

AGENDA ITEM IV – A

YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES MARCH 16, 2023

I. Call to Order & Roll Call (4:09 P.M.)

Present: Bains (Chair), Blaser, Buttacavoli, Fuhrer (Vice-Chair), Hudson - Arrived at 4:15 p.m., and Shaw
Absent: Flores, Kirchner

Martin requested the addition of off-agenda closed and open session items regarding property negotiations for Caltrans Temporary Construction Easement (TCE) #37882-04 at 2100 B Street, Marysville as the need to discuss this issue occurred after the agenda was posted. Director Fuhrer made a motion to accept the addition of the Caltrans agenda item. Director Shaw seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

II. Presentation

A. Draft Yuba-Sutter NextGen Transit Plan Service and Financial Recommendations.

Mr. Rahul Kumar, Innovate Mobility, provided an overview of the draft service recommendations including the resulting vehicle requirements, proposed fare structures, cost estimates, and implementation schedule. The three key components of the plan are the Crosstown (previously named Core), Community, and Commuter services. Crosstown is the traditional fixed route service that is being proposed to be reduced from six to two routes that have been streamlined to reduce travel times; Community would be the new on-demand service that also includes the rural routes; and Commuter which will include both the existing Sacramento schedules as well as the new Roseville service.

Mr. Kumar then discussed the recommended implementation schedule and the projected additional cost increase by year of the proposed three-year plan. He noted that the current service level requires 31 vehicles for peak service which will be reduced to 30 in the third year of implementation. The current fare structure is proposed to be adjusted in two phases with the biggest change occurring in FY 2025 when monthly local passes would be discontinued in favor of a monthly cap. Current monthly passes are for a calendar month (1st to the 1st) and the new monthly cap discount is calculated based on a 30 day period that would start with the first tap. Based on the feedback received at this meeting, Mr. Kumar expects to present a draft plan at the April 20th meeting for approval consideration by the Board of Directors.

Director Blaser asked if we have had a Technology Manager in the past and if the plan includes any other new position. Martin responded that the Technology Manager would be a new position and that the plan also includes a new Community Relations Manager.

Dr. Tawny Dotson, Yuba College President, and a member of the NextGen Transit Plan Advisory Committee, addressed the board in full support of the NextGen Transit Plan recommendations. She also expressed a desire to expand the partnership with Yuba-Sutter Transit in the future.

Courtney Williams, representing FREED and also a member of the NextGen Transit Plan Advisory Committee, addressed the board with support for the NexGen Transit Plan, but expressed concern with the lack of access to Yuba-Sutter Transit for people in the more rural communities of the region.

Director Shaw asked Dr. Dotson if she was aware of any grants that would help reduce the cost of public transportation for college students. Dr. Dotson stated that the State of California has made access for community college students a priority and that funds are available to make bus passes available to students. Dr. Dotson also stated that there are more grants opportunities to Yuba College.

It was the consensus of the Board that staff should proceed with the development of the final draft plan as recommended.

III. Public Business from the Floor

None.

IV. Consent Calendar

Director Shaw made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Hudson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

V. Reports

A. Preliminary Draft Yuba-Sutter Transit Operating and Capital Budgets for FY 2023-24.

Martin noted that the joint powers agreement requires that a preliminary draft budget for the next fiscal year be presented by the end of March of each year and that the final budget is to be adopted by the end of May. He stated that the current year operating expenses are projected to be about 4 percent below budget due largely to the operation of less service hours being operated than was budgeted and lower than expected fuel expenses. On the revenue side, fare revenues are up from last fiscal year and higher than expected. Capital expenditures are also lower than budgeted because the buses that were ordered will not arrive until next fiscal year and the facility engineering design work that had been budgeted will not be taking place this fiscal year.

Martin stated that the preliminary draft operating budget for FY 2024 is only \$24,000 over the current fiscal year budget and almost \$400,000 more than what is now projected for this fiscal year. The new budget assumes the operation of 75,000 service hours due to expected growth in Dial-A-Ride ridership. Key assumptions in the preliminary draft budget include the expected YARTS bus lease, staffing changes, extension of the Storer contract, and early NextGen Transit Plan recommendations.

On the capital side, the budget assumes the delivery of six small replacement buses and the early environmental, design, and engineering work on the new facility. At this time, two grants are pending for the facility and a third will be submitted by April 13th.

B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Bus Lease Agreement.

Martin stated that Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) operated by the Merced County Association of Governments has a short-term need for some highway coaches due to significant delivery problems with their new buses. As a result, they have reached out to us to see if we could lease them up to three of our commuter buses for four months starting June 1st. The agenda packet included a YARTS-provided draft lease agreement which is now being reviewed by counsel. Under the terms of the draft agreement, YARTS will pay Yuba-Sutter Transit \$9,000 per bus per month (\$27,000 per month total) and will insure and maintain the buses for the duration of the four-month lease.

Director Hudson asked if selling the buses was a consideration. Martin stated these are the three oldest buses we have and that they will be surplus at some point but leasing them gives us an extra revenue stream now and we can still sell them later.

Director Blaser asked about the typical mileage for these buses. All three of these 2010 model buses have traveled nearly 500,000 miles and the federal useful life standard for such buses is 12 years or 500,000 miles so they have already reached that standard, but there is still a lot of life left in them.

Director Buttacavoli asked if an engine blows are we obligated to fix or will it be dropped from the lease agreement. Martin stated that it would be our choice whether to have it either repaired or replaced, but YARTS will not pay if a bus is down seven or more days.

It was the consensus of the Board to proceed with the YARTS lease agreement.

C. State Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) Project Selection.

Martin noted that we are now using these state funds to cover the lost revenue for the general monthly local fixed route passes that have been reduced in price from \$30 to \$10 each month since July 2020. Staff is now recommending that the new LCTOP funding be used to extend the program through July 2024. Pursuant to the preliminary recommendations of the NextGen Transit Plan, the fare structure would be changed effective August 2024 to offer a 30-day monthly cap instead of monthly passes. It was noted that LCTOP funding had previously been limited in how many years it could be used for a project, but recent legislation now allows fare and pass subsidy programs to be funded indefinitely. Staff is also recommending that the new LCTOP funding will also be used to cover the cost to extend the existing discount monthly senior, youth, and disabled pass program that now reduces the cost from \$15 to \$5 per month from April 2024 through July 2024. The current FRAQMD grant for the discount fare program is expected to end March 31, 2024, and the prospect for significant future FRAQMD funding is uncertain. Finally, staff is recommending that any remaining funds from the FY 2023 allocation (estimated at about \$300,000) be used for the transit facility project.

Director Hudson made a motion to authorize the submittal of specified projects for LCTOP funding as proposed and adopt Resolution No 2-23 authorizing execution of the related LCTOP Certifications and Assurances including the designation of the Executive Director as the Authorized Agent. Director Buttacavoli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

D. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5339(b) Buses and Bus Facilities Program Competitive Grant Application Authorization.

Martin stated that staff is requesting authorization to submit an FTA grant application for the facility project. This will be the third application under this program. The 2022 application was ranked as highly recommended on all six criteria, but there is a lot of competition across the country.

Director Fuhrer made a motion to adopt Resolution 3-23 authorizing the submittal of a Buses and Bus Facilities Program grant application as proposed. Director Hudson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

E. State of Good Repair (SGR) Project Designation.

Noting that the staff report lists the State of Good Repair funded capital projects that have been funded over time, Martin recommended that the new cycle of funding of nearly \$306,000 be used for the design and engineering work on the new facility in FY 2024.

Director Buttacovoli made a motion to adopt Resolution No 4-23 approving the submittal of Yuba-Sutter Transit's SGR Project List as proposed. Director Hudson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

F. Authorizing Resolution for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grant Documents.

Martin stated that this routine annual resolution designates the Executive Director or their designee to execute and file federal grant and contract related documents each year.

Director Shaw made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5-23 authorizing the Executive Director, or their designee, to execute all federal grant and contract documents under Sections 5307, 5309, 5310, 5311, 5317, 5339 and RAISE. Director Hudson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

G. Annual Authorization for the Executive Director to Certify as Counsel for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grants.

Martin stated that this routine annual resolution authorizes the Executive Director to certify as counsel for electronic grant applications.

Director Hudson made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 6-23 authorizing the Executive Director to certify as counsel for FTA grants. Director Shaw seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

H. Appointment of an Interim Retired Annuitant to the Vacant Executive Director Position.

Martin stated that this item is part of the transition process between his retirement on April 30, 2023, and when the new Executive Director is on board with continuing support thereafter as necessary. Pursuant to CalPERS requirements, this process requires specific Board actions as specified in the staff report. These include the adoption of a new salary schedule for the Executive Director position effective April 1, 2023, an Interim Retired Annuitant Employment Agreement with Keith Martin, and a resolution authorizing the appointment of an interim retired annuitant to the vacant Executive Director position under an allowed exception to the normal 180-day waiting period.

Director Bains asked counsel if all three items could be approved in one motion and counsel responded affirmatively. Director Shaw then inquired as to what happens if a new Executive Director is not on board in six months. Martin responded that 33 applications were received for the position and that has since been reduced to 12 qualified candidates. He fully expects that a quality candidate will be found among these candidates. He did note that the appointment of an Interim Retired Annuitant can only be made once and that the end date has been set for June 30, 2024, though only 960 hours can be worked in any one fiscal year so that will have to be monitored closely if the replacement process is delayed for some reason.

Director Shaw made a motion to: 1) Adopt the revised Yuba-Sutter Transit Monthly Salary Schedule effective April 1, 2023.

2) Authorize execution of the Interim Retired Annuitant Employment Agreement with Keith martin effective May 1, 2023, as proposed.

3) Adopt Resolution No. 7-23 authorizing the appointment of an Interim Retired Annuitant to the Vacant Executive Director position under the 180—day wait period exception of Government Code Sections 7522.56 and 21221(h).

Director Blaser seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

I. Staff Classification and Compensation Study.

Martin stated that it has been discussed in the past that it is a best practice to periodically evaluate an organization's classification and compensation program and that Yuba-Sutter Transit has never conducted such an evaluation. In October, staff retained Bryce Consulting to conduct the first ever agency classification and compensation study. The agenda packet includes the study and new job descriptions along with a proposed salary schedule effective July 1, 2023, to fully implement the study findings.

Martin noted that this discussion does not include the Executive Director position as the Board previously adopted a new job description and set a new salary range for that position as part of the recruitment process. For the classification portion of the study, the four non-executive positions include two Program Managers with the same basic job description and salary schedule though one is responsible for finance and administration and the other is responsible for planning and marketing. Bryce recommended that these positions be separated into a Finance Manager and a Planning Manager with different job specifications and salary schedules for each and that both positions be classified as being exempt from overtime. Bryce included revised job descriptions for all four non-executive positions.

For the compensation portion of the study, Bryce looked at three different markets: Local Transit Agency Market; Expanded Transit Agency Market; and the Local Non-Transit Agency Market. The local transit market is both relatively nearby and generally comparable to Yuba-Sutter Transit; the expanded transit market that included generally comparable agencies located in the Bay Area and southern California; and the local non-transit market which included Yuba City, Sutter County, and Yuba County. The study results indicate that the four Yuba-Sutter Transit positions are significantly below those of comparable positions in all three markets. As a result, the study recommended that the local non-transit market be used as the basis for adjusting the salaries for the four non-executive Yuba-Sutter Transit positions as these positions are likely to be recruited locally.

Martin stated that he is now asking the Board to adopt the revised job descriptions for all four non-executive positions as proposed including the new overtime exemption for the Finance Manager and Planning Manager positions as well as a new salary schedule to implement both the recommended equity adjustments for each of the four positions including a 3.0 percent cost-of-living adjustment as the surveyed salaries were generally effective in 2022. The proposed equity adjustments, at an average of 12.75 percent for all four positions would represent a combined salary and benefit cost increase of \$55,723 for FY 2024. The cost-of-living adjustment would increase that cost to \$67,631 for FY 2024. Martin noted that the basic classification and compensation recommendations were discussed with the Ad Hoc Personnel and Executive Search Committee in February.

Director Buttacavoli made a motion to adopt revised job classification and job descriptions for the four non-executive position as proposed; and adopt a revised staff salary schedule effective July 1, 2023, reflecting both the proposed equity and cost-of-living adjustments. Brad Hudson seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

VI. Project & Program Updates.

1. Caltrans Temporary Construction Easement Agreement

Pursuant to the action at the beginning of the meeting to add both closed and open session items to the agenda, the Board adjourned to closed session at 5:11 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 5:26 p.m. and stated that no reportable action was taken in closed session.

VII. Correspondence / Information

None.

VIII. Other Business

Martin stated that March 18th is National Transit Driver Appreciation Day and all drivers and other Storer Transit and Yuba-Sutter Transit employees will be given a tote bag with our logo. Each of the board members are also receiving a bag in appreciation for their contribution to public transit.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 pm.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023 AT 4:00 PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTICED.