

**Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board
Work Program – Legislative – Planning Committee (WPLP)
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA**

MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: C. Stone (Chair), C. Chavez, M. Zmuda

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: J. Hartnett, J. Cassman, B. Fitzpatrick, M. Bouchard, D. Hansel, D. Seamans, S. Wong

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Charles Stone called the subcommittee meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. and Director Chavez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

District Secretary Dora Seamans called the roll and confirmed all members were present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There was no public comment.

4. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2020

Motion/Second: Chavez/Zmuda

Ayes: Chavez, Zmuda, Stone

Noes: None

Absent: None

5. CALTRAIN BUSINESS PLAN - UPDATE COVERING MARCH 2020

Jim Hartnett, Executive Director, provided a financial support update to sustain and expand services. He said there were State and Federal funds distribution discussions that Caltrain took active part in.

Sebastian Petty, Director of Policy Development, presented the staff report and highlights included declining shuttle riders, Caltrain Station Management Toolbox, equity assessment, and analysis of funding opportunities. Mr. Petty noted that Caltrain demographics match commuters in the corridor, but not the overall population, and that low-income riders were 30 percent of the population, but only 10 percent of riders. In general, Caltrain is faster and costs more.

Director Zmuda asked if commuters living in the corridor were commuting from other districts as well. Mr. Petty clarified that these commuters made work trips over-all, including driving. He noted that discounts are primarily used by middle and high income users.

Director Zmuda asked if there was any equity data so far. Mr. Petty responded that the Clipper Start program was pushed out due to COVID-19.

Public comment

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, commented on access to Caltrain, expanding modes of getting to Caltrain, and off-peak ridership.

Roland Lebrun, San Jose, commented on public commenting procedures.

Adina Levin, Friends of Caltrain, commented on improving fare structure, means based fares, scheduled integrations and affordable housing.

Adrian Brandt, Redwood City, commented on fare inequities.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, commented on solutions to fare inequities for low and middle income customers.

Roland Lebrun, San Jose, commented on the Governor's Orders.

Adina Levin, Friends of Caltrain, commented on adding this information to the GTSF data feed for phones.

Director Zmuda was commented on local transit fares being cheaper than Caltrain fares as a point of further study.

Director Chavez said it would be interesting to see income demographics on a graph to better understand where low income people are living and how they then get to Caltrain services.

6. UPDATE ON 25TH AVE GRADE SEPARATION/HILLSDALE STATION CLOSURE

Michelle Bouchard, Chief Operating Officer, Rail, provided an update on the project, including progress and accelerating work by closing the station and moving service to Belmont.

Rafael Bolon, Project Manager, provided additional updates on the project and mentioned the temporary closure in May. He said it is ultimately a safety improvement project, with two new vehicular crossings to improve East-West connectivity being built, as well as pedestrian and bicycle paths. Highlights of the presentation included physical progress, project funding, station closure starting May 16 for six months, proposed shuttle service, and customer communication efforts.

Director Zmuda asked about the volume of daily riders from Hillsdale that will now be using Belmont. Mr. Bolon said he would research that information, but noted that Hillsdale was the fourth or fifth most travelled station.

Chair Stone pointed out that members of the public were allowed to address the meeting electronically, it may not be the way everyone wanted currently, but the JPB is in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order.

Joan Cassman, Legal Counsel, affirmed full compliance with the Brown Act.

7. FINANCE AND RIDERSHIP UPDATES - COVID-19

Jim Hartnett, Executive Director, gave a brief update on these circumstances, including major orders requiring people to stay at home and employees working from home, many of whom rode Caltrain. The six counties ordered employees to stay at home except for essential services, then the state issued its own order; the three county orders are set to expire April 7, however this is believed to be extended and the State Order has an indefinite end date. Mr. Hartnett stated that ridership and revenues are down, service adjustments were made, the duration of this situation is uncertain, but ridership updates will be provided.

Derek Hansel, Chief Financial Officer, provided an extensive current financial outlook due to COVID-19; highlights included a drop in one way and day passes at the end of February, a decrease in ridership, impacts on financial liquidity, service modifications, and broader economic impacts. Mr. Hansel stated that where typically over 20,000 tickets were sold a day, we are currently selling about 1,000 one-way tickets a day. There is some liquidity due to GoPass, non-GoPass fares representing over seven million in revenues a month, which has since dropped significantly, and April is anticipated to be extremely low. Mr. Hansel said they expect a loss of 90 percent for non GoPass fare revenues. He said they have made a ten million draw against the thirty million line of credit with JP Morgan.

Ms. Bouchard said they are trying to operate nimbly; effective March 17, baby bullets were reduced in order to provide for more frequent station cover. She stated that they are careful with decisions that would require furloughing workers. Weekend service will remain as it is currently at every 90 minutes and staff is looking to recoup cost savings where possible.

Derek Hansel noted this challenge is for both Caltrain and its partners, as jobless claims are spiking at two million nationally. There has been significant lobbying for state and federal support for public transit, and they are heavily dependent on that happen to recoup and roll service

Director Zmuda asked why reduce bullet train with first round of service reductions. Ms. Bouchard said the value of time was not driving ridership, and they could eliminate those trains and still provide to provide the frequency and coverage needed.

Public comment

Aleta Dupree, Oakland, asked how COVID-19 was affecting the electrification project.

Roland Lebrun, San Jose, commented on remote meetings, baby bullet removal, and managing agencies.

Jeff Carter requested that data in Excel spreadsheet format be included into the agenda packets.

Mark Roust commented on using lighter rolling stock because it would cost less to operate.

Director Zmuda said the utilization of line of credit would be best way to continue to operate and we are now waiting for the federal government to pass legislation.

Director Chavez asked if was possible to get a reimbursement from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) for transporting first responders on trains.

Jim Hartnett responded that conductors were asked to provide information on who was riding on the weekends and that they are studying all of the language now in order to recoup as much as they may be qualified for. Joan Cassman, Legal Counsel, said she would have someone look into that, as well as every angle for Federal funding.

Director Stone acknowledged the current unchartered situation and asked to be kept abreast of updates.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBER REQUESTS – there were no requests.

9. DATE/TIME OF NEXT REGULAR WPLP COMMITTEE MEETING: APRIL 22, 2020 AT 3:00 PM, SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING, 2ND FLOOR, 1250 SAN CARLOS AVENUE, SAN CARLOS, CA

ADJOURN - The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.