

**San Benito County
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING**

February 18, 2010 2:30 P.M.

FINAL MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Deputy County Counsel, Shirley Murphy; Executive Director, Lisa Rheinheimer; Administrative Services Specialist, Kathy Postigo; Transportation Planner, Veronica Lezama; Transportation Planner, Betty LiOwen; Secretary, Monica Gomez

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tony Mercado, MV Transportation; Carla Vincent, Parsons; Jeff Bingham, Parsons

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Gomez called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

A. ACKNOWLEDGE Certificate of Posting

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

B. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Approve** LTA Transactions Report (Financial Claims) dated January 2010 – Postigo
- 2. Approve** LTA Draft Meeting Minutes dated January 21, 2010 – Gomez
- 3. Receive** Jovenes de Antaño Specialized Transportation Services Monthly Service Report for the Month of December 2009 – LiOwen
- 4. Receive** San Benito County Express Monthly Service Report for the Month of December 2009 – LiOwen
- 5. Authorize** Staff to Sign a Revised Settlement Agreement and Release between the California Air Resources Board and San Benito County Local Transportation Authority for an Amount Not to Exceed \$750.00 – Rheinheimer
- 6. Approve** Project List for Potential Funding from Jobs from Main Street Act of 2010 – LiOwen
- 7. Receive** Local Transportation Authority FY 09/10 Budget Report – Postigo
- 8. Funding for Transit Planning Student Internship Program – LiOwen**
 - a. Adopt** Resolution 10-01 Authorizing the Executive Director to Apply and Accept Transportation Planning Grant Funds for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.
 - b. Support** AMBAG's Partnership Planning Grant for an Origin and Destination Survey.
- 9. Adopt** Resolution 10-02 to Support Local Taxpayers, Public Safety and Transportation Protection Act of 2010 – LiOwen

10. Security Gates and Fence at Transit Facility and Public Works Yard – Rheinheimer

- a. Reject all Bids in Reference to Invitation for Bids #2009-003 and
- b. Approve Invitation for Bids #2010-001 for Security Gates and Fence.

Chair Gomez pulled Items 4 and 6 from the Consent Agenda.

Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho, and seconded by Director De La Cruz, the Director's unanimously approved Items 1-3, 5, and 7-10.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Item 4

Marvin Jones
Hollister, CA

Mr. Jones stated that he has observed that the Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit service has more riders than the Fixed Route service. Mr. Jones stated that the service is a taxi service in effect and there is federal statute that says that public entities, such as County Transit, cannot compete with private enterprise.

Mr. Jones stated that one day out of the week for one hour he observed 10% occupancy on the County Express system. Mr. Jones stated that there is no protection for the taxpayers of this County.

Joe Thompson
Tres Pinos, CA

Mr. Thompson stated that last year the County Express reported 6.08 passengers per hour for the entire fleet and it has declined in the current report for the same period in 2009 system wide 5.53 passengers per hour per fleet. Mr. Thompson asked if the taxpayers are being well represented when there is so much waste going on. Mr. Thompson asked the Board to bring back the "performance indicator report" so that they can see the real trend.

Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho and seconded by Director Emerson, the Director's unanimously approved Item 4.

Item 6

Joe Thompson
Tres Pinos, CA

Mr. Thompson stated that if the Board is going to create a plan and put together a recommendation, it should be on something that is going to help create jobs.

Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho and seconded by Director Emerson, the Director's unanimously approved Item 6.

REGULAR AGENDA
TRANSPORTATION ITEMS

11. Receive Report of Taxi and County Express' Paratransit and Dial-A-Ride Services – LiOwen

Transportation Planner, Ms. LiOwen provided a Power-Point presentation and reported that in October 2009, there were several articles in the local newspaper that questioned the need and differences between local taxi service and County Express' Paratransit and Dial-A-Ride service. Staff prepared a report highlighting the differences in services and regulations.

Chair Gomez inquired if we are required to provide public transportation and who determines if there is an Unmet Need.

Ms. LiOwen stated that the Transit Development Act requires public hearings to determine if there are unmet transit needs in the community. Unmet transit needs need to be met before distributing funds to local streets and roads. The findings are reviewed by Caltrans.

Ms. Rheinheimer stated that if the Board decided to take a different direction than they have in the past and report to Caltrans that transit is not needed in the County because there are two taxi companies in the area, Caltrans could then take the funds and distribute them somewhere else.

Chair Gomez asked if COG is mandated by the State to provide public transit

Ms. Rheinheimer stated that COG is not mandated to provide public transit. The Board can return the Local Transportation Funds (LTF) to the State, there would not be any transit service or money for local streets and roads, and it would all go away.

Director De La Cruz stated that as a public official he had a different perspective and it is the public official's responsibility to provide the service to the public, whereas the taxi companies are in the service to make a profit. There are many members of the community who depend on the service and cannot afford to use the taxi service.

Director Gomez stated that it is also the public official and the public's responsibility to live within their means.

Director Botelho stated that the transit service can be eliminated altogether and the public would have to use the taxi service to get around, but sending the LTF funds back to Sacramento to be distributed elsewhere is a disservice to the County. Director Botelho stated that if Sacramento were to cut funds then cuts to the service would be made accordingly.

Director Emerson's comments were similar to those of Director Botelho. Director Emerson inquired about the allocation of funds received from the Transportation Development Act (TDA).

Ms. Rheinheimer stated that all TDA funds go to the first three priorities on the list which is the Council of Governments Administration, 2% set aside for bicycle and pedestrian needs, and the remainder goes to mass transit purposes.

Director De La Cruz stated that Board members brought up valid concerns on both sides of the issue.

Director Bilich stated that she is grateful for the Dial-A-Ride service because she depends on the service to get around. If it weren't for the Dial-A-Ride service she would not be able to attend the Board meetings or other appointments. Ms. Bilich stated that the Board needs to accept the fact that there are some people who need public transit and they need to work together to provide the service to the community members who depend on public transit.

Chair Gomez stated that he has issues with the Dial-A-Ride service because he believes that there are people who are abusing the service. He stated that he does not have an issue with the Paratransit service because it is for persons who are disabled.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Joe Thompson
Tres Pinos, CA

Mr. Thompson commended the Board for their “good government debate” on transit and asked the Board to consider privatizing the transit system. Cities and Counties all over the United States have saved taxpayer dollars, provided more transportation for less money by contracting out.

Marvin Jones
Hollister, CA

Mr. Jones expressed appreciation to Chair Gomez for his comments. Mr. Jones agreed that the Paratransit service may be a service that is needed. Mr. Jones stated that it is good that the local taxi companies make a profit because that way they have to pay taxes which then pays for things such as the Board of Supervisors, COG members, and staff etc...

Ruben Martinez
Hollister Taxi

Mr. Martinez stated that he was representing Hollister Taxi and mentioned that they recently took over the business. One of the concerns Hollister Taxi had are similar to the Boards concerns, that is the service is too pricey and people may not be able to afford it. Mr. Martinez stated that they have come up with a “Frequency Card” which is an incentive for customers who use the taxi service more frequently. The Frequency Card allows a free ride after the 8th ride and promotions vary month to month. Mr. Martinez noted that Hollister Taxi is the least expensive in the Tri County area. Hollister Taxi charges start at \$2.20 and there is a \$7 flat rate fee in town. Mr. Martinez stated that they are not increasing their prices because one of their concerns has been to lower their prices to compete with the Dial-A-Ride service. Unfortunately, they don’t have a vehicle to transport disabled persons, but it is something that they strive to do in the future to better their service. Mr. Martinez closed by saying that Hollister Taxi is not here to simply make a profit, they are also here to help the community.

Director De La Cruz suggested putting this item on a future agenda for further discussion.

Chair Gomez stated that he would like to somehow incorporate the private industry whenever possible to try to create more jobs in the community.

Ms. Rheinheimer mentioned that MV Transportation, who provides our transit operations, is from the private sector and they have provided employment to people who have worked in our community for many years. Ms. Rheinheimer also mentioned that staff will be going out for Request for Proposals for services for both the Jovenes de Antaño Services as well as MV Transportation Services at the end of this year. Staff will be looking at ways to improve on the services as well as trying to think outside the box given the discussion that was heard at this meeting.

Upon a motion duly made by Director De La Cruz, and seconded by Director Emerson, the Director’s unanimously voted to adjourn the LTA meeting.

ADJOURN TO LTA MEETING MARCH 18, 2010. AGENDA DEADLINE IS MARCH 9, 2010 AT 12:00 P.M.