MINUTES OF OCTOBER 17, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT: P. Bendix, K. Gardiner, J. Hronowski, B. Jenkins, D. Lindsey, Y. Mills, A. Sweet, C. Tucker

MEMBERS ABSENT: A. Levin

STAFF PRESENT: J. Averill, T. Bartholomew, M. Bouchard, R. Haskin

Chair Paul Bendix called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m. and John Hronowski led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
A motion (Lindsey/Sweet) to approve the minutes of September 19, 2012 was approved (Tucker and Hronowski abstained).

PUBLIC COMMENT
Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said he appreciates Caltrain keeping its regular schedule during times when extra service is provided. He said the additional trains help. He thinks Caltrain might need to start adding service on the weekends as ridership increases. He said the service stops too early on Sunday evenings.

CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION, REAL TIME INFORMATION
Executive Officer, Customer Service and Marketing Rita Haskin said:

- Real-time provides a prediction of a train arrival or departure by using global positioning satellite information from the locomotive.
- Visual Message Signs at the stations will display the train number, its scheduled arrival time, and its status which could indicate how many minutes late the train will be. Advanced and special train information will also be displayed and will be labeled with an “A” or an “S.”
- When a train approaches the station, the sign will display the number of the approaching train and a caution to stand back. When trains come through but do not stop at the station, the sign will notify customers with a caution. This does not apply to non-revenue trains at this time.
- The Caltrain Web page will display real-time information. Customers can pick the station or pick the train they want to know about. Customers can sign up for text or e-mail alerts for a specific train.

Cat Tucker asked if information will be sent out so she can forward it. Ms. Haskin said customers can go to Caltrain.com/realtime to learn about the project and the timeline.
The project is in testing mode. The plan is to go live at the end of 2012 or the beginning of 2013. Caltrain might do a soft launch of this project to allow time to find and fix bugs. Information will be provided to 511.org by next spring so customers can get this information online or by phone.

Dee Lindsey asked if text alerts are available now. Ms. Haskin said it is in testing mode and not available at this time.

Mr. Hronowski asked if Union Pacific (UP) trains will be included in this project. Ms. Haskin said UP uses a different Rail Operating Control System so they will not be included.

Yvonne Mills asked what the difference is between revenue and non-revenue trains. Ms. Haskin said a revenue train is one that stops to pick up passengers. A non-revenue train is one that is moving without customers, such as when a train breaks down and is then moved to another location for repairs and does not carry passengers at the time.

Alex Sweet said real-time information helps customers use their time efficiently. She asked if the Web page has the option to select individual trains to find out information about them. Ms. Haskin said no, but the customer can look at a station which will display the train information, and customers can sign up for text or e-mail alerts for specific trains. Several methods will be used to advertise real-time information.

Chair Bendix said a soft launch is a good idea and is happy this system will be reliable.

Public Comment
John Canfield, San Carlos, said he is building transportation applications for smartphones, and his Caltrain application is called Nimbler Caltrain. He would like to work with Caltrain and support the real-time system.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said the estimated arrival time should be displayed, not the scheduled time with a late notice. He said the signal system knows the UP trains exist even though they don’t have the global positioning feature so there should be a way to warn people to stay clear of the tracks when a UP or a non-revenue train comes through.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said there could be confusion about “A” or “S” trains because the average customer might not know what those are. He said this system should be able to warn customers about non-revenue trains. He said some problems shut down the entire system, like when a tree falls on the tracks. He said it might be better to keep the trains moving at least as close to the incident area as possible and then reverse them to keep people moving on the system.

Ms. Haskin said the names of some free mobile applications are posted on the Caltrain Web page. She said this system gives customers options by letting them know the status of the trains. The train conductors will have cheat sheets that show which other transit systems connect to Caltrain stations so the conductors can offer the information to customers giving them more transportation options.
TICKET VENDING MACHINE (TVM) REPLACEMENT

Ms. Haskin said:

- The current TVMs were deployed in 2000. There are 104 machines at 31 stations. The machines sell one-way, Day Pass, zone upgrade, and parking permits. They accept cash and credit cards, and programming can be deployed remotely.
- A planning study was launched which probed the internal stakeholders, reviewed nine transit agencies, and identified new technologies.
- Possible features in the new TVMs include Clipper integration, touchscreens, fast ticketing options, and a bill recycler.
- The next steps include an online customer survey in early 2013, a funding plan, replacing the current TVMs in 2015 or 2016, and investigating mobile ticketing.

Ms. Sweet asked if Caltrain tickets can be purchased in advance. Ms. Haskin said the Day Pass or one-way tickets have to be purchased on the day they are to be used. Some special event tickets can be purchased in advance like with the Bay to Breakers event.

Mr. Hronowski said he would like the Day Pass to be integrated with Clipper on the new machines. Ms. Haskin said Clipper is not ready for the Day Pass yet, but may be developed better in the future. She said staff is looking at ticket offerings to see if they need to be more flexible.

Ms. Mills said she appreciates that Caltrain checks the mobile applications before advertising them on the website because she has seen other applications that were inaccurate.

Ms. Tucker said customers might not know if their Clipper card will have enough money loaded on them when the customer takes a trip. Ms. Haskin said the cards can be automatically loaded so they will always have enough.

Public Comments

Andy Chow, Redwood City, said the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority upgraded their machines with Clipper readers. He asked if Caltrain investigated upgrading the existing TVMs. Ms. Haskin said the Metropolitan Transportation Commission took away funding that was in place for the project so the upgrades couldn’t be done. The TVMs have to be replaced because there is a limited life span and upgrades will only work for so long.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said it was a terrific idea to do advanced sales for Bay to Breakers. He said having touchscreens on the new TVMs is a dumb idea because they are fragile and susceptible to vandalism. He said the Bay Area Rapid Transit machines use the same hardware for the Clipper interface as for credit card payments. He said online ticketing by smartphones is paid for by the implementer and would be good for Caltrain to pursue.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said he prefers paper tickets over Clipper. He said the new TVMs should provide point-to-point pricing instead of zone pricing which is unfair. He said it would be good to provide advanced sales for Giants games or a package deal.
Jerry Graham, Burlingame, asked who built the current machines. Ms. Haskin said VenTek. Mr. Graham said the bill recycler would be a good feature. He said he knows of an automatic fare collection system that takes credit cards and he thinks customers don’t even have to remove their cards from their pockets for the machines to know when the customers come and go from the transit system.

**CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT**
No report

**STAFF REPORT**
Director of Rail Michelle Bouchard reported:
- Performance for September over Fiscal Year 2013:
  - 85 percent on-time performance
  - Average weekday ridership was 50,821 riders
  - Farebox revenue was $5.85 million
- Extra engineers were brought in to help with a busy weekend when eight different events took place in the area. Caltrain ran 28 additional trains, and Saturday alone carried 16,000 additional passengers.
- Giants ridership was at 110,000 extra riders this year.
- The counts in February will reveal if things have improved since the implementation of the new service trains.

Ms. Bouchard said the quality of recent service and information shared during service disruptions has been unacceptable. There have been 12 major disruptions during peak periods since September 21, including a communications failure that delayed 25 trains, a mechanical problem that delayed 33 trains, a vehicle strike at grade crossing, an incident with multiple mechanical failures, an officer involved shooting, and a fallen tree. Every day staff and the new contract operator discuss causes of delays, trends, and how to react better in the future to address the learning curve. There has been a glaring gap in communication with customers. A communications taskforce has been put together to understand where communication needs to be provided during service disruptions, the sources of the communication, what needs to be communicated, and the process to implement it.

**COMMITTEE COMMENTS**
Ms. Mills asked if there has been consideration to limiting drinking and intoxicated passengers on the trains. Ms. Bouchard said Caltrain would rather have intoxicated people on the train than on the roads. She said it sounds like there is a need to enforce the rules on the train, and typically enforcement is increased on game days.

Mr. Hronowski asked how the change to the consists have affected the bicyclists. Ms. Bouchard said Train 324 had the most bicycle bumps, but now there are gallery sets on Trains 322 and 324 which increased bike capacity, and staff received good feedback. She said the Federal Railroad Administration was on property and they were concerned that aisles stay clear on bike trains. Mr. Hronowski said there is a lot of correspondence about bumps on Train 375 and asked what consists are on that train. Ms. Bouchard said she will look into it. Mr. Hronowski said he was on Train 262 when a bike passenger lost his ticket and was instructed by the conductor to detrain
to purchase a ticket. He said this passenger told him the conductor said the train would wait for him. The customer purchased a ticket but before he could get back on the train it departed with his bike onboard. Ms. Bouchard said she would look into the issue.

Mr. Bendix and Bruce Jenkins left at 7:07 p.m.

Ms. Tucker asked if planning guides for travelers are going to be offered to customers. Ms. Haskin said the customer service center can help customers understand how to plan their train transportation.

Ms. Bouchard said each train has two bike cars but Bombardier trains and gallery sets have different capacity levels, so the website advertises which trains have which consists to help customers plan ahead.

Vice Chair Kevin Gardiner said Train 375 might have increased bike bumps because Palo Alto is a new stop where bicyclists board and take up space preventing Redwood City bicyclists from boarding.

Ms. Mills said 511.org has planning information that customers can use to plan travel.

**DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING:**
November 14, 2012 at 5:40 p.m., San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building, 2nd Floor Bacciocco Auditorium, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, CA.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.