CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)
PENINSULA CORRIDOR JOINT POWERS BOARD (JPB)
SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Berk, H. Chamarthy, C. Chang, G. Scharff, B. Shaw, C. Tucker, R. Valenciana

MEMBERS ABSENT: G. McMullen

STAFF PRESENT: J. Averill, C. David, C. Fromson, J. Navarro

Chair Brian Shaw called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW CAC MEMBER CAT CHANG
Cat Chang said she lives in San Francisco and commutes to Palo Alto and takes the train a couple days a week. She studied civil engineering and likes urban planning, real estate and infrastructure.

REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Election of 2017 Vice Chair
Jonathan Berk said the committee did not meet and asked to postpone this item until March.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2017
Motion/Second: Scharff/Chamarthy
Ayes: Berk, Chamarthy, Chang, Scharff, Valenciana, Shaw
Absent: McMullen, Tucker

PUBLIC COMMENT
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said the public needs to know how many seats will be on the new trains. Staff will not tell because they are trying to get a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA), but they are required to increase seating capacity by 10 percent. The new trains will lose 200 seats per train, but were supposed to gain 200 seats, so the new trains are 400 seats short.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said on Train 261 in car 233 the complete restroom door latch was missing and the number three door leaf did not open. There is deferred maintenance going on. There is a hole torn in the fence on the opposite side of the right of way from College Park Station. The fence panel is pushed in towards the tracks. If a trainman was riding on the train he would get snagged by the edge of the fence panels.
Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said the Republican Congressional Delegation is trying to withhold the FFGA for electrification. This is important for Caltrain to get. He hopes people will write to Congress to allow it to proceed. He asked if the CAC could get an update on the fare study, if the JPB is using consultants, getting stakeholder input, or CAC input.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT
Chair Shaw said he gave the update to the Board this month and hopes the Board is working on appointing a new San Mateo committee member.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS
Mr. Berk said the problem of trains leaving early has not gone away. The train at Palo Alto today left at 5:19:40 p.m. instead of 5:20 p.m. Conductors should focus on the fact that it is frustrating for passengers on the platform when trains leave even 15 seconds early. Caltrain was a very well-run system, then it went through a period when it was not well run, and JPB’s response was to change the schedule. Now it is back to a well-run system and trains routinely wait at stations, which is causing the issue of early trains. He suggested the JPB look at the schedule again and if trains are waiting as much as two minutes at stations, they should go back to a better schedule. There has been an unbelievable improvement in the late trains in the system over last year.

Greg Scharff said he wants an update on Union Pacific Railroad (UP) agreement. There is a huge price difference if there is a 1 percent grade or a 2 percent grade. Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Mountain View are interested in understanding if there is the ability to have a higher grade. He would like an update on what that agreement was and how it works.

Public Comment
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said the UP agreement was premature. The California State Transportation Agency made an announcement that they are looking at regulation and legislation that will make it possible for UP to run whatever they need to under electrified lines.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said Train 101 pulled into Millbrae three or four minutes early and the doors were closed long before the train was scheduled to leave. The engineer realized the train shouldn’t be leaving before 5:35 a.m. and radioed the conductor to open the doors. In San Francisco sometimes the doors will be closed 15 seconds early. Doors shouldn’t be closed until the time the train is supposed to leave. Tunnels should be avoided at all cost because there are too many problems with them. The best way to do grade separations is a berm that is elevated for tracks and below grade for the street.

ADVISE THE BOARD REGARDING THE CAC’S ASSESSMENT OF CALTRAIN
Mr. Berk said the original motion to the Board expressed the CAC’s displeasure. The CAC has found things have improved. He proposed the motion: The last year has seen improvement in the level of customer service on Caltrain. We attribute this improvement to Michelle Bouchard and her executive team’s leadership and focus on this issue. He said his memo details all the successes. Not everything is a success, there
are still things to do, but the CAC appreciates everything that has been done. The new leadership at Caltrain has made a big difference.

Mr. Scharff said he would like to amend the motion to add Joe Navarro, Director, Rail Operations, to the motion.

Chair Shaw said the amended motion is: The last year has seen improvement in the level of customer service on Caltrain. We attribute this improvement to Michelle Bouchard, Joe Navarro, and the executive team’s leadership and focus on this issue.

Motion with amendment:
Motion/Second: Berk/Scharff
Ayes: Berk, Chamarthy, Chang, Scharff, Valenciana, Shaw
Absent: McMullen, Tucker

Cat Tucker arrived at 6:02 p.m.

SUPPORT RECOMMENDED WEEKEND SERVICE CHANGES
Catherine David, Senior Planner, presented:
- Weekend service change background
  - Facilitate construction work windows for Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project (PCEP)
  - Supports entire JPB capital program
  - Local service headways: 60 minutes to 90 minutes
    - Reduction in trains: 36 to 28 (Saturdays); 32 to 24 (Sundays)
    - Maintains four bullets and keeps range of service
  - Service reduction is “major service change” and requires Title VI Equity Analysis
  - Coordination with sister transit agencies, weekend Tamien-San Jose shuttle, contractors, TransitAmerica Services, Inc., stakeholders
  - Effective summer 2017 through construction and testing
- Service change information
  - All details available at www.caltrain.com/proposedchanges
  - Website contents:
    - 2017 proposed weekend timetable changes
    - Online from to enter comments
- Public outreach overview
  - Expanded public outreach program
  - 14 separate station outreach meetings
  - Public meetings throughout the corridor
  - Direct communication with over 125 people
- Weekend comment summary
  - Over 100 comments
  - Mostly negative feedback for reduction in weekend service and proposed 90-minute headways
  - Concerns with special event service
  - Concerns with capacity issues
o Concerns with impacts to revenue and ridership
  o Requests for more weekend service including weekend bullet trains, supplemental shuttle service, weekend service to Gilroy

• Response to public comments
  o Continued special event service
  o Flexibility for limited weekend shutdowns per year
  o All six-car weekend train sets to address capacity
  o Financial projections anticipated likely ridership and revenue declines during construction
  o Promotion of existing public transit options that run parallel to the Caltrain corridor
  o Selection of 90-minute local service
    ▪ Compromise between continuing to provide weekend service and complete shutdown of weekend service
    ▪ Complete shutdown was not necessary since construction work would be done in work windows simultaneously
    ▪ 55-hour weekend work windows
    ▪ On-track construction activities and equipment

• Title VI Equity Analysis
  o Weekend service reduction is a “major service change” because it has a greater than 25 percent reduction of total revenue train miles per day
  o Findings
    ▪ No disparate impact on minorities versus non-minorities
    ▪ No disproportionate burden on low-income versus non low-income

• Next steps
  o March 2: public hearing
  o Board action pending approval
  o Pending confirmation of FFGA funds
  o Issue full notice to proceed
  o Execute implementation plan for weekend service changes
  o Share final weekday timetable with riders, transit agencies, and stakeholders
  o After implementation, monitor ridership

Mr. Scharff asked about Stanford special events. Ms. David said currently there is a range of certain trains that will stop there. That level will not be maintained, but special Caltrain will still provide supplemental service to that station. The details of the special service at Stanford have not been determined yet.

Ms. Tucker asked if the duration of construction will really be three years. Ms. David said yes.

Casey Fromson, Director, Government and Community Affairs, said this exact schedule is not locked in stone and there could be small tweaks made. This schedule or something like it will be in effect for the duration of construction.
Mr. Berk asked what the objective is when coming up with a timetable. Mr. Navarro said to stop at every station, provide proper service and keep some consistency at points and throughout the system.

Mr. Berk said it seems there is a decision that during peak hours express trains are run and the rest of the time it is local trains. He asked why Caltrain does not always run express trains. Ms. Fromson said if it was just express trains the trains would not stop at all the stations. There needs to be a balance between serving all the stations and getting people up and down the corridor quickly. There is not one sole goal.

Mr. Berk said doesn’t see how those goals lead to this schedule. Mr. Navarro said the peak lasts four hours. He is trying to maximize the workforce for productivity and work them for eight hours. After peak hours the trains have to go in to refuel. The hours of service on employees is 11 hours and 59 minutes. There is only so much service that can be put out there during off peak. Electrification will help to provide a different type of service, and there will be more frequent service off peak.

Ms. Fromson said it sounds like the question is how overall schedules are set. Electrification will provide the opportunity to drill down on what the biggest priority is for the service and an opportunity to revamp the schedule. Ms. Fromson said schedules are worth a bigger conversation, because there are other factors that go into them such as maintenance, cost, and ridership. It is part science and part art how a schedule is created.

Chair Shaw said he would like to add to the work plan an overview how a schedule is created and methodology used.

Mr. Berk said objectives should be included in the conversation. He wants to hear an explanation of how goals are balanced in a particular way that leads to a particular schedule.

Ms. Fromson said one of the goals with this schedule is to provide enough construction work windows to construct electrification and continue to serve as many riders as possible.

Ms. Tucker asked if there is going to be flexibility and adjustments in case things don’t go as planned. Ms. Fromson said yes, staff will evaluate how things are going and things can be changed if necessary.

Chair Shaw said any time something is taken away from the public they are not going to give a positive response. People have to be given something they want when something is taken away in order to get a balance. There is nothing in this schedule that people will appreciate. He suggested staff look at what can be done to give the weekend riders something to balance out the negative with positive. This change is going to make people mad. He said he can’t support this because he doesn’t know why there are not express trains beyond the current makeup. He asked why service isn’t being extended to Gilroy.
Ms. Fromson said staff has been thinking outside of just purely the number of trains. Staff is exploring other things such as with fares so fares are a different price on weekends and different times, but this is not final yet. There are creative things staff is thinking about.

Chair Shaw said he recommends those ideas be presented with the schedule change because people will not be happy about accepting this without something of that nature being presented.

Public Comment
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said public outreach was a disaster. Staff went to Tamien Station on a Saturday to provide information to riders, but that station does not have service on the weekends. Staff reached out to the few shuttle riders instead of the 1,000 people who ride during the week. He supported killing the FFGA because this project is out of whack. He suggested staff go to Europe to ask how they construct electrification without impacting ridership. He has been asking for express trains for years. He said all local service should be stopped and the riders should take Bus Rapid Transit to the baby bullet stations. The agency currently in charge of Caltrain planning and administration is a dysfunctional transit agency.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, asked how this is done in Europe. There are a lot of logistical problems trying to electrify on a running railroad that has high ridership and is very popular. If express trains could be added to supplement local trains that would be great and would make them more efficient. Crappy service produces crappy ridership. Service to Gilroy doesn’t get good ridership. If Gilroy service operated during the day it might get better ridership. The Monthly Pass is good on SamTrans and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, but it should also be good on San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and Bay Area Rapid Transit to give an incentive to customers.

Chair Shaw made the motion to approve the weekend service changes as presented by staff. There was no second to the motion.

Mr. Scharff said staff should come back with incentives.

Mr. Navarro said the JPB wants to get electrification done as quickly and painlessly as possible. Crews will be working in two segments at a time. There will be a production line. There will be a drilling rig to do boring, and behind it will be a rebar and concrete truck, and after it cures, crews will put up catenary poles, then cantilevers, then wires. This is a process that has not been seen in the United States or in Europe. This will be going on in both segments at the same time. There will be at least five or six pieces of equipment working and moving up and down the alignment at the same time. One reason for the 90-minute window is for safety. Crews will have to stand down and stop working when trains pass. If things start going to well staff could look at changing schedule without delaying productivity. This is going to be very challenging.

Ms. Tucker said she appreciates the hardship of this project. The CAC should approve the motion with a clause that includes an incentive to riders.
Ms. Chang asked when the schedule change has to be approved. Ms. Fromson said it is going to the March Board meeting for the Board’s approval.

Mr. Scharff said the CAC can approve the motion but the CAC wants something to be positive for the public. The CAC wants to be able to say there are some positives.

Ms. Tucker made a motion to approve the staff recommendation with a clause that adds the CAC wants an incentive given to riders such as a fare incentive.

Ricardo Valenciana seconded the motion.

Chair Shaw said he would amend that motion to include other items such as additional express service, Gilroy weekend service, or other improvements to weekend service that are feasible given the needs of windows of time for the electrification project.

Mr. Berk said he will vote against the motion because he has no confidence that the objectives that led to schedule concur with the objectives that he thinks Caltrain should have. It seems that the objectives were purely the construction schedule and local service. This schedule does not take into account the broader needs of the community. He would rather send that message to the Board.

Motion/Second: Tucker/Valenciana
Ayes: Scharff, Tucker, Valenciana
Noes: Berk, Chamarthy, Shaw
Abstain: Chang
Absent: McMullen

Mr. Berk made a motion that the CAC cannot approve the timetable in its current form because they are not convinced the current timetable takes into account all the interests of the riders of Caltrain.

Motion/Second: Berk/Shaw
Ayes: Berk, Chamarthy, Chang, Scharff, Shaw
Noes: Tucker, Valenciana
Absent: McMullen

**CALTRAIN MODERNIZATION UPDATE**

Ms. Fromson said the current status is the project is in the Limited Notice to Proceed (NTP) phase. The JPB is not able to issue the full NTP until the JPB gets the last remaining funds needed, which is $647 million from the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) Core Capacity Program. The technical work is done and the project received a high rating. Previously appropriated funds have been received. After the funding is approved by the FTA, it goes through a 30-day Congressional review process. That process ends on February 17. It does not involve Congress approving or disapproving the package, it is just time to for people to examine and discuss. At the end of the 30 days, The United States Department of Secretary Elaine Chao will have the opportunity to execute the FFGA. It then would go through an annual appropriation process to receive the funds. The JPB has in place with the contractors that the full NTP will be issued on March 1. If
there is a delay in the FFGA, it puts project’s future in jeopardy. It is likely that a several-month delay would make it so the project is not viable in its current form. JPB would have to terminate the contracts for convenience. Staff is doing what it can to make sure it is known how viable the project is. Staff has tried to clarify that this is solely for the PCEP, not high-speed rail (HSR). HSR is not able to come to the corridor with this project alone.

Mr. Scharff asked how much money the JPB is asking for. Ms. Fromson said $647 million, or 33 percent of the entire project cost.

Mr. Scharff asked if anyone has come out against this besides California Republican Delegation. Ms. Fromson said no. The California Democratic Delegation sent a support from 40 members and two senators, and 70 employers in the corridor support the project.

Public Comment
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said the FFGA was supposed to be ready on December 15, but the FTA discovered problems and everyone had to scrape up 200 million. Caltrain did not qualify for Proposition 1A bonds and the governor changed the language of the bond act. In Europe a quarter-mile-long train goes out every night and works on a 10-mile section of track at a time. The train goes out every night with all equipment on the train, and one section bores holes, one section pours foundations, one section puts in masts, another section lays wires. This train can do one mile of track a night. He supports killing the project.

STAFF REPORT
Mr. Navarro said:
- January on-time performance (OTP) was 94.4 percent compared to 93.3 percent last January. There was one vehicle strike, seven vehicles on tracks, protestors that shut down the tracks.
- December OTP was 95.2 percent compared to 90 percent last year. There were three fatalities, three vehicles on the tracks, and mechanical delays were minimized and cut in half from last year.
- Staff has been reacting very quickly to delays and unexpected events.
- Annual counts started February 6 and results will be back in two months.

Customer Experience Taskforce
Mr. Navarro said:
- Mobile ticketing will be coming out in summer.
- Engineering department staff is being asked to ride the trains and fill out a checklist to give staff a report on when trains arrive at stations and when they depart. Staff will be using a global watch to see where trains are dwelling and to make sure they are not leaving early and are staying on time.
- Staff is working on the visual message signs. Staff is trying to get some of the language trains and trying to get real-time information instead of projected information.
- Staff is working on the equipment. Mechanics are riding at least half a trip to help through troubleshooting issues and working together with engineers. Accountability in that area has improved.

Mr. Berk said Mr. Navarro is doing a fantastic job. There has been a tremendous improvement. He suggested the report show the improvements and show how long after an incident occurs that things go back to normal. He suggested Mr. Navarro think of statistics to make it clear to the public what the improvements are.

Ms. Tucker said she has heard of problems with automobile bridges because of the rain and concern with mud slides. She asked if because of recent weather staff checks train bridges to see if they are in good shape. Mr. Navarro said engineering staff monitors bridges regularly.

Mr. Valenciana said on Monday there was an incident that was cleaned up and things got moving again really fast. He asked if it was a suicide. Mr. Navarro said a person was struck. The speed of recovery changes depending on the situation, what county it happens in, and what the coroner and the sheriff’s department will allow.

Ms. Chang asked how information gets updated in transit applications. Ms. Fromson said Caltrain doesn’t currently have its own mobile application, but a mobile application is being developed. Its first priority will be ticketing, but later the JPB will be able to layer on functionality such as alerts.

Mr. Berk left at 7:15 p.m.

Public Comment
Roland Lebrun, San Jose, said whether a fatality is a suicide or not is irrelevant. The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office will decide what the circumstances were. The response from conductors is much better, but there are always ways to make it better. Mr. Navarro is the incident commander who calls the shots, and he should consider using Twitter himself and taking over communications to communicate by-the-minute totally accurate information.

Work plan
Chair Shaw said he would like to add how schedules are determined and the factors considered.

Mr. Scharff said the UP agreement should be added.

Mr. Navarro asked to take off the automated enforcement of grade crossings.

Ms. Chang said she would like to hear about capacity planning for future and sources of that study and regional population and how it plays into the capacity study. Ms. Fromson said that is two issues, capacity on vehicles and land-use ridership modeling.
Ms. Chang said she would like to hear about integration with newer modes of transportation to Caltrain stations such as shuttles, ride share, and last-mile connections.

Chair Shaw said a study was done on the use of bikes on Caltrain and at stations and capacity issues that bikes present, and he would like a report of the findings of that study.

**DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING:**
March 15, 2017 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 7:24 p.m.