

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

February 21, 2013 2:00 P.M.

FINAL MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Botelho, Director Boch, Director De La Cruz, Director Scattini, and Director Velazquez

STAFF PRESENT:

Deputy County Counsel, Shirley Murphy; Executive Director, Lisa Rheinheimer; Transportation Planning Manager, Mary Gilbert; Administrative Services Specialist, Kathy Postigo; Transportation Planner, Betty LiOwen; Secretary, Monica Gomez

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brandy Rider, Caltrans District 5

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Botelho called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

A. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

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

B. PUBLIC COMMENT:

**Joe Thompson
Tres Pinos, CA**

Mr. Thompson asked why transit isn't privatized. He said that companies and shuttle operators should move the passengers who really need assistance being moved and submit a token to the local elected officials so that the taxi and shuttle operators can be reimbursed. He stated that in places around the United States where this has been done, they have saved taxpayers millions of dollars.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. Approve** LTA Transaction Report (Financial Claims) dated January 2013 – Postigo
- 2. Approve** Local Transportation Authority Draft Meeting Minutes Dated January 17, 2013 – Gomez
- 3. Receive** Jovenes de Antaño Specialized Transportation Services Monthly Service Report for the Month of December 2012 – LiOwen
- 4. Receive** County Express Monthly Service Report for the Month of December 2012 – LiOwen
- 5. Receive** Local Transportation Authority FY 2012/13 Second Quarter Budget Report – Postigo
- 6. Approve** Request for Qualifications #2013-01 for a Taxi Voucher Program – Rheinheimer

Chair Botelho pulled Items 4, 5, and 6 to allow discussion and comment from the public.

Upon a motion duly made by Director De La Cruz, and seconded by Director Scattini, the Directors approved Items 1-3 of the Consent Agenda with an abstention on Item 3 by Director Velazquez.

Item 4

**Marvin Jones
Hollister, CA**

Mr. Jones stated that the service report demonstrates that LTA's revenue is between \$1.25 and \$1.50 per passenger, but it costs about \$67-\$68 to carry each passenger. He mentioned that he hopes ridership does not go up. He continues to observe less than 2 passengers on the buses in the afternoon.

**Joe Thompson
Tres Pinos, CA**

Mr. Thompson stated that the numbers on the report are misleading. He stated that you are required to put in all of your costs in calculating your results. You cannot pick and choose and only include your variable costs. He stated that the transit agencies and the Bullet Train do not put in their fixed and capital costs when calculating their operating results. Therefore, they're hiding the truth from the taxpayers.

Chair Botelho expressed that this is a State mandated service that the Board may not be entirely pleased about. However, he wanted to clarify that the service is being subsidized closer to \$6 per passenger, not \$67-\$68 per passenger. He added, that it is the taxpayers who are subsidizing the service. The funds are not coming out of Local General Funds.

Upon a motion duly made by Director Scattini, and seconded by Director De La Cruz, the Directors approved Item 4 of the Consent Agenda.

Item 5

**Joe Thompson
Tres Pinos, CA**

Mr. Thompson stated that the report shows how they are gauging the taxpayers. He said that if the motorists don't continue buying fuel, then we are going to need other forms of taxation.

Upon a motion duly made by Director De La Cruz, and seconded by Director Scattini, the Directors approved Item 5 of the Consent Agenda

Item 6

Director De La Cruz asked to pull this item for discussion. He asked if the request for qualifications is structured in a way that may potentially prevent local taxi companies from bidding, such as, requesting \$1 million in bond insurance.

Ms. Rheinheimer clarified that the document was a request for qualifications. She explained that her intent is that it will provide for multiple contracts with the local taxi companies to provide what now exists as Dial-a-Ride service.

There was discussion about the difference between bond and liability insurance. County Counsel, Shirley Murphy stated that she did not recall there being a bond requirement in the Request for Qualifications.

Upon a motion duly made by Director De La Cruz, and seconded by Director Scattini, the Directors approved Item 6 of the Consent Agenda

REGULAR AGENDA:

7. Fare Increase for County Express and Medical Shopping Assistance Program – LiOwen
 - a. **RECEIVE** Fair Equity Analysis of Fare Increase for County Express Services and Medical Shopping Assistance Program
 - b. **OPEN** 45-Day Public Comment Period Beginning February 22, 2013.
 - c. **SET** Public Hearing Date for Adoption on April 18, 2013.

Ms. LiOwen provided a Power-Point overview of the Fare Increase in Scenario A and Scenario B. Scenario A involved two small incremental fare increases of 5% annually for two years. Scenario B involved a one-time fare increase of 25%.

Ms. LiOwen noted that the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council selected Scenario A as its preferred scenario because it has the least financial impact on riders and the additional revenue is comparable to Scenario B.

Director De La Cruz inquired if the Dialysis service would be covered under the taxi services. He mentioned that one of the drawbacks with the Dialysis service through Jovenes de Antaño is that you have to go during their allotted time.

Ms. Rheinheimer stated that the Dialysis service is currently provided by Jovenes de Antaño and it would not be impacted. She explained that the Request for Qualifications is structured in a way that the LTA would pay up to \$10 for the fare. If the metered fare goes beyond that, the passenger would be required to pay for the additional amount.

After brief discussion amongst Board members and staff, Directors De La Cruz, Scattini, and Boch favored Scenario A. They noted that at the end of the fare increase, there is a projected fare of \$24,700 to \$27,400 in additional revenue and a lower percentage in ridership loss.

Director Boch mentioned that although he's leaning towards Scenario A, he would like to listen to public input prior to making a final decision.

Directors Botelho and Velazquez favored Scenario B. They noted that there has not been a fare increase for some time now and an increase of fifty cents would not be unreasonable. They stated that perhaps not increasing the fare on seniors over 65 years of age who are on a fixed income is understandable.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joe Thompson
Tres Pinos, CA

Mr. Thompson stated that this was an item that was long overdue. He stated that this item should not be part of the government decision process. The transit service should be privatized. Mr. Thompson complimented Ms. LiOwen by saying that this was the best report he had seen in over 13 years.

Director Velazquez asked for clarification between the taxi service and the implementation of a fare increase.

Ms. Rheinheimer explained that the Dial-a-Ride service was included in the fare increase scenario; however, if the taxi voucher service is successful the increase would be null and void. If for some reason staff is unable to implement the taxi voucher program on July 1st, staff would have the ability to increase the Dial-a-Ride fare.

Director Velazquez stated that the idea of a taxi voucher all the way across the board would be a better idea and it would save the City and County a lot of money.

Director Boch asked for clarification from staff, but noted that his understanding was that the Board did not have to decide on a preferred scenario at this time.

Ms. LiOwen confirmed that this item was only for the Boards information. The public comment period would allow the public to comment on both scenarios. Staff will present all of the comments that are received at the public hearing for the Boards consideration.

Upon a motion duly made by Director Boch, and seconded by Director De La Cruz, the Directors unanimously approved Item 7 as noted..

Upon a motion made by Director De La Cruz, and seconded by Director Scattini, the Directors unanimously voted to adjourn the LTA meeting.

ADJOURN TO LTA MEETING MARCH 21, 2013.