

**SAN BENITO COUNTY  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**February 20, 2008 1:00 P.M.**

**FINAL MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chair Pike, Director Botelho, Director Edge

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Transportation Planning Manager, Mary Dinkuhn; Transportation Planner, Betty Li; Secretary, Monica Gomez

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

MV Manager, Tony Mercado

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Pike called the meeting to order at 1:05 P.M.

**A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**B. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING**

*Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho and seconded by Director Edge, the Directors unanimously approved the Certificate of Posting.*

**1. Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing**

- a. Receive Report on Unmet Transit Needs Hearing,**
- b. Open Public Hearing**
- c. Close Public Hearing , and**
- d. Direct staff to return to the Council of Governments with a recommendation at the April 17, 2008 meeting.**

Transportation Planner Betty Li stated that the Unmet Transit Needs hearings provide a forum for residents, transit users, and community members to express concerns with the local bus service, County Express and Jovenes de Antaño. The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and staff review all the testimony received after the hearings, and provide a recommended determination of Unmet Transit Needs to the Council of Governments Board. Staff will return to the Board with a recommendation at the April 17, 2008 meeting.

Chair Pike opened the Public Hearing.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

### **Pauline Valdivia Jovenes de Antaño**

Ms. Valdivia stated that currently Jovenes de Antaño is the primary provider for specialized transportation for the elderly and people with disabilities in the community. She also noted that out of county medical transportation is in high demand. Unfortunately, due to insufficient funding, vehicles, and staffing, Jovenes de Antaño has had to turn people down.

Ms. Valdivia noted another crucial service that Jovenes de Antaño provides, which is the transportation to an average of 10 residents to the Gilroy Dialysis Center, 6 days a week. Unfortunately, there are some residents that drive themselves or have a family member transport them because there is not enough funding for this service.

The Directors inquired how many people are currently using transportation for dialysis treatment and if the number of dialysis patients in San Benito County has been identified.

Ms. Valdivia mentioned that the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) has worked with Hazel Hawkins Hospital to try to figure out what the demand and possibility for a dialysis center in San Benito County is. Ms. Valdivia stated that this is an item on the SSTAC agenda and as a member of SSTAC they will continue to pursue this item. A survey will have to be conducted to find out exactly what the demand for dialysis transportation is in this community.

Ms. Valdivia thanked the Board for their continued funding support.

Chair Pike stated for the record that the COG Board received Joe Thompson's public comment correspondence dated: January 18, 2008 and February 20, 2008. The correspondence was entered into the public record.

### **Mary Gonzalez Senior Center**

Ms. Gonzalez inquired about an article she read in the Freelance regarding the cost effectiveness of empty buses driving around town.

Ms. Li stated that sometimes empty buses are seen driving around town however, people don't realize that often times the driver's have just dropped off a group of people at the shopping centers.

Director Botelho stated that this is why it is very important that the community provides feedback on the transit service so that it can be improved if necessary and meet the needs of the community.

Ms. Gonzalez also suggested providing an additional bus run during peak hours after school.

Transportation Planning Manager, Mary Dinkuhn stated that staff tries to balance the buses to provide service to both schoolchildren and the rest of the community. There are times when staff schedules an extra bus to go out to try to meet the demand during peak hours.

Ms. Gonzalez complimented the bus drivers and stated that when her sister used the transit service for school the drivers were pleasant, polite, and reliable.

**Sadie Hernandez**  
**Senior Center**

Ms. Hernandez inquired about the buses that Jovenes de Antaño has been waiting for.

Ms. Li was pleased to announce that staff received notification that the buses are ready to be picked up. Staff is currently arranging delivery of the buses.

**Hazel Ochaska**  
**Senior Center**

Ms. Ochaska stated that she is grateful for the Jovenes de Antaño escort service because she is legally blind. The driver meets her at the door and walks her to the gate when she is dropped off. Ms. Ochaska mentioned that the County Express driver's don't provide the escort service.

Chair Pike stated that it would be ideal if the drivers could provide door-to-door service.

Chair Pike closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Chair Pike thanked everyone for attending the Unmet Needs Hearing and reminded members of the public to report any additional Unmet Needs to staff.

Staff will report back to the Board with a recommendation at the April 17<sup>th</sup> COG Board meeting.

*Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho and seconded by Director Edge, the Director's unanimously voted to adjourn the COG meeting.*

**ADJOURN to COG Meeting on Thursday, February 21, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.**