

JPB CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building
1250 San Carlos Avenue San Carlos, CA 94070

MINUTES – FEBRUARY 20, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: P. Bendix, F. Granade, G. Graham (Vice-Chair), J. Hronowski, B. Jenkins (Chair), M. Kiesling, S. Richardson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: B. Wilfley, J. Shukis

STAFF PRESENT: B. Doty, M. Bouchard, R. Lake

Chair Bruce Jenkins called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program – Status Report: Caltrain 2025

Rail Transformation Chief Bob Doty reported the following:

- Caltrain staff met with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) last April to ask about the possibility of providing a different type of service and what methodology Caltrain will use to approach the changes.
- Caltrain's current system has a primary core of 24 stations and many grade crossings.
- Caltrain and the FRA will co-host a national program at the SamTrans District offices on April 1-2 to discuss the best practices for intrusion protection in the USA.
- Electrification of the Caltrain system is scheduled to be completed in 2014.
- Caltrain has increased service and revenue with the same infrastructure and rolling stock with a 54 percent increase in ridership and 100 percent increase in revenue.
- Passengers expect more stops and reduced runtime, newer vehicles and better access at stations.
- Future service requirements include: improved system performance, maintain express service at less than 60 minutes, limit San Francisco to San Jose travel time to 70 minutes for all trains, stop at every station every 30 minutes and minimize equipment and crew requirements.
- Operational improvements for electrification require a new signaling system and grade crossings need to approach a 95 percent equivalent of a grade separated railroad.
- Vehicle options include electric haul locomotives and electric multiple units (EMUs). EMUs are more efficient at acceleration and deceleration, basically self-propelled, carry more passengers, earn more revenue, reduce operating costs and have higher performance capability.
- Caltrain has completed crash worthiness tests with compliant trains and will present test data for Crash Energy Management to the FRA in April.
- Funding strategies for Caltrain 2025 are being developed to include public/private partnerships.

Questions/Comments

Sepi Richardson said Caltrain must look to the future but it will be very costly. She asked where Caltrain is looking for funding. Mr. Doty said Caltrain has done several fare increases and there's been absolutely no elasticity of demand. The perception is that it is a good value. He said each of the counties in the JPB has financial issues. High Speed Rail (HSR) is looking for a bond issue in November for about \$10 billion. The state government is borrowing money from transportation. Mr. Doty said that what supersedes these facts is understanding the benefit that Caltrain 2025 will provide.

Ms. Richardson said Mr. Doty's presentation should be made available to the Congestion Management group with C/CAG. Mr. Doty said the people with the most to gain and who enjoy what we do the most are the Caltrain riders.

Ms. Richardson said new transit should be tied to housing, and cities should be supporting the process.

Deputy Director, Rail Transportation Michelle Bouchard said that behind Mr. Doty's excellent overview is an extensive outreach planning program.

Ms. Richardson said regulations from legislation will require 20 percent less energy use. She asked how this could be achieved without public transportation. Mr. Doty said Caltrain's timing is good and that is why this is being done now. He said Caltrain will have the prototypical railroad for the entire United States. Caltrain owns its right-of way, is relatively small and has great support in the three JPB counties.

Michael Kiesling said the trick to funding is to point out to the MTC or regional government that the next pot of money should go to Caltrain's project because it is the most important project in the region that is next in line to get funding. The project will aid BART, the Capitol Corridor and HSR.

Chair Jenkins thanked Mr. Doty for the great presentation. He said he hears opposition from Atherton and Menlo Park about Caltrain and hopes staff would invite the editor from *The Almanac* to hear this presentation. Mr. Doty said he met with these groups and told them it was great that they care so much about the railroad and that Caltrain wants a system they want, which allows more stops that doesn't affect journey time.

Paul Bendix asked how grade crossings would look like grade crossings that weren't there. Mr. Doty said that from a safety evaluation perspective, the rating for the grade crossing would be 95 percent equivalent of it not being there. The crossing would be brought to a level of the systems that Caltrain is proposing. From a safety rating perspective, a grade separated railway is supposedly 100 percent safe and Caltrain is using a rating system to make grade crossing equivalent to 95 percent of the same.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of December 19, 2007 and January 16, 2008 were approved by the committee.

Public Comment

Jeff Carter, Burlingame, reported:

- Requested a timeline for service restoration to the Broadway and Atherton stations.
- *Caltrain Connection* should be published more often.
- Clock times on some station message boards are a few minutes faster than times on the ticket vending machines.
- Bicycle capacity is a constant issue.
- Caltrain needs more funding, be it a gas or sales tax.

Andy Chow, Redwood City, reported:

- A lot of money is being spent by MTC for a regional rail plan to do basically nothing.

- VTA has a new peak hour express Route 168 from Gilroy to the Diridon station in San Jose. He asked if Caltrain is working with the VTA in terms of improving connectivity between the trains and asked about Caltrain's future service to Gilroy.

Sam Bejach, Berkeley, said he is a transit advocate, attends many area transit meetings and would like to employ his skills in helping to create a financing mechanism for mass transit. He asked if the Caltrain model could be applicable to the East Bay from San Jose to Richmond and if the Capitol Corridor could be eliminated from Richmond to San Jose. He said BART should not be given money for an extension until BART eliminates redundancy and money could be freed up for the Caltrain model.

Ms. Bouchard said 24 transit agencies are all competing for the same funding. She said there is awareness at the regional level that is beyond where it was a few years ago and the notion of HSR is impacting the need to take a more comprehensive look at Bay Area transit. Caltrain is putting together a model that could possibly be expanded and or replicated when the time is right. Caltrain is hoping to prove a model that really works and if proven, working to expand a model that would be the most efficient way of spending regional dollars.

Staff Report

Ms. Bouchard reported the following:

- The 98-train schedule will be implemented on March 3.
- A free shuttle will take riders from the Belmont station to the Hillsdale station during peak commute hours.
- Caltrain's annual counts will reported at the May JPB meeting.
- Amtrak has reached a tentative agreement with nine unions with a possible ratification date of April 1. The cost of business will increase with Amtrak operators due to the modest annual amount that will be compounded since talks broke off in 2000.

Chairperson's Report:

Chair Jenkins said that he attended the Capitol Corridor meeting today and the Department of Finance in Sacramento did their head count on the Capitol Corridor on Labor Day weekend when the Bay Bridge was shut down and feeder buses to the Capitol Corridor were shut down. This would affect data on empty trains and the need for more rolling stock.

Public Comment

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said transit advocate Francis Wong has passed away. He was a strong supporter of Caltrain, served on the Bicycle Task Force and attended many meetings of the JPB.

Committee Comments

None

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 19, 2008 at 6:00 p.m., San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, CA 94070, Second floor, Boccaccio Auditorium.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.