

**COUNCIL OF SAN BENITO COUNTY GOVERNMENTS
SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

FINAL MINUTES

DATE: Friday, June 25, 2010
9:30 AM

LOCATION: **San Benito Bank**
Conference Room (Upstairs)
300 Tres Pinos Road
Hollister, CA 95023

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Tony Mercado called the meeting to order at 9:35 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tony Mercado, Mary Margaret Bilich, Charles Scott, Pauline Valdivia

STAFF PRESENT

Mary Gilbert, Transportation Planning Manager; Betty LiOwen, Transportation Planner; Veronica Lezama, Transportation Planner; Selena Lopez, Office Assistant

A. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

Upon a motion duly made by Mary Margaret Bilich, and seconded by Pauline Valdivia, the Committee unanimously acknowledged the Certificate of Posting.

B. MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Scott announced that he would not be attending the September SSTAC meeting.

Ms. LiOwen announced that LTA staff will conduct two public workshops on June 30, 2010 to solicit input from riders on their transit facility needs. More information will be provided under agenda Item 4.

C. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Gilbert announced that Ms. Rheinheimer was unable to attend due to a conflict in her schedule.

Ms. Gilbert reported that LTA received a new bus which will be used by the Jovenes de Antaño operation. Jovenes de Antaño should have the bus sometime next week.

Ms. Gilbert encouraged members to attend the next Regional Blueprint Plan Public Workshop given by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments tomorrow June 26, 2010 at the Veteran's Memorial Building Room 218, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1) **Approve** SSTAC Meeting Minutes dated April 16, 2010 – Gomez
- 2) **Receive** County Express Monthly Operations Reports Fiscal Year 08/09 for the Months of February 2010 – April 2010 – LiOwen
- 3) **Receive** Jovenes de Antaño Specialized Transportation Services Monthly Service Reports for the Months of February 2010 – April 2010 – LiOwen

Upon a motion duly made by Mary Margaret Bilich, and seconded by Charles Scott, the Committee approved Consent Items 1-3, with an abstention from Pauline Valdivia on Item 3, and an abstention from Tony Mercado on Item 2.

REGULAR AGENDA:

4) Draft Transit Design Guidelines – Lezama/LiOwen

- a) Receive Presentation on the Draft San Benito County Transit Design Guidelines; and
- b) Receive and Comment on the Draft San Benito County Transit Design Guidelines.

Ms. LiOwen and Ms. Lezama provided a Power-Point presentation and overview on the Draft Transit Design Guidelines. The goal of the San Benito County Transit Design Guidelines is to encourage the use of transit design elements that make commercial and residential developments more transit-friendly.

Ms. LiOwen announced that staff will hold two Public Participation Workshops on the Transit Design Guidelines June 30, 2010 from 10am to 12pm and 4pm to 6pm at the Veteran's Memorial Building Room 204. Food and transportation will be provided.

Ms. LiOwen stated that the timeframe for public comment is June 18 – July 19. The LTA will conduct its Public Hearing July 15 and the Consultant should finalize the Guidelines in August. The LTA Board will adopt the Guidelines at its September meeting.

5) Receive 3rd Quarter Transit and Specialized Transportation Operations Report for Fiscal Year 2009/2010 – LiOwen

Ms. LiOwen provided the Committee with an overview on the 3rd Quarter Specialized Transportation Operations Report.

The Transit and Specialized Transportation Operations Performance Report is for the quarter ending March 31, 2010 and compares data for the quarter ending March 31, 2009. The report contains system-wide, individual service, and fiscal year-to-date information for the current and previous fiscal year.

Ms. LiOwen stated that due to the state of economy and high unemployment in the County, ridership decreased by 6.30% system-wide on County Express. Productivity decreased by from 6.19 to 5.57 passengers per hour. Maintenance decreased by 10.03% while fuel increased by 14.94%. System-wide farebox recovery increased from 11.33% to 11.99%.

Specialized Transportation ridership increased by 2.74% overall while the farebox recovery decreased by 62.28%. The decrease in farebox recovery is caused by the reduction of donations received from the Out-of-County Non Emergency Medical Transportation service and the increase in maintenance costs. Maintenance increased by 8.78% due to repairs to an older vehicle. Productivity also decreased from 2.46 passengers per hour to 2.24 passengers per hour.

6) Fares for Specialized Transportation Services – LiOwen

- a) Discuss and Recommend Preferred Fare for Out of County Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
- b) Discuss and Recommend Preferred Fare Increase for Medical Shopping Assistance Program

Ms. LiOwen provided a Power-Point presentation on Fares for Specialized Transportation.

Ms. LiOwen stated that staff is sensitive to the financial situation of some of the individuals using Out of County Medical Transportation (OOCMT) services. Staff asked the Advisory Council to comment on the pricing of each of the zones and also procedures on hardship cases. Previously, rides were not denied to individuals who were unable to donate the full amount or portion of the fare. If the Authority establishes the zone based fare, staff will assume that rides will be denied to individuals who cannot afford it.

There was discussion about Out of County Medical Transportation

Mr. Mercado suggested eliminating the 'donation' fare for OOCMT.

Ms. Bilich suggested requesting a fare and also working with people who have significant hardship.

The Advisory Council agreed to have a set fare with no established procedures for hardship cases.

There was discussion about the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) policy. The Advisory Council agreed with the current set PCA policy, which allows (1) PCA to ride free when accompanying the client.

In addition to the establishment of the OOCMT fare, staff also proposed to raise the fare of the Medical-Shopping Assistance Program (MSAP) this service primarily serves seniors over the age of 60 and persons with disabilities. The service provides transportation, escort, and minor Spanish translation to clients for in-town medical appointments, the bank, grocery store, and pharmacy. The service operates Monday through Friday and the hours of service vary depending on the needs of the clients' appointments and destination. The one-way cash fare for MSAP is \$1.00. The fare is kept by the Contractor to offset operations costs.

The fare for a like service in San Benito County is \$1.25 for an eligible ADA Paratransit client on the County Express service. However, the Paratransit service only provides the minimum required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The MSAP provides the services beyond ADA, as mentioned above. Staff is proposing to increase the MSAP fare by either (a) 25¢, making the fare \$1.25 one way or (b) 50¢, making the fare \$1.50 one way.

After brief discussion the Advisory Council recommended increasing the MSAP fare to \$1.25 one way.

Upon a motion duly made by Maggie Bilich, and seconded by Charles Scott, the Committee unanimously recommended to adopt the OOCMT fares in presentation (Item 6a).

Upon a motion duly made by Charles Scott, and seconded by Pauline Valdivia, the Committee unanimously recommended the fare increase for MSAP to \$1.25 (option b), as well as the PCA Companion Policy.

Ms. LiOwen stated that staff will present the Advisory Council's recommendation to the Authority's Board of Directors at the July 2010 meeting and a public hearing will be scheduled to solicit public comment on the fares. After the public hearing, the Board will consider adopting the fare increases.

7) Potential Caltrain Service Reductions for Fiscal Year 2010/2011 – LiOwen

- a) Receive Report on Potential Caltrain Service Reductions for Fiscal Year 2010/2011.
- b) Approve Letter Opposing Service Elimination on Caltrain Service to Gilroy.

Ms. LiOwen reported that Caltrain, the primary commuter rail service between Santa Clara County and the City and County of San Francisco, will have a \$12.5 million operating budget deficit in Fiscal Year 2010/2011. As a result, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board is considering reductions in service and fare increases.

Ms. LiOwen stated that one of the Local Transportation Authority's services that could be affected is the Intercounty Caltrain. The Authority currently has three runs in the early morning and evening to connect

San Benito County residents and visitors to Caltrain service. At the June 17, 2010 meeting, the Authority is considering sending a letter to the JPB opposing the Gilroy service eliminations. Staff has also included a letter for the Advisory Council to consider sending to the JPB opposing the Gilroy Service Eliminations.

After some discussion the Advisory Council recommended County Express to connect with the Santa Clara County Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)'s Express Lines 121 and 168, as these routes provide Gilroy connections to San Jose and Sunnyvale. However, only route will provide a direct Caltrain service connection at the San Jose Diridon station. The Advisory Council recommended continuing to offer three transit connections in Gilroy. Staff will work on a survey to be distributed to the Intercounty Caltrain riders to find their preferred connections to the VTA service.

Upon a motion duly made by Pauline Valdivia, and seconded by Maggie Bilich, the Committee unanimously approved Item 7.

8) ADJOURN to Meeting of September 24, 2010

Upon a motion duly made by Pauline Valdivia, and seconded by Maggie Bilich, the Committee unanimously adjourned the meeting.