MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 16, 2011


MEMBERS ABSENT:  None

STAFF PRESENT:  T. Bartholomew, M. Bouchard, P. Lee, N. McKenna, M. Stevenson

Chair Bruce Jenkins called the meeting to order at 5:42 and Brian Wilfley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes
A motion (Hronowski/Wilfley) to approve the minutes of October 19, 2011 was approved (Tucker abstained).

Public Comment
Jeff Carter, Burlingame, said the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) Business Plan was released recently and the cost of the project has increased. People are making Caltrain the bad person for the increase in cost for High Speed Rail (HSR). Caltrain has been around for over 100 years and HSR needs to move forward.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said there was a news item about the Port of San Francisco getting a grant for improvements for signals related to the Quint Street lead. He recently noticed there are some new signal houses stored along the right of way near Control Point Army and asked if staff could provide an update on the plan activity for the freight improvement.

Chairperson’s Report – Bruce Jenkins
Chair Jenkins reported:
- Attended the CHSRA meeting in Palo Alto yesterday. He said the meeting was very well attended with many pros and cons.
- Appointed John Hronowski, Gerry Graham and Mr. Wilfley to the nominating committee for 2012 chair and vice chair.

Presentation:  Shuttles
Mike Stevenson, Associate Operations Contract Administrator for Shuttles reported:
- Caltrain operates 31 routes in three counties serving 19 stations.
- JPB operates 22 routes and nine are employer operated routes.
- Some business partners are Genentech, Stanford University and Oracle.
Public partners include the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB), the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA).

Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) funding through the BAAQMD is a $4 surcharge on motor vehicles registered in the Bay Area.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Caltrain shuttle budget is approximately $4.4 million.

Average weekday ridership is almost 6,800.

There were about 1.5 million riders in FY2011 with an average shuttle trip of 2.2 miles.

Average fare based on ridership in FY2011 is $3.63 per trip.

Shuttle operators provide operational flexibility to respond to unplanned situations, bus bridging and support various Caltrain emergency operations.

The current shuttle operator contract option year for Caltrain shuttles expires September 30, 2012.

Mr. Graham said he notices there are some shuttles being operated above the 31 mentioned earlier, including the Genentech shuttle operated out of Millbrae. Mr. Stevenson said this report is on shuttles provided by grant programs that touch Caltrain stations. He said a portion of the Genentech ridership that comes into Millbrae is included in this report.

Mr. Wilfley asked if employers pay about one-third of the cost. Mr. Stevenson said for the JPB funded shuttles, employers contribute 39 percent, and for the TA funded shuttles, the private match is 32 percent.

Cat Tucker asked if there is an avenue for new companies to join in the shuttle partnership. Mr. Stevenson said the BAAQMD grant maximum is $1 million. The TA will be issuing a call for projects.

Paul Bendix asked where there are expansion opportunities to move people to Caltrain stations. Mr. Stevenson said some routes are limited by service frequency and logistics. Staff has been receiving requests for additional service from other participants. Most routes are using small cutaway buses carrying 24 to 30 passengers and this is causing capacity constraints. The problem is finding the local match to fund the shuttles.

Mr. Bendix asked if the shuttles are wheelchair accessible. Mr. Stevenson said every shuttle that is subsidized is required to have wheelchair access.

Kevin Gardiner said he was at a meeting in Mountain View and wanted to know if there are any shuttles operated in the north Bayshore area. Mr. Stevenson said there is the Google shuttle and the Shoreline/Embarcadero shuttle.

Mr. Hronowski said shuttles carry about 30 people so what happens if there are more people than the shuttle can carry. Mr. Stevenson said a back-up shuttle is provided, but shuttles do allow for standees.
Mr. Hronowski asked if the Marguerite shuttle is part of the Stanford Transit System or part of the shuttle program. Mr. Stevenson said the JPB provides about $100,000 of the $5 million that provides 45 peak hour shuttles.

Scott Klemmer said he uses the Marguerite shuttle and has noticed ridership is way up.

Mr. Wilfley asked how the shuttles are not viewed as competitive to the normal bus service. Director of Rail Transportation Michelle Bouchard said looking at transportation as an eco-system where the different modes contribute a different piece these shuttles are focused on last mile trips, east/west trips and focused entirely in the peak period. So this would in no way be in competition with trunk line service that SamTrans provides. Mr. Stevenson said through the TFCA funding there is a requirement that the San Mateo County Transit District must sign-off that the services being applied for are not in competition with existing transit.

Ms. Bouchard said according to a shuttle survey results, 90 percent of Caltrain riders would not be riding if it weren’t for the shuttles.

Mr. Bendix said the new Marguerite shuttles have the best wheelchair lifts.

Public Comment
Jeff Carter, Burlingame, said there are a lot of people on the 5:15 p.m. train out of San Francisco boarding at Bayshore Station from the Forty Niner games. Is there any possibility of working with the Forty Niners for a shuttle between Bayshore Station and Candlestick Park?
Mr. Stevenson said the challenges are the potential of using public funds and being in competition with the private service providers. Ms. Bouchard said staff has never seen this type of ridership in terms of foot traffic from Candlestick to the Bayshore Station.

Andy Chow, Redwood City, said shuttle statistics don’t count the Muni express service that Caltrain pays for and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) shuttles. Mr. Stevenson said the statistics are for commute only shuttle service. Ms. Bouchard said Caltrain doesn’t fund Muni Service.

Mr. Chow said he has a shuttle service and provides service from Mountain View to Shoreline.

Staff Report
Ms. Bouchard reported:
- October performance:
  - Ridership was up 2 percent over last year.
  - Farebox revenue is $4.8 million, up 15.3 percent.
  - Total revenue is up 25 percent for the year.
  - Average weekday ridership is 44,000.
  - On-time performance was 94.9 percent and staff has been paying attention to this number and the recovery from mechanical delays.
- Special service
  - Giants ridership increased 7 percent this year.
  - Ridership is up for Sharks, Stanford and Berkeley football games.
The Turkey Trot will take place on Thanksgiving Day in San Jose and a special train will operate from San Francisco. A Sunday schedule will operate on Thanksgiving Day and a Saturday schedule will operate on the day after Thanksgiving.

- Current construction includes the completion of the Jerrold Avenue Bridge in San Francisco, work continues on the San Bruno Grade Separation and at South Terminal/San Jose Diridon.
- CAC member Sepi Richardson has tendered her resignation and staff will see if she is able to attend the December meeting to thank her for her service.
- It has come to the attention of the staff there may be some confusion or misinformation on the CAC attendance policy. The policy provides for a member to have up to four absences in a rolling 12-month period. It is a CAC adopted policy and approved by the Board. If there is a desire to revisit the policy staff is more than happy to facilitate discussion.

Ms. Tucker thanked staff for bringing up the attendance policy and clarifying. She said there is quite a bit of south county ridership going to the Turkey Trot and other special events and what would it take to get special trains from Gilroy north for these type of events. Ms. Bouchard said there is trackage right issues but to run special trains and break-even the ridership needs to be around 1,000 passengers.

Public Comment

Andy Chow, Redwood City, said he recently went to the San Jose Station and looked at the platforms and very surprised at the signage. There was a sign that said San Francisco and one that shows San Jose/Gilroy and asked why there is a San Jose sign in San Jose.

Mr. Hronowski asked if there will be a grand opening when the platforms go into service. Ms. Bouchard said yes around January.

Ms. Bouchard said the Bicycle Advisory Committee is meeting tomorrow evening, November 17. This group is doing some good work, including signage and mirrors in stations where there are tunnels.

Mr. Klemmer said a couple of months ago there was a discussion on commute capacity and is there any update on adding a train to accommodate the commute traffic. Ms. Bouchard said staff is thinking about it and it will be filtered into the upcoming budget discussion, particularly if the revenues are sustained and it allows for more trains to be operated. The challenge is providing service where it is needed.

Mr. Gardiner said some employers in Mountain View were discussing the Transportation Management Association and plugging into Caltrain. To what degree are major employers and Silicon Valley Leadership Group lobbying for the long-term financial stability of Caltrain. Ms. Bouchard said the number one group helping with the funding is the Silicon Valley Leadership Group and they are the number one connection to the business community.
Committee Comments
Mr. Hronowski asked when the policy was instituted in San Francisco where conductors are checking tickets as people go through the gates at off-peak times. Ms. Bouchard said staff has been working with Amtrak on checking tickets when there is control access. Also Clipper has caused some conflict issues with customers and conductors. This door check is only being done during the off-peak because of the amount of passengers during peak.

Ms. Tucker said she received an email regarding the Clipper card and validator problems. Ms. Bouchard said a group was convened regarding the beeping on the validator and it was more related to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The group will be making recommendations on the placement of the Clipper tagging machines around the station.

Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting:
TBD at 5:40 p.m., San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building, 2nd Floor Bacciocco Auditorium, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, CA.

Ms. Tucker asked if the December meeting can be moved up one week. Ms. Bouchard said the committee could make a motion to move the meeting up a week.

A motion (Tucker/Hronowski) to move the December 21 meeting to December 14 depending on the availability of the room was approved by all.

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.