MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Berk, C. Cobey (Chair), H. Chamarthy, G. McMullen, G. Scharff, B. Shaw, C. Tucker, R. Valenciana

MEMBERS ABSENT: C. Cabansagan

STAFF PRESENT: J. Averill, J. Navarro

Chair Chris Cobey called the meeting to order at 5:43 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW CAC MEMBERS
Harish Chamarthy said he is interested in Caltrain because he lives in Redwood City and it is the way he gets into San Francisco. He said he is a data analyst at Facebook.

Ricardo Valenciana said he works in San Francisco and commutes by Caltrain. He said he is concerned about making Caltrain more efficient and providing more services to the riders.

Geoffrey McMullen said he works in San Francisco in employment law and uses Caltrain to commute from San Jose.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2016
Motion/Second: Shaw/Scharff
Ayes: Berk, Chamarthy, McMullen, Scharff, Shaw, Tucker, Valenciana, Cobey
Absent: Cabansagan

PUBLIC COMMENT
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said the Playbook is working. The figures for the new Electric Multiple Units (EMU) came in after the contract was signed. The trains are losing 200 hundred seats per train and another 60 will be lost when the second set of doors are put into use. Amtrak has ordered new trains for the northeast corridor, and the Federal Railroad Administration said they cannot use EMUs because they are not safe. They may get bi-level cars, which have level boarding at 22 inches. The California High-Speed Rail Authority have halved the lengths of their trains and there is every indication they will be forced to have bi-level trains, which means Caltrain will not need two sets of doors on its trains. The JPB should go back to the 2012 Capacity Analysis plan where it had 948 seats per train, re-issue the Request for Proposals and create a level playing field where many manufacturers could bid.
Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said in June he had requested the raw ridership data be put into Excel and posted online. Staff said it would be posted at the end of September, but it still has not been posted. He has also requested to know how ridership is calculated with the Go Pass, but has not heard an answer. He said he does not want automated enforcement at grade crossings to come off the work plan and Caltrain needs to pursue it.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT
Chair Cobey said he provided a written report to Board at their October meeting. He said any new member who is interested in presenting the CAC report to the Board can let him know.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS
Jonathan Berk said a year ago the CAC told the Board they were not happy with customer service and things have since improved. He said the CAC should draft another resolution to the Board recognizing the significant progress that has been made in general. He is amazed at how often the trains are not late. He asked to add this to the agenda for next month. He said he was at 4th and King two minutes before departure time, but when he got halfway to the front of the train the conductors started to close the train doors and he had to jump onboard. This is not the proper way to treat customers. The doors should not close if people are walking up the train. He asked staff to investigate this. When conductors are trained, they should be made aware of this behavior because when conductors treat customers well the customers will treat the conductors well. He said he specifically asked staff to address the issue of the insane policy of making all the trains local during last month’s presentation on Incident Management and Recovery, but it was not addressed in the minutes. He asked what the logic is for making all the trains local and he asked staff to respond to him in an e-mail.

Cat Tucker said she took the bullet train from Venice to Rome and it was fast and efficient, but expensive.

Chair Cobey said he took the train to two games at Stanford and the pilot program for tagging Clipper on and off using readers worked very well. Twice in the last six weeks Train 283 started its run with no train number indicator at all. Having no train identification can be confusing to people.

Public Comment
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said Caltrain does not show up on transit applications during the day because they run local trains and Bay Area Rapid Transit is always faster. Everybody has been telling the JPB for over a year they want an hourly bullet off peak. He showed the Board how to pay for it. The administration contract with SamTrans comes up every year and now is a good time to end it and do something different.

IMPACT TO SERVICE FOR ELECTRIFICATION AT CONTROL POINT BRITTAN IN SAN CARLOS
Joe Navarro, Director, Rail, said a control point is a point on the railroad where staff controls movement of the train from the dispatch office. It either has a stop signal or a green “go” signal. It may or may not have switches for a train to cross over from one
track to two tracks or from two tracks to three tracks. When a train breaks down, the only way to get around it is at a control point. Control points can be anywhere from three to eight miles apart. Depending on where a train breaks down at and where the single tracking is impacts the types of delays to the system. For example, if a train breaks down at one end of a control point and there are eight miles to the next control point, a passing train will have to slow to 45 miles per hour to go over the crossover to the other tracks, travel southbound on the northbound track for the eight miles, and cross back to the proper tracks, while another train will have to wait for this train to clear the eight miles of rail before it can go. Control points provide some flexibility.

Mr. Navarro said staff did an analysis of where to add another control point for flexibility for service and for single-track capacity while electrification is underway. During electrification, the entire system will be broken down into four segments. Staff will be working in Segment 2 and Segment 4 initially, so trains will be single tracking in two areas during the off peak on week nights starting at 7:45 p.m. and clearing up at 4:30 a.m. and on weekends from Friday night to Monday morning. It is crucial to have the flexibility with another control point. Staff chose Control Point Brittan to construct the new control point, right outside San Carlos Station over the under grade passing. This will be a “V” type switch to create another point to reduce single tracking delays so staff can construct electrification.

Mr. Berk asked how this will impact service while staff is constructing the control point. Mr. Navarro said trains will be single tracking around that area. There is a five-mile gap where the new construction will be. Initially service will be impacted during construction because trains will be single tracking in a wider area, but once the new control point is constructed and installed, the single tracking area will be reduced to 2.5 miles during electrification construction.

Mr. Navarro said the electrification notice to proceed will take place July 1, and the construction for Control Point Brittan will also take off around July 1 and will take two months to complete.

Mr. Chamarthy asked how these minor schedule changes will be communicated. Mr. Navarro said a new schedule will be put out in April.

Public Comment
Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said the JPB went through this process a number of times to get where it is today. The JPB installed control points along the railroad where they didn’t exist before to give Caltrain the flexibility it has today. The main disruptive aspect for constructing a control point is installing the switches in the existing track. Right now where this control point is going is just straight rail, so four switches have to be installed to create this crossover mechanism. Those switch installations are done over a weekend so the train is only single tracking over weekend service. There is another bubble of activity when the control point is put into service because of signal testing. Typically there is not much disruption to the weekday service.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said before the control points were installed, trains had to run at 10 or 15 miles per hour during single tracking, and to cross over, the train had to back into
the other track. It was agonizing to be on those trains. It is very sad how it was done at that time. These control points make things much easier. He asked if weekend service might have to go to every 90 minutes instead of every hour during electrification construction.

Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said Control Point Brittan has been going on forever. The latest Quarterly Capital Report shows this project at $7.7 million, which is ridiculous. Four switches have to be installed in order to go back and forth. He said he had requested that every single new switch on and off the main line must be capable of 80 miles per hour, otherwise trains have to slow down to 15 or 30 miles per hour, which is ridiculous.

STAFF REPORT
Mr. Navarro said:
- On-time performance (OTP) for September is at 94.1 percent, compared to 86.2 percent last September. There was one vehicle strike on September 19 and a vehicle on the tracks causing delays on September 29.
- OTP for August was 94.5 percent compared to 87.9 percent last August. There was a trespasser strike and a few other issues.
- Mechanical delays have been higher the last few months but OTP has been increasing, partly because of mitigation and methods to get around these delays. Staff knows the fleet is aging, but that is no excuse and staff is doing the best they can to mitigate some of the operational issues.
- 233 people used the handheld Clipper Reader at the Stanford game.

Ms. Tucker said she does not see any information on the vehicle signage. Mr. Navarro said he will have to provide an update next month.

Greg Scharff asked why the trains stop at Stanford on weekends but not on weekdays. Mr. Navarro said that stop is at a grade crossing, there is not actually a station and people can just walk across the tracks. When the train does stop at that area there are flagmen to protect people from crossing the tracks, there are police officers there, and staff from Transit America Services, Inc. to mitigate any issues with customers walking across the tracks because it is so easy to do there.

Mr. Scharff asked if by not stopping there fewer people take the train or go to weekday games. Mr. Navarro said it is too complicated to add a stop at that location, and adding a stop during commission hours would impact the regular service. It is not necessary to have a stop there every day because the ridership is not there, it is at Palo Alto. Mr. Navarro said this system is different from any other system in the United States. Most systems have cab signal control, which puts a code into rail. Caltrain just has track circuits. The last signal is the responding issue for the engineer at that speed. If a train stops at Stanford and it takes a few minutes to get going, the last signal is that trains governing speed that the train has to maintain until it gets a better signal, and that is going past the next point. This is why there are delays in the system. For other systems throughout the United States, when the cab signal picks up, that is the code into rail to identify another train is ahead, and when that train goes on three miles away, that code into rail picks up to the engineer in the cab and tells the engineer to go the maximum authorized speed. For Caltrain, the last signal is the governing speed
that the train has to maintain until it gets a better signal. This is why it is complicated and when an extra stop is inserted into the schedule, the train stops for three minutes instead of being three miles down the line, it is impacting the signal that is three miles away forcing the next train to slow down, which impacts the train behind it, and so on.

Mr. Scharff said with better technology this problem could be solved. He would like to understand if it would impact more ridership on a Friday night. Getting around Palo Alto on a game night is difficult, so the more people that take the train the better.

**Customer Experience Taskforce (CETF)**

Mr. Navarro said:
- A tone now sounds every 15 seconds on every Clipper Reader to help sight-impaired customers find the readers.
- A pilot program is being conducted for service on holidays that fall on the weekend but are celebrated on the weekday. Staff will run complementary service for essential workers who have to get to work at 7 a.m. or 8 a.m. in San Francisco and San Jose on the day after Thanksgiving, the day after Christmas, the day after New Year’s, and President’s Day. Rather than run a Sunday schedule, it will be a modified schedule.

Chair Cobey asked what the cost is to run a train in that circumstance. Mr. Navarro said he will have to get that information.

Mr. Berk said the CETF had the items the CAC brought up in the CAC’s memorandum to the Board, and each one of those items was part of the taskforce. Not one of those items is in the staff report. The CAC specifically wanted more express trains, which should be a short-term issue, the CAC wanted trains labeled, for staff to look at adding quiet cars, and other things that are not in the report. Mr. Navarro said he will look into these concerns.

Mr. Berk said in the commendation to Caltrain, he is going to point out there are still outstanding issues.

Chair Cobey said the CAC’s minutes are not searchable as a body. Each month’s minutes have to be searched individually. He was told SamTrans does not have the capability to have the entire mass searchable. He asked for an update on that capability in the next report. He asked if there are any preliminary impressions as to how well the new service schedule implemented on April 4 is doing. Mr. Navarro said quite a few things have been going on. Staff has been setting up different mechanical programs, and management command structures and standard operating procedures have changed a bit. All of these changes have been taking place at the same time since April. The numbers started changing around June. Mr. Navarro said since Chair Cobey had asked him for the OTP over the last year, he will attach it to the staff report.

Mr. Berk said that new schedule came out because the whole Caltrain system was in crisis. Now that staff has fixed the problem, Caltrain can go back to the old schedule so trains will not have to wait at stations as they do now. When Caltrain previously had
problems, the fix was to expand the schedule. Mr. Navarro said the fix was not just the schedule, but things staff have been doing to maintain the OTP. It is hard to pinpoint what the actual fix was on any given day. There is always something going on such as a person in need of assistance (PNA), which takes a lot of time. He just came up with a list of every time Caltrain has received a report of a PNA to document it to find trends to help fix things. Staff has plans to try a call line for PNAs to call in so train crews will be ready and available. Sometimes an engineer may not see that there is a PNA until the train gets very close and there is a long response time after the engineer notifies the crew, especially if the crew needs to use the lift that is gated and locked up. Staff is not going to go backwards at this time to the old schedule, but may look at the schedule and refresh it.

Mr. Berk said when first joined the CAC in 2013, the OTP rates were similar to what they are today. This tells him that Caltrain can maintain and achieve the OTP under the old schedule. Mr. Navarro said staff needs to provide proper service for the customers in need of assistance. Right now things are working in conjunction with everything else that is going on, and staff is doing a lot of work with very few staff. He said mechanics are riding the trains in the morning and there is communication between engineers and mechanics to make sure there is accountability, and if some people lack experience in troubleshooting there is a mechanic there to help. There is a lot going on behind the scenes. Staff is working very diligently at making the OTP. The schedule change did not fix the OTP.

Mr. Berk said staff is doing a great job, but could do an even better job because Caltrain previously did do a better job with the old schedule.

Brian Shaw said ridership has increased every year since 2011. The ability for the old schedule to function with the current ridership is questionable. It is not as simple to say the train can go back to the schedule from three years ago under operating conditions that no longer exist. There are more people riding today than ever. The fact that Caltrain can run on time with these conditions is remarkable.

Ms. Tucker said there has been a business decision that changed the way Caltrain deals with wheelchairs. In the past people used to come forward to speak about the difficulties boarding by wheelchair from station to station. At one point the Diridon Station had a manual crank to raise wheelchairs, and there was a person on the train who would operate that crank, but at some point the position was eliminated. She asked Mr. Navarro to research that issue. She asked when the CETF was started because there are many items that are estimated to be completed between six months and 18 months. As a way of measuring it, it is important to know when it started.

**Work Plan**

Ms. Tucker asked if the raw ridership data in Excel can be added to a future agenda for discussion. Josh Averill, Assistant District Secretary, said that was supposed to have been posted by now, but he received a response from staff saying the Chief Operating Officer pulled the staff member off that project to work on something else. Staff is now estimating the data to be posted before the November Board meeting.
Mr. Scharff asked if the Caltrain Modernization Update that was canceled from this meeting will be added to the next meeting. Mr. Averill said the CAC requested that to be a standing item, so it will be presented next month.

Chair Cobey asked when the Station Management Plan will be presented to the CAC. Mr. Averill said staff indicated it will be ready in the next few months.

Mr. Averill said staff asked to add the 2016 Customer Satisfaction Survey Results to the November agenda. Chair Cobey said that is fine.

Public Comment
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said things have changed since Mr. Navarro joined Caltrain. He said it is physically impossible for dwell times to be under one minute especially since Gallery cars have only one door and people board with bikes. The signaling system Caltrain uses was designed for a freight system. It should be a top priority if the goal is to increase capacity on this right of way. Caltrain needs shorter blocks. All the track circuits are going to be replaced with AC track circuits, but they will be in the exact same place, which is not smart. When switches are installed, he hopes staff will bring preassembled switches instead of assembling them on the right of way.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said there were standing slow orders for bridge replacement in San Mateo and one may have been taken off which will provide additional slack in the schedule, although it is precious little in relationship to the crush of business Caltrain is dealing with. It is not realistic to get back to the transit times from five years ago. It will not happen with 60,000 people a day.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said he doesn’t think it is realistic to go back to the old schedule considering the current ridership. He appreciates the hard work Mr. Navarro has done. Things have improved. He appreciates the pilot program for modified holiday schedules. He has complained about this many times over the years.

DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING:
November 16, 2016 at 5:40 p.m., San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building, 2nd Floor Bacciocco Auditorium, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, CA.

Adjourned at 6:44 p.m.