

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

March 11, 2009 1:00 P.M.

FINAL MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Botelho, Director De La Cruz, Director Edge, Director Emerson, and Director Gomez

STAFF PRESENT:

Deputy County Counsel, Shirley Murphy; Executive Director, Lisa Rheinheimer; Transportation Planner, Betty LiOwen; Secretary, Monica Gomez

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tony Mercado, MV Transportation

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Botelho called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

Upon a motion duly made by Director De La Cruz, and seconded by Director Emerson, the Directors unanimously approved the Certificate of Posting.

REGULAR AGENDA

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES:

Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing – LiOwen

- a. **RECEIVE** Report on Unmet Transit Needs Hearing.
- b. **OPEN** Public Hearing.
- c. **CLOSE** Public Hearing.
- d. **DIRECT** Staff to Return to the Council of Governments with a Recommendation at the June 18, 2009 Meeting.

Transportation Planner Betty LiOwen provided a Power-Point presentation on the Unmet Needs Hearing.

Chair Botelho opened the public hearing at 1:05 p.m.

Public Comment:

Kirk Tognazzini

Senior Center

Mr. Tognazzini's comments were in regards to the Dial-A-Ride (DAR) service. Mr. Tognazzini stated that the DAR bus shows up late, causing him to be late to appointments. Sometimes dispatch does not answer the phone when calling to schedule a ride.

Mary Gonzalez
Senior Center

Ms. Gonzalez spoke on behalf of someone else at her table. The DAR bus does not show up on time and when the rider calls dispatch to report it, they're told that the bus was on time and the rider was not there.

Lupe Quiroz
Senior Center

Mr. Quiroz complained about the Green Line route and DAR service. Mr. Quiroz stated that the new schedules are very difficult to read because the print is too small. Mr. Quiroz had to call four times before he could get through to dispatch to cancel a scheduled ride. Mr. Quiroz stated that having to wait 1 1/2 hours on the bus is not good service (this was when DAR operated on Saturday).

Irene Martinez
Senior Center

Ms. Martinez commented on the elimination of weekend services. Ms. Martinez stated that she was also speaking on behalf of senior citizens who rely on the weekend service to get to church. A lot of seniors do not have any other type of transportation. Ms. Martinez asked that the LTA Board consider bringing back at least one bus on Sundays, to provide transportation to church.

Juanita Lopez
Senior Center

Ms. Lopez stated that she also relied on the weekend service which was eliminated. Ms. Lopez stated that she has to walk from Enterprise Road to the Nob Hill store on Airline Highway to fill her prescriptions and purchase groceries. Ms. Lopez asked if it is possible to bring back the weekend service.

Zeke
Senior Center

He inquired about the service cuts and asked if the weekend service could be reinstated.

Salvador LoBue
Senior Center

Mr. LoBue stated that he relies on the weekend bus service and added that it is wrong to have cut bus service on Saturday and Sunday. Mr. LoBue asked that the weekend service be reinstated.

Kirk Tognazzini
Senior Center

Mr. Tognazzini inquired if it would be possible to cut service during the week to be able to provide service on the weekends.

Marvin L. Jones

Mr. Jones commented on the number of empty buses driving around during the week and asked if staff could research and determine which weekday routes could be cut in order to provide DAR service on the weekend.

Catherine Farnham
Public Health Nurse
Perinatal Services Coordinator

Ms. Farnham commented on the need to increase access to ADA Paratransit transportation services for women throughout pregnancy and for them and their infants for a full year after the baby is born.

Ms. Farnham also noted concern over the weekday service cuts from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. because mothers have a longer waiting period to and from medical appointments.

Mary Gonzalez
Senior Center

Ms. Gonzalez commented on the possibility of coordinating with doctors in an effort to match up transportation services for doctor appointments.

Chair Botelho closed the Public Hearing at 1:25 p.m.

Board members thanked everyone for their participation and feedback regarding services. Board members noted that it is difficult to have to make cuts on a service that is greatly depended on by the community; however, the cuts are necessary due to the transportation cuts from the State.

The Board noted that staff will take the comments that were provided and look at different alternatives to best implement changes that will provide an efficient transportation service.

Director Gomez inquired if it would be practical to use the old benches that will be replaced with new benches, and place them at some of the bus stops that don't have a bench.

Ms. Rheinheimer stated that staff will research the Director's inquiry and determine if it is feasible.

The Board expressed concern that it is difficult and unfortunate to have to make cuts on a service that is greatly used by the community however, some cuts are necessary due to the State budget cuts.

Chair Botelho directed staff to return to the Board with a recommendation at the June 18, 2009 meeting.

Upon a motion made by Director De La Cruz, and seconded by Director Edge, the Director's unanimously voted to adjourn the COG meeting.

ADJOURN TO COG MEETING MARCH 19, 2009. AGENDA DEADLINE IS MARCH 10, 2009 AT 12:00 P.M.