Chair Cat Tucker called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
No discussion.

A motion (Cobey/Bendix) to approve the minutes of February 19, 2014 was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said today there was a signaling problem with Caltrain and he did not get any notifications from Caltrain about it. He said the dispatch system went down because of a power failure. He said Caltrain is supposed to have a non-failing backup power system. He said when the power came on, Caltrain tried to turn on the system and it didn’t work. He said staff stated the backup batteries failed. He said once a month staff should test the backup batteries. He said he would like to know what Caltrain is going to do about it.

Michelle Bouchard, Director, Rail Transportation, said testing is conducted of the uninterruptable power system, and the system worked last week during a different power interruption. She said staff is looking into this failure and will implement engineering contingencies that will prevent it from happening again.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said he encountered someone on the train who was checking on the literature racks and other things. He said he is happy to see quality assurance going on. He said since Positive Train Control (PTC) is going to be long evolved, staff might want to advertise some incremental milestones like pulling half the fiber duct or putting platform detection gizmos in the system so staff can provide a drumbeat of progress.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said at last month’s meeting a reference was made to a forum where an expert said Caltrain might be underpricing its riders. He said a public commenter said Caltrain should strive for a 100 percent farebox recovery. He said most people think transit is too expensive. He said on average Caltrain riders pay about
$4.41, not including parking or transit fees to get to Caltrain. He said Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) passengers pay $3.21 on average and SamTrans passengers pay $1.75 on average. If Caltrain wanted 100 percent farebox recovery, passengers would have to pay $6.94 per trip. He said it would be demeaning to tell someone they have to take the bus because they can’t afford Caltrain.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT – Cat Tucker
No report.

PENINSULA CORRIDOR ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR) RELEASE UPDATE – Rich Walter, Stacy Cocke, Casey Fromson

Casey Fromson, Government Relations Officer, presented:
- The $1.5 billion early investment program includes CBOSS/PTC, electrifying the corridor, and procuring the electric vehicles.
- Project history:
  - Conceptual design in 2002.
  - Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and DEIR in 2004.
  - In 2008, 35 percent of design was completed.
  - In 2009, Federal clearance from the Federal Transit Administration was received and State clearance was postponed.
- Policies in place since 2009:
  - JPB Strategic Plans
  - The 2012 California High-speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) Business Plan
  - The 2012 regional nine-party funding Memorandum of Understanding
  - In 2013 a new JPB/CHSRA agreement with JPB as the lead agency for PCEP Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and CHSRA as the lead agency for blended system environmental evaluation
- All the delivery milestones work backwards from the 2019 electrified service date.

Rich Walter, Consultant, ICF International, reported:
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements:
  - Identify environmental baseline.
  - Analyze direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.
  - Compare impacts to significance criteria.
  - Identify feasible mitigation for significant impacts.
  - Consider alternatives.
  - Adopt “reasonable worst-case” assumptions as a conservative approach.
- Project purpose and need:
  - Improve Caltrain system performance.
  - Increase service and ridership.
  - Increase revenue and reduce cost.
  - Reduce environmental impacts.
  - Implement a High-speed-rail (HSR) compatible electrical infrastructure.
- Project description:
  - Approximately 51 miles between San Francisco and San Jose.
  - Electrification infrastructure includes overhead contact system, traction power facilities and electric multiple units.
Service will be up to 79 miles per hour with six trains per peak hour, per direction. Restore service at Atherton and Broadway.

Service will be a mixed diesel and Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) fleet with diesel service south to Gilroy.

- Continue tenant service.

- Right-of-way needs:
  - Most in Caltrain right-of-way.
  - Two traction power facilities in South San Francisco and San Jose are proposed to be outside of the right of way. Up to 1.5 acres will need to be acquired to support these facilities.
  - Overhead Contact System (OCS) is mostly inside the right of way; using a worst-case assumption of the poles being outside of the right-of-way, about an acre would need to be acquired.

- Electric safety zone needed:
  - Easement for safety with no trees within 10 feet of OCS and no structures within six feet of OCS.
  - Guidance of 25 kV and industry standards.
  - Approximately 18 acres outside the right of way.

- The DEIR will be clearing the project only and does not clear HSR or the blended service.

- Key regional benefits are ridership increasing to 69,000 in 2020 and 111,000 in 2040. This will reduce vehicle miles traveled by 235,000 in 2020 and 619,000 in 2040, cut down air pollution, and reduce greenhouse gases.

- Stakeholder key concerns include removal of trees and vegetation, the aesthetic impact of the OCS, noise, electromagnetic fields and interference, traffic and freight.

- Based on the study, there are approximately 19,000 trees and plants along the ROW; the DEIR estimates the project will require the removal of 2,200 trees and pruning of 3,600 trees. Mitigation strategies include avoidance, minimization, replacement plan and aesthetics after mitigation.

- OCS:
  - Poles and wires will be approximately 300 feet apart along corridor, 30 to 50-feet tall.
  - Changes in visual aesthetics along tracks and at stations.
  - Mitigation strategies include OCS design and treatments.

- Noise:
  - EMUs are quieter than diesel locomotives, but more trains will result in more horns being sounded.
  - There is electrical and cooling equipment for the traction power facilities.
  - Forty-nine locations were analyzed and significant impact was found at one power facility in South San Francisco.

- Electromagnetic Fields (EMF)/Electromagnetic Interference (EMI):
  - EMF physical field produced by electrically and magnetically charged objects has a less-than-significant impact.
  - EMI potential effects on sensitive electronic equipment.

- Local Traffic:
  - More trains increase gate down time.
  - EMUs decrease gate down time.
More riders increase local traffic at stations.
Eighty-two intersections were studied.
Mitigation strategies include signal and local roadway improvements.

Station Access and Egress
Continuation of the bikes onboard program and wayside facility improvements.
All stations have adequate pedestrian access except the 4th and King terminus, but improvements will be made in partnership with San Francisco.
Parking demand exceeds supply at seven stations, resulting in the loss of approximately 1,000 potential riders.
Improvements are ongoing with the Caltrain Access Program Policy and the Caltrain Bicycle Access and Parking Plan.

Freight Rail:
Vertical clearance impact from OCS.
Constrained operating window from Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) waiver temporal separation requirement.

Alternatives:
Fifty-one scoping alternatives.
Screened alternatives as to feasibility, project purpose and need, and environmental effect.
The DEIR analyzes the no project alternative, the diesel multiple unit alternative, the dual mode multiple unit alternative and the OCS construction alternative - the factory train.

Cumulative analysis:
Project contributions to cumulative impacts.
Cumulative projects including rail projects in Caltrain corridor, other transportation projects and local development along corridor.
Key rail projects include HSR blended system, San Francisco Downtown Extension and Transbay Transit Center, and tenant railroad service expansions.
HSR blended system is a conceptual cumulative analysis only. HSR service would be two to four trains per peak hour/per peak direction. Improvements include stations, system improvements, grade separations, passing tracks, and maintenance yard.
Key cumulative effects:
Beneficial effects to air quality and regional traffic.
Potential adverse effects are aesthetics and land use, noise and vibration, local traffic, and freight rail.
Mitigation of Caltrain funding contribution on a fair-share basis and existing agreements.

Next steps:
Sixty day DEIR comment period.
Public meetings will be held in San Carlos, Redwood City, San Jose, and San Francisco.
Final EIR in 2014.
Request for JPB certification and adoption in winter 2014.
- All substantive comments will be considered and staff will respond to all written comments.

Yvonne Mills asked what the planned train speed is going to be because she thought the speed was being contemplated up to 110 miles per hour (mph). Mr. Walter said this project is only designed to accommodate 79 miles per hour, but the long-term plan is to have all electrified trains between San Jose and San Francisco potentially go up to 110 mph. He said this project is not enabling that. He said 79 mph is the fastest allowable speed by statute. He said when blended service arrives that is the time to implement improvements that would allow for accelerated speeds, and HSR is interested in those speeds. He said all the improvements along the line to make that happen have not been defined. Another EIR will contain that information with HSR and blended system data.

Ms. Mills asked if eminent domain will be used to displace fences along the line. Mr. Walter said if some space is needed on private land, staff would follow the public acquisition process with willing sellers and fair market value, and if that is not successful, eminent domain comes into play. He said staff has notified all property owners that JPB may need encroachment.

Ms. Mills asked if staff has received any feedback from owners who might be affected. Mr. Walter said some have contacted staff and asked how many feet will be needed and when decision be made. He said final decision will come in the final design.

Paul Bendix asked if the trip between San Jose and San Francisco will be shorter once the electrified system in place. Mr. Walter said the prototypical schedule focuses on stopping at all stations. In the actual scheduling there could be a mix of stops and skipped stops to decrease the trip length. He said the electric trains accelerate and decelerates faster, which will cut trip length between stops.

Mr. Bendix asked to see simulated schedules that include what people might expect in terms of travel times.

Adina Levin said vehicle-miles travelled (VMT) reduction is presented in the EIR with respect to the entire corridor, but to help communicate the value of VMT reduction, the EIR should include Highway 101, Interstate 280, and El Camino Real and compare that to the corridor VMT reduction.

Ms. Levin said the prototypical schedule only sends two Caltrain trains to Transbay Terminal per hour, but it would be logical to send all trains to the Transbay Terminal. Mr. Walter said Transbay has studied a much higher level of trains coming in per hour, so their environmental process has cleared much higher level of service. There should not be constraint between the two environmental processes to make that change. Stacy Cocke, Senior Planner, said this is not a policy decision on how JPB will serve Caltrain. She said the schedule assumed is the schedule used for the blended system studies.
Chris Cobey asked what Mr. Walter learned from the first public meeting. Mr. Walter said not many people attended. He said no new issues came up. He said there were issues about noise, trees, concerns about EMI and its effect on other railroad systems, traffic, and questions about grade separations.

Chair Tucker asked if any data was presented about how it is not unsafe to live near electrification. Mr. Walter said it has been studied and staff looked at the potential electric and magnetic fields. He said the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists published thresholds for EMF and EMI, and staff determined that this project is well below those thresholds and believes this is a safe system.

Public Comment
Roland LeBrun, San Jose, said factory trains have lower environmental impacts and save money. He said if Caltrain got bimodal EMUs, they would be running in two or three years and would fix the capacity problem. He said Caltrain needs an FRA waiver to run EMUs and diesels together. He said bike capacity needs to be figured out now while the EIR is being worked on, not later during procurement.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said if trees are on Caltrain property, Caltrain can do what they want with them. He said grade crossings are not part of the project and he would like to know how a new grade separation would work in an existing electrified service.

Ms. Cocke asked the committee to submit their comments in writing to electrification@caltrain.org.

STAFF REPORT – Michelle Bouchard
Ms. Bouchard said:
- Farebox revenue is up around 7 to 8 percent.
- The annual counts are in and staff will try to present them in April.
- The deal to purchase of Metrolink cars is still ongoing but there is a lease transaction that needs to be resolved.
- A power outage in San Jose led to the loss of the control system. The control system helps to remotely control the signals and switches in the field, but the safety functions reside in the field, so there was not a safety condition that resulted from the power loss. Staff is looking at ways to back up the backup system.
- Next month at 5:00 p.m. there will be a Clipper 2 update before the meeting.
- Staff will be posting the results of the triennial customer survey on the website.

DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING:
April 16, 2014 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.