated that various transit agencies have to agree on the Transit Center alternate relocation plan in order to access RM3 funds but not necessarily for the environmental document.

In response to Member Vince O'Brien, ED Richman stated that funding for the MSN project should be enough for Caltrans to prepare the project to go out for bid.

In response to Member Kate Powers, TAM Manager of Programing and Legislation David Chan confirmed Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers are eligible for TFCA Grants and ED Richman added that TAM is working on an EV readiness plan this year for the County.

5. Marin Transit FY2021-22 Budget and Operation Report (Information)

Ms. Lauren Gradia, Marin Transit (MT) Director of Finance and Capital Programs, presented the Draft MT Budget Report, which included the COVID-19 impacts, the budget assumptions, and the operation and capital budget. She stated that MT suffered less ridership loss than most other transit agencies in the Bay Area during the pandemic, but still lost about 50% riders for its fixed route services and 75% for paratransit and demand response services. MT has implemented the 25% vehicle capacity limitation due to the six feet distance requirements since mid-April 2020 and has been working with the County Health Department and GGBHTD to modify the vehicle capacity to 50% once allowed, with implementation of various health and safety measures, including face covering, driver vaccination and installed driver barrier for fixed routes.

Ms. Gradia stated that compared to last year, the biggest challenge for this year's budget has been developing service plans due to the uncertainties imposed by the pandemic. The current service plans assume lifting vehicle capacity restrictions, returning of ridership, and maximizing the fixed route services with available resources. The ridership for fixed route and demand response dropped about 50% and 75% in 2020 and the assumption for this year is that ridership will be increased to 80% and 70% respectively.

Ms. Gradia reported that the total revenue projected for operations and capital is \$46.9 million and expenditure is about \$49.2 million for next fiscal year. The difference between revenue and expenditure is primarily for facilities using capital reserve. The total operation revenue is \$36.9 million with about 34%, \$12.8 million from Measure A/AA. The total operation expense is \$35.4 million with 59% from contracted expenses also known as Purchased Transportation.

Ms. Gradia presented the service plans proposed for FY2021-22, including increasing the fixed route service hours, restoring supplemental school and yellow bus services, and discontinuing back-up service. The Marin Access/Paratransit demand service was about 60% pre-COVID and the full budget will not be spent if

demand is slower this year. The service hours have increased to address the pass-ups in this and next fiscal years, but in contrast, ridership has dropped significantly for local services and Marin Access. For the capital budget, vehicle replacement and facilities purchase are the primary capital expenditures.

Ms. Gradia concluded the presentation stating that MT is in a strong short-term position and will continue to monitor and adjust the service plans based on the economy recovery and transit needs of the community, and that the final budget will be adopted by the MT Board in June.

In response to Mr. Stephen Burke, Ms. Gradia stated that there are reasons for charging a fare because people see it as more valuable when paying for it and also if not charging fare, people may take many short trips which may result in capacity issue. She pointed out that MT manages to charge a very low fare or provide free fare to low-income riders.

In response to Alternate Jeff Olsen, Ms. Gradia answered that pass-ups were a serious issue, but bus frequencies were increased to address it, for popular routes, the frequency was increased to every five minutes.

In response to Member Kate Powers, Ms. Gradia confirmed that the two locations for the maintenance facilities are in Novato for fleet parking and in San Rafael for Paratransit. MT is looking for a facility that can be used for maintenance and parking for larger fixed route vehicles, and another facility for yellow bus parking. She added that the federal relief funds are for operation expenses only.

Chairperson Pelham thanked Ms. Gradia for the great presentation.

6. Review the Proposed TAM FY2021-22 Annual Budget (Discussion)

Ms. Li Zhang, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer, presented the report. Ms. Zhang reported on the budget development timeline and process, the most recent economic condition and expected recovery trend, operational changes made to reduce cost and the proposed agency organization changes before she turned the item to ED Richman to highlight TAM's FY2021-22 work plans.

Under updates on the economic recovery and funding pictures, Ms. Zhang discussed that the current recovery is the letter K shape, with fast recovery industries, such as technology software service doing really well, and slow recovery industries such as travel, entertainment, hospitality and food services needing more time to go back to normal. In general, people are more optimistic about the economic recovery. Even though there are funding challenges such as the RM3 legal action, there are also funding opportunities including funding for MSN, MTC's Quick-Strike programs and new federal Earmarks. TAM will amend the budget when these funding opportunities become available. She added that TAM is not going to negotiate for the long-term funding for the City/County CMA fee this year.

Ms. Zhang discussed the ongoing control of operational costs. These costs include the re-negotiated office lease with a \$40,000 savings per year, sublease with the Marin General Services Authority for about \$12,000 income annually, and a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) request since sales tax in Marin is stable. Staff is recommending a long-term COLA policy to the Board, connecting it to the CPI but capped at the sales tax growth rate. Ms. Zhang reported that TAM's Human Resources (HR) Ad Hoc Committee and the APP Executive Committee have reviewed and are in supportive of the FY2021-22 and the long-term COLA policy.

Ms. Zhang discussed the organization changes for the 3 positions: the creation and internal promotion of the Director of Project and Delivery position, the conversion position of rotating Deputy Executive Director (DED) to Regular DED/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and retitle of three existing positions to better match peer agencies structures and/or reflect the job responsibilities of the staff. All proposed changes were reviewed and supported by the HR and APP Executive Committee as well.

Ms. Zhang then discussed the components of the proposed FY2021-22 Annual Budget. The total revenue is projected to be \$42.18 million and the total expenditure \$60.16 million. As a funding agency, the difference between revenue and expenditure should not be a major concern since funding balances accumulated from prior years are being spent more for delivering of major projects and programs. As a result of the faster delivery of projects and programs, TAM is expected to have significant cash flow needs and the reserve funding will be used to cover the cash flow. Ms. Zhang then went over the expenditures for each major fund briefly.

ED Richman highlighted the FY2021-22 work plans. She identifies the ongoing general coordination activities and the major work items for administration and finance, public information and outreach, planning and program management, programing and legislation, and project management and delivery.

In response to Alternate Olson, ED Richman explained that Quick Strike is an MTC program for small scale projects in the Bay Area, in order to advance bicycle mobility, transit mobility, and support people affected by the pandemic. TAM has submitted a few projects and the final decision for funding will be announced by the end of May.

In response to Member Vogt regarding funding for the MSN project, ED Richman responded that of the \$120 million set aside for the project, \$90 million was designated for Marin and \$30 million for Sonoma. In the case federal funds become available for MSN, MTC will have more discussions about the RM3 allocations. In regard to Marin Independent Journal's opinion about the East Francisco Blvd bike lane improvement connecting to Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, ED Richman responded that an active transportation grant of \$5 million was awarded to this project which is sponsored by MTC.

In response to Vice-Chairperson Hagerty, ED Richman answered that TAM, along with consultant teams, is working on equity planning and is considering that for some of the project development processes.

In response to Mr. Burke, ED Richman explained that 1% of the Measure A/AA sales tax goes to sea level rise. It is a new program with only a few hundred thousand dollar per year and TAM is trying to figure out a most effective way to use this fund. She pointed out that there is a significant amount of planning performed already by Caltrans, Marin County and local jurisdictions. There are also funding discussions for sea level rise at the federal, State and regional levels.

7. Review and Provide Input on the Proposed Transportation Sales Tax Strategic Plan Framework (Discussion)

Ms. Zhang presented the staff report with the background and process. Both the Measure A and AA Sales Tax Expenditure plans require a Strategic Plan (SP), which is a guideline document that lists the processes and policies for implementing the projects and programs. Since the renewal of Measure AA in 2018, TAM has been presenting two SPs since some of the projects/program under Measure A haven't been fully delivered. Staff is proposing to combine the two SP into a single Measure A/AA SP but with updated guiding principles and policies. The new SP will be redesigned with new framework and information, and includes the following sections: executive summary, background, policies guiding the plan, revenue forecast and programing/allocation for the projects/programs.

Ms. Zhang added that the SP framework has been reviewed by the Administration, Projects and Planning (APP) Executive Committee on May 10 and the full SP will be reviewed and released by the TAM Board for public comment at the May 27 meeting. Ms. Zhang added that staff will bring the full SP to the COC for review at its June meeting and the TAM Board is expected to adopt the SP on June 24 pending closure of the 30-day public comment period.

8. Review the 2021 Measure A/AA Transportation Sales Tax Compliance Auditee Selection List (Action)

Ms. Zhang reported that the compliance audit is part of the Measure A/AA Expenditure Plan requirement for spending of the sale tax revenue. The recommended auditee list is usually brought to the COC for review in May and there are five recipients for this upcoming cycle. Staff is recommending the COC to accept the selection list and refer it to the May 27 Board meeting for approval.

Member Vogt moved to approve the compliance auditee selection list and Vice-Chairperson Hagerty seconded the motion, and the item was approved unanimously.

9. Committee Member Hot Items Report (Discussion)

Alternate Olson asked if there are still five alternatives being considered for the San Rafael Bettini Transit Center and ED Richman responded that there are three alternatives with one sub-option. Golden Gate Transit staff has made several presentations on this project including one to the April TAM Board meeting.

Member Powers presented the Marin Transit report. She pointed out that Marin Transit is in the process of evaluating transit fares and accessing the financial impact of the free fare program. The evaluation process focuses on gathering information on current policy impacts, researching other transit experiences, exploring both short-term and long-term options for improve the fare program, and reaching out to stakeholders. The report will be presented before the Marin Transit Board in September.

Member Powers also reported that Marin Transit will increase its passenger capacity to 50%, from 9 people to 18 people in a bus starting Wednesday.

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

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, June 21, 2021. Items planned for the meeting would include review of the combined Measures A and AA Sales Tax Strategic Plan.

In response to Member Vogt regarding the bike lane pilot terms and data, and the movable barrier on the Richmond-San Rafael bridge, ED Richman stated staff could bring updates at a future COC meeting.

ED Richman invited the COC members and alternates to join the TAM Board meeting on Thursday, May 27, so new members/alternates and those who re-signed up can be introduced and the Board can also acknowledge all COC members for their dedicated service and support at the meeting.

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