

**CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
MASS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 12, 2002**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Deby Anderson called the meeting of the Mass Transportation Committee (MTC) to order at 1:08 pm on Thursday, December 12, 2002 in Meeting Room B, located at 864 Santa Rosa Street, San Luis Obispo, California

ROLL CALL

Present: Deby Anderson (Chair) Richard Lee (Vice-Chair), Bob Johnson, Jean Knox

Alternates: Jim Wier, Kathy Howard, Ann Wager

Council Liaison: Christine Mulholland

Staff: Austin O'Dell, Transit Manager
Tim Bochum, Deputy Director

Absent: Andrew Rubin, Jennifer Allen-Baker

A quorum was present

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deby Anderson announced that she had contacted Paul Dahan, former MTC Chair, and that he is recovering from his accident. Ms. Anderson also announced that he would love to hear from everyone.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments

CONSENT ITEMS

C1. Approval of Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2002

Jean Knox, seconded by Bob Johnson, made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of September 11, 2002. The motion was carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

D1. Discussion on Current Transit Issues and Operations

Tim Bochum, Deputy Director of Public Works was introduced. Mr. Bochum indicated that he would be presenting to the MTC, highlights from the SLOCOG meeting that took place on November 6, 2002.

Mr. Bochum commented on several significant issues regarding SLO Transit. Mr. Bochum briefly outlined them as follows:

1. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG).** The purpose of this document is to establish a process for the planning and programming of federal dollars. The City currently performs the role of planning and programming. SLOCOG would like to assume the role of planning and programming at a regional level. The MOU will guide future funding and selection of projects for future transit improvements. Preliminary deadline for completion of the MOU has been set at March 2003.
2. **Ridership.** San Luis Obispo Transit ridership has decreased by twenty-four percent in FY 2001/2002 from the previous year. Cal Poly students has also decreased. Staff will be exploring strategies with Cal Poly to increase student ridership. Interestingly noted, there was not a significant drop in farebox recovery. Mr. Bochum commented that San Luis Obispo Transit is still one of the most successful operators in the country.
3. **The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (SLORTA) Bus Stop Improvement Project.** SLORTA approached the City to improve bus stops in the city limits. SLORTA needed to spend grant funds by a deadline. The City approval process was not able to process their request within the time limit. This situation made it clear for the need of a Transit Operating Agreement between City and SLORTA to clarify and specify how SLORTA service interacts in the city limits.

Mr. Bochum mentioned that Bill Statler, Finance Director, made a presentation at the recent City Council meeting. Mr. Statler estimates that there will be a deficit of \$5.5 million dollars. The impact to transit is unknown, Mr. Bochum said. It may mean a shifting of priorities and service cuts. Mr. Bochum encouraged everyone to watch the recording of the City Council Meeting to get a good understanding of what was discussed.

Deby Anderson requested that Mr. Bochum provide the MTC with a copy of the MOU and explain the funding process. Ms. Anderson also requested that staff inform the MTC when the MOU will be presented to City Council. This will allow the committee members to attend the Council Meeting.

Jean Knox commented on the importance of working closely with the City Council. Jean Knox commented there was a lack of communication and coordination between SLOCOG and the City. Jean Knox further commented, it was her opinion, that the drop in ridership was attributed to the absence of signs at the bus stop.

Mr. Bochum responded that staff will update the MTC regarding the MOU and the Transit Operating Agreement at the next meeting.

Deby Anderson presented to the committee, a list of “Questions About Ridership” that was submitted to her by Jim Weir. Each question was addressed by the committee and was answered by Mr. O’Dell, Tim Bochum and Deby Anderson.

Richard Lee suggested that to improve ridership and to gain local business sponsors, a program could be established to provide advertisers with free Gold Passes.

Deby Anderson suggested that staff go to Council and request an increase in the advertising budget.

Bob Johnson inquired if anything had been done to increase ridership; such as rider surveys. Mr. O’Dell commented that there were two surveys. The utility bill survey was sent out to homeowners along with their water bill. The survey was sent to the fifteen thousand utility customers of the City. Six hundred were received.

The second survey was the on-board destination survey, which was conducted as part of the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP). As a result of the surveys, Mr. O’Dell received a lot of insight on what type of service non-riders and they want. The general consensus was that the riders were satisfied with the service they were receiving.

D2. ROUND 2: Draft Council Goals for City Council Consideration

Mr. O’Dell suggested that the committee members review the Draft Council Goals and take the following actions:

1. Review draft MTC goals for accuracy or reporting
2. Review the goals from the other advisory bodies
3. Identify similar goals and modify draft MTC goals accordingly
4. Identify additional goals that pertain to transit
5. Develop a final list of recommended goals for Council consideration

The Committee revised goals are provided in Attachment 1, and are in priority order.

A motion by Bob Johnson, seconded by Ann Wager, to approve the changes made to the six draft council goals. The motion carried unanimously.

D3 Change in Status of Alternate Members

Deby Anderson commented that it was her understanding that the committee did not want to change the by laws. Mr. O’Dell commented that the committee wanted to elevate the alternate staff into a position that allowed them to have

voting rights. Mr. Bochum suggested that the committee refrain from requesting a by-law change.

Bob Johnson suggested a change in the language. Reword the definition of a quorum. Bob commented that the goal is to meet a quorum. If two members are absent and two alternate members are present, then the committee has a sufficient number of members to vote. Mr. Bochum commented that it is the committee's decision to determine the number of members present to make a quorum. If there were any other questions concerning a quorum, then those questions should be referred to council. Bob Johnson made the motion to change the wording to reflect that in the absence of a regular member, an alternate member chosen by the chair will be allowed to sit in for that member with full voting rights. Jean Knox seconded the motion. The motion was carried through unanimously.

At 3:00 p.m., the committee recessed for fifteen minutes.

At 3:15 pm, the committee resumed the meeting. Mr. Jim Wier (alternate) served as alternate for Jean Knox.

The committee agreed to continue the meeting with Agenda Item I1 and will reserve Agenda Item D4 for later in the meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

II. TRANSIT MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. O'Dell, the Transit Manager, reported on the following items:

- **Operating Data** – A chart of monthly ridership data from July 2002 through September 2002 was shown to the committee. This chart will be updated every meeting and will include revenue riders, non-revenue riders, ridership summary, productivity measures and customer service issues; including the number of complaints and commendations.

The free rider category appeared to be high. Mr. Kim Blakeman, First Transit, explained that the free riders fare type was overstated. This has been corrected with the new electronic fareboxes.

- **TDA triennial Audit** – SLOCOG completed their TDA Triennial Audit on October 9, 2002. The summary report was provided and was presented to the Committee. San Luis Obispo Transit was in full compliance with the twelve regulatory requirements reviewed for the performance audit.
- **SRTP Progress** – The SRTP Ad Hoc Committee met on October 30, 2002. The consultant presented service recommendations to the ad hoc committee,

and received comments. The consultant will provide staff with the Administrative Draft for initial review. An update of the SRTP schedule was as part of the Transit Manager's report.

- **Transit Award** – The City of San Luis Obispo received one of four Transit Innovations Awards from the California Transit Association (CTA). The award was for the successful deployment of the Efficient Deployment of Advance Public Transit System (EDATPS). The success of this project was a partnership with Caltrans, Cal Poly, and the City. The most significant component of EDATPS is the electronic signs at key bus stops that inform passengers when the buses are arriving.
- **Unmet Needs** – As one of the requirements for receiving TDA (Transportation Development Act) funds, SLOCOG will be conducting their annual Unmet Needs Hearing. The meeting will provide the public an opportunity to express what they need in the way of public services. The meeting will be held on February 5, 2003 at 8:30 a.m. at the County Supervisor's Chambers. A bus flyer was available for the Committee.

I2. Draft Marketing Plan

Mr. O'Dell presented the Draft Marketing Plan. The purpose of the presentation was to introduce the concept of the plan, the elements of the plan, provide questions and answers and recommend the next steps to be taken. The full draft will be available at the next regular MTC meeting scheduled in January 2003. Deby Anderson suggested that committee members send any suggestions, ideas, marketing strategies to her through email. Deby Anderson and Mr. O'Dell will review suggestions prior to the next meeting.

Bob Johnson inquired about any plans to produce an interactive website. Mr. O'Dell commented that Andrew Rubin will make a presentation to the committee at the January MTC meeting on a new trip planner/virtual tours website. The website will act as a tool for riders and potential riders on how to ride the bus.

ACTION ITEMS:

D4. Review of Proposed New Bus Stop Designs

Mr. O'Dell presented 2 different design options of the new proposed bus stop signs. The designs were developed by the Bus Stop Access Ad Hoc Committee. Mr. O'Dell commented that the law requires the letters and numbers on the sign to be 3" high. This also means that the route numbers will be 3" high. Mr. O'Dell further commented that the ADA does not require signs to designate

wheelchair access. The signs will be painted with a reflective paint for improved visibility.

Mr. O'Dell discussed the next steps that need to be completed:

1. Receive preliminary quote information to determine project costs and budget.
2. Review City Standards and Specifications for new sign and installation requirements.
3. Review requirements from other advisory committees.
4. Prepare Project Report
5. Report back to the Committee
6. Program project in budget and federal process
7. Prepare procurement document
8. Council approval
9. Solicitation of contractors
10. Award contract
11. Production of new signs
12. Installation

Mr. O'Dell commented that the entire process may take approximately six months.

Mr. O'Dell commented that the new signs provide a positive image for the City. The committee agreed that this project should be their number one goal.

By consensus, the Committee unanimously agreed to the new design for the City bus stop sign.

MEMBER'S COMMENTS:

Deby Anderson will confirm the dates of the next two MTC special meetings scheduled in January. The meetings will be to review the SRTP Administrative Draft, the MOU, and the Marketing Plan. Each meeting will be scheduled for two hours. Meetings will be held on Wednesdays at 864 Santa Rosa Street, Meeting Room B. Deby Anderson will confirm meeting dates to committee members by e-mail.

Deby Anderson commented that several committee members did not receive the agenda packets until Monday, December 9, 2002, three days prior to the meeting. Deby Anderson suggested that the agenda packets be put in the mail to committee members at least ten days prior to the MTC meeting.

Richard Lee requested that his SRTP Administrative Draft be sent in PDF format.

Bob Johnson commented that he has felt like he has been left in the dark over the last two years. Bob commented that he would like to be copied on issues as they occur. The committee needs to be kept updated on issues as they happen as opposed to being made aware of them one week prior to the MTC meetings. The committee members would like to be copied on anything that goes to council, as they occur.

Mr. O'Dell suggested that staff provide a synopsis of activities in the Transit Managers Report. A monthly report will be e-mailed to committee members in bullet list format. The Chair concurred.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Jim Weir, seconded by Deby Anderson. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Recording Secretary
Nanette Tarpinian