

MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
TAM

JULY 22, 2021
6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Alice Fredericks, Tiburon Town Council
Brian Colbert, San Anselmo Town Council
Damon Connolly, Marin County Board of Supervisors
Dennis Rodoni, Marin County Board of Supervisors
Eric Lucan, Novato City Council, TAM Chair
James Campbell, Belvedere City Council
Chance Cutrano, Fairfax Town Council
Kate Colin, San Rafael City Council
Stephanie Moulton-Peters, Marin County Board of Supervisors, TAM Vice-Chair
Urban Carmel, Mill Valley City Council
Katie Rice, Marin County Board of Supervisors
Beach Kuhl, Ross Town Council
Dan Hillmer, Larkspur City Council

Members Absent: Judy Arnold, Marin County Board of Supervisors
Susan Cleveland-Knowles, Sausalito City Council

Staff Members Present: Anne Richman, Executive Director
Bill Whitney, Principal Project Delivery Manager
Dan Cherrier, Principal Project Delivery Manager
David Chan, Director of Programming and Legislation
Jennifer Doucette, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board
Helga Cotter, Senior Accountant/HR Specialist
Derek McGill, Director of Planning
Molly Graham, Public Outreach Coordinator
Grace Zhuang, Accounting & Administrative Specialist
Li Zhang, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer
Nick Nguyen, Principal Project Delivery Manager
Scott McDonald, Senior Transportation Planner

Chair Lucan called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Chair Lucan welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board Jennifer Doucette to conduct a roll call to ensure a quorum. A quorum of the Board was confirmed and detailed information about how the public may participate was provided.

1. Chair's Report (Discussion)

None.

2. Commissioner Matters Not on the Agenda (Discussion)

None.

3. Commissioner Reports (Discussion)

Item 3b was taken out of order.

b. Marin Transit Report – Vice Chair Moulton-Peters on behalf of Commissioner Colin

Vice Chair Moulton-Peters reported that Marin Transit is evaluating a free fare pilot program to test whether fares are a barrier to riding transit. Through its evaluation, Marin Transit determined that many riders are not aware of existing fare discount programs; riders support expanding free or reduced fare options for low-income riders; and community-based organizations believe that discounted or free fares should be targeted to those most in need versus a system-wide free fare for all riders.

Marin Transit is developing a pilot program to test free rides for targeted user groups and planning for a broader education program to raise awareness of current fare discounts. Marin Transit staff is working with community-based organizations and health service agencies to increase outreach to the community, leveraging current systems for determining eligibility and distribution, and partnering with them on one or more free or reduced fare pilot programs.

The Marin Transit Board of Directors will consider a fare pilot program at its August 2, 2021 meeting.

Item 3c was taken out of order.

c. SMART Report – Commissioner Lucan

Commissioner Lucan reported that the Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) has received authority to take over freight hauling services on their line. The SMART Board of Directors will determine if SMART should provide the freight hauling service directly, contract with an outside freight hauling company, or a combination of both.

Item 4 was taken out of order.

4. Executive Director's Report (Discussion)

Executive Director (ED) Richman announced the cancellation of the Executive Committee and Board of Commissioners meetings in August and that TAM staff will continue to work on logistics for returning to in-person, hybrid meetings, or continuing virtually in September.

ED Richman provided an update on projects and programs including: completion of Safe Pathways projects in San Rafael and Kentfield; Gate 6 Road/Bridgeway intersection improvements; Harbor Bridge temporary 2-lane reconfiguration; the release of Request for Proposals (RFPs) for outreach and marketing support for TAM's Alternative Fuel Program and Countywide Travel Demand Forecast Modeling; TAM's public agency EV fleet webinar; Safe Routes to School (SR2S) preparation and crossing guard recruitment; Caltrans' Pedestrian Plan for the Bay Area; new terminology for Equity Priority Communities; SB 1 Local Streets and Roads Funding; and Caltrans' call for Innovative Concepts.

ED Richman also called attention to this month's Caltrans report.

Chair Lucan opened the discussion to the Board members.

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Vice-Chair Moulton-Peters commented that the newly installed HAWK (High-intensity Activated Crosswalk) beacons in San Rafael, and the Gate 6 Road/Bridgeway intersection improvements in Sausalito are transformative and greatly improve the user experience in those areas. She also expressed support for TAM staff's project submittal for Caltrans' call for Innovative Concepts.

Commissioner Carmel expressed his support of returning to in-person meetings.

3. Commissioner Reports (Discussion)

a. MTC Report – Commissioner Connolly

Commissioner Connolly reported that the Bay Area is receiving approximately \$1.7 billion from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). Sixty percent or \$912 million is being allocated through Phase 1 by formula after extensive engagement with transit operators around the region. This includes a 10% set-aside for operator "hardships and disparities" and for Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force initiatives.

At a recent Programming & Allocations Committee (PAC) meeting, Commissioner Connolly raised concerns on behalf of smaller operators in Marin and Sonoma Counties regarding issues with the distribution formula, including data inconsistencies and the formula not accounting for operators such as Marin Transit that added service during the pandemic to meet demand, or SMART that added new service just prior to the pandemic; and that Marin and Sonoma County operators believe there is a greater need for resources in order to maintain service levels going forward.

Commissioner Connolly reported that MTC will consider addressing these situations by using a portion of the 10% set-aside for "hardships or disparities" allowance. Commissioner Connolly also reported that Marin Transit is requesting an additional \$2.4 million, for a total of \$7.2 million from ARP to maintain the current adjusted service levels (for two years), accounting for revenue loss and expected service cost increases; and that Sonoma County is requesting an additional \$4.6M, for a total of \$20.1M from ARP to restore to 100% pre-pandemic service (for three years), accounting for revenue loss and service cost escalation.

Commissioner Connolly reported that the next round of the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Program is being developed by MTC, including issues around funding, policies, and county program shares. These conversations will be occurring throughout Fall 2021.

Commissioner Connolly provided an update on the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force and reported that meetings are concluding with recommendations for action coming to MTC in September and a workshop in October. Commissioner Connolly also reported that Marin Transit General Manager Nancy Whelan will serve on the task force.

5. Open Time for Public Expression

Chair Lucan asked if any members of the public wished to speak or had sent in an e-comment.

Sustainable Mill Valley Co-Head and Mill Valley resident Al Grumet commented that the City of Mill Valley will be working on its climate action plan update which will highlight emissions associated with transportation. Mr. Grumet also commented that Sustainable Mill Valley has been advocating for a Fall 2021 electric vehicle (EV) campaign to improve EV awareness and buyer motivation, and that the City of Mill Valley staff has requested funding from TAM for the event. Mr. Grumet expressed concern that the TAM Board of Commissioners would not address the funding request until September or October, nor did he think the full amount of requested funds would be granted, both of which would jeopardize the Fall 2021 event.

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San Anselmo resident Susannah Saunders expressed her support of full funding for a Fall 2021 EV campaign to address each local jurisdiction's climate action goals, including decreasing emissions through increased education, and outreach about the use of e-bikes and EVs.

"350 Bay Area" representative and Novato resident Lily Cohen expressed her support for funding education and outreach for a Fall 2021 EV campaign, including specific outreach to equity priority communities.

"350 Marin" representative and EV advocate Jody Timms expressed her support of fully funding Fairfax's and other local jurisdictions' proposed e-bike and EV campaigns for Fall 2021, and encouraged the Board to take action on this item at the September 2021 TAM Board of Commissioners meeting.

Sausalito Sustainability Commission representative and Marin County resident Greg Thomson expressed his support of fully funding a Fall 2021 EV campaign, as well.

Chair Lucan asked if there were any other public comments and hearing none, he closed the item to public comment and asked ED Richman if she would like to respond to the public comments.

ED Richman confirmed that TAM has received requests from local jurisdictions and is in the process of assessing the requests, obtaining additional information, and planning to bring this item to the Board as soon as possible for deliberation and potential action.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR (Action)

- a. Approve TAM Board Meeting Minutes June 24, 2021
- b. Annual Review of TAM's Investment Policy and Debt Policy
- c. Approval of Extension of Interagency Agreements with Larkspur-Corte Madera and Kentfield School Districts for Crossing Guard Services
- d. Review and Accept the July 2021 Project Status Report

Commissioner Rice moved to approve the Consent Calendar and was seconded by Commissioner Campbell. Chair Lucan opened the item to public comment and hearing none, a roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously.

7. State Legislative Update (Discussion)

Chair Lucan welcomed Gus Khouri, TAM's Legislative Advocate with Khouri Consulting, to present the State Legislative Update; and ED Richman noted that due to quickly moving changes at the State legislature, a supplemental memo highlighting updates on several bills has been prepared and distributed for tonight's meeting.

Chair Lucan notified the Board that he would recuse himself should an action be taken on Assembly Bill (AB) 117.

Mr. Khouri reported on the State budget including the passage of AB 128 and Senate Bill (SB) 129, which incorporate investments aimed at climate change and multi-modal transportation options. Mr. Khouri reported that Governor Newsom is making funds available for various programs including the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), the Active Transportation Program (ATP), and zero-emission vehicles.

Mr. Khouri reiterated that both the Central Marin Regional Pathways Gap Closure Project, and the San Rafael Canal Crossing are projects that would likely qualify for state funds through the augmented ATP.

Mr. Khouri noted that there were no action items for consideration but highlighted recent changes to AB 149, AB 361, AB 339 and AB 117, as outlined in the supplemental memo for Item 7.

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Chair Lucan asked the Board members if there were any questions or discussion on AB 117, and hearing none he opened the discussion of the remaining Item 7 topics to the Board.

Commissioner Colin asked for clarification about TAM's positions on bills involving broadband infrastructure and service.

ED Richman explained that the primary nexus between broadband and transportation is supporting alternative commute options and minimizing the need for single-occupant vehicle travel.

Commissioner Carmel commented that the City of Mill Valley is working to connect Marin City residents to its public facilities, however, a lack of transportation between the two neighborhoods has been a constraint and asked how the State's funding programs may be used to address this issue.

ED Richman explained that some program funding will be distributed through well-established processes, guidelines and calls for projects; and offered to meet with Commissioner Carmel separately to have a more detailed discussion about the City of Mill Valley's needs. ED Richman also commented that TAM staff will continue to work with partners to monitor and seek various funding opportunities.

Chair Lucan opened this item to public comment. Seeing no one wishing to speak, Chair Lucan closed the item to public comment.

8. Marin Transit's Annual Presentation and Funding Allocation (Action)

ED Richman welcomed Marin Transit General Manager Nancy Whelan who provided the agency's annual report highlighting its achievements over the past year, ridership data, federal relief funding, operation budget and revenue sources for FY2021/22, capital budget, and various factors that the agency is monitoring that may affect its operations.

Ms. Whelan discussed the allocation requests including \$13,612,193 in Measure A/AA funding for transit services including community shuttles, school transportation, rural transit, seniors/special needs services, and for funding capital projects; and \$944,944 in Measure B funding for mobility management program staffing to support paratransit programs and other programs to provide mobility to seniors and low-income residents.

Chair Lucan opened the discussion to the Board members.

Commissioner Rice thanked Ms. Whelan for her presentation and asked if AB 149 would have any implications for Marin Transit.

Ms. Whelan responded that Marin Transit will continue to monitor the situation.

Chair Lucan asked if any members of the public wished to speak or had sent an e-comment, and hearing none, he closed the item to public comment and asked for a motion.

Vice-Chair Moulton-Peters made a motion to approve the allocation of FY 2021/22 Transportation Sales Tax Funds (Measure AA) to Marin Transit and was seconded by Commissioner Fredericks. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously.

Vice-Chair Fredericks made a motion to approve the allocation of FY 2021/22 Vehicle Registration Fee (Measure B) Funds to Marin Transit and was seconded by Commissioner Cutrano. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Update on US 101 Part-Time Transit Lane Feasibility Study (Discussion)

ED Richman introduced TAM Director of Planning Derek McGill and Kimley-Horn consultant Adam Dankberg to present an update of the US 101 Part-Time Transit Lane Feasibility Study.

Mr. McGill provided a brief background of the Study and explained that “bus-on-shoulder” and “part-time transit lane” are both commonly used terminologies to describe the same concept.

Mr. Dankberg presented an update of the Study, including project objectives, purpose, and process; outreach activities and survey results; existing traffic and congestion conditions; Covid-19 implications; concept summary and operational scenarios; capital improvements summary; operating costs and savings; ridership, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and equity benefits; coordination with planned improvements; systems plan; subsequent phase efforts; and legal/statute coordination.

Chair Lucan opened the discussion to the Board members.

Commissioner Carmel commented that making bus transit competitive with vehicular travel times is integral to a successful transportation plan. Commissioner Carmel highlighted the success of public transportation systems in Europe and the effect those systems have on decreasing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Commissioner Carmel expressed his support of continued investment in public transit infrastructure and service.

Commissioner Rice asked for clarification of the terminologies used for bus-on-shoulder, part-time transit lane, and express bus lane.

Mr. Dankberg explained that bus-on-shoulder and part-time transit lane are the same concept; and that an express bus lane is commonly seen on the left-hand side of the highway but may be located on the right-hand side of the highway in a part-time transit lane scenario.

Commissioner Rice expressed reservations about the initial cost estimates outlined in the Study; and asked if the bus-on-shoulder conditions were the same in both the North-bound and South-bound sections of the highway. Commissioner Rice also asked for clarification between an auxiliary lane and a shoulder that is as wide as an auxiliary lane.

Mr. Dankberg explained that an auxiliary lane is generally added to the highway at an on-ramp location, does not immediately merge into the general purpose lanes, ends at the next off-ramp, and may be used by any vehicle. Mr. Dankberg further explained that in a part-time transit lane scenario the shoulder area would be limited to transit vehicles only.

In response to Commissioner Rice’s inquiry about the bus-on-shoulder conditions on the North-bound and South-bound directions of the highway, Mr. Dankberg explained that the study included geometrics for both directions and found that the existing South-bound congestion condition was the only one that warranted a part-time transit lane.

Commissioner Rice expressed her support of the part-time transit lane project, commented that many variables will need to be taken into consideration for it to be successful, and noted that the passenger number and hours of use parameters for the existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane no longer alleviate congestion.

Vice-Chair Moulton-Peters expressed her support of the part-time transit lane project and noted that the concept attempts to use all of the available highway margins.

Commissioner Colin expressed support for the underlying goal of the part-time transit lane concept but asked for clarification of how the concept would work at the Freitas Parkway on-ramp onto South-bound US 101.

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Mr. Dankberg provided a general overview of how the concept may be implemented, and Mr. McGill explained that while there is a concept design developed as part of the study, specific locations will have different challenges.

Mr. McGill noted that a design has been developed for the Freitas Parkway interchange and that he could meet with Commissioner Colin separately to discuss the design solutions specific to that location.

Chair Lucan asked about the enforcement and communication of speed-limit thresholds.

Mr. Dankberg explained that enforcement would be based on real-time conditions and that communication specifications would be determined in the concept of operations during the subsequent project phase.

Chair Lucan asked about the legislative changes that would need to occur to implement the part-time transit lane project, and whether private transit operators will lobby for use.

Mr. Dankberg explained that interpretation of the current code would allow any transit operator to use the part-time transit lane, but that the goal within the legislature is to limit part-time transit lane use to public transit operators and includes specialized training and permitting to access the part-time transit lane.

Chair Lucan further asked who is responsible for determining if the part-time transit lane may be used by both public and private operators, to which Mr. Dankberg responded that it is yet to be determined.

Chair Lucan asked if any members of the public wished to speak or had sent an e-comment and seeing none, asked if there were any further comments or questions from the Board members.

Commissioner Lee expressed his support of the project and noted that in San Francisco, revenue was raised by training and permitting private transit operators to use the public transit infrastructure; and that monitoring devices are better than stickers for tracking and enforcement.

Mr. McGill commented that TAM staff will be announcing the release of the Study next week and will present the results of the Study to the other transit operator boards in the coming months. Mr. McGill further noted that TAM staff will bring the final report back to the Board for acceptance to close out the grant process and move forward to the next phase of the project.

10. Pandemic Response Update (Discussion)

ED Richman provided an update of the transportation pandemic responses/issues including: an overview from 2020-2021, TAM Board direction on various issues, travel conditions, project and program efforts, transit recovery, and HOV hours.

Mr. McGill provided an update on the Quick Build Program, equity coordination with partner agencies, TAM program changes, and next steps.

Chair Lucan opened the discussion to the Board members.

Commissioner Lee commented on the successful implementation of the Quick Build Program and asked if it was possible to make the program permanent. Commissioner Lee also expressed his support of the EV outreach and education and would like to expand the program.

Commissioner Colbert expressed his support of the Quick Build Program and noted that the program parameters encouraged focused and creative projects.

Chair Lucan asked if any members of the public wished to speak or had sent in an e-comment and seeing none, asked ED Richman and Mr. McGill if they had any further comment.

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ED Richman commented that the Quick Build Program allowed TAM to create innovative community projects and that TAM staff will evaluate if similar approaches may be applied to other programs.

Chair Lucan closed this item and reminded everyone that the August Executive Committee and Board of Commissioners meetings are cancelled.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

DRAFT