

**CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
MASS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2007
APPROVED MARCH 12, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Jean Knox called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m in the Council Hearing Room, City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Present: Jean Knox, D. Gregg Doyle, Susan Rains, Margaret Crockett, Tracey Amundson, and Denise Martinez

Absent: Christine Batteate and Kathy Howard

Staff: John Webster, Tim Bochum

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments at this time.

A. CONSENT ITEMS

A-1 Approval September 12, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Chair Knox pulled Item A-1 for discussion and clarified that the meeting minutes should reflect that the subcommittee that was formed was comprised of Chair Knox, and members Martinez and Rains. Transit Manager Webster stated this change would be incorporated into the final minute language for clarification.

Ms. Amundson moved to approval the minutes as amended. Ms. Martinez seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

At this time, Chair Knox advanced discussion of Information Item D-5. See description of discussion of that Item below.

B. DISCUSSION ITEMS

B-1 Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), Urbitrans staff presentation

Stuart Geltman, Urbitrans representative, made a brief presentation on the SRTP process and outlined the data collection phase, including updating demographic and census information, trip generators, new areas of service, increased ridership, route changes, and evening services analysis.

He stated Urbitrans will do a detailed service evaluation of SLO Transit systems and would now incorporate discussion on the Ramona Drive issues discussed at today's meeting.

Mr. Geltman estimated the SRTP report process would take approximately eight months and that the public comment sessions would be held late February/early March of 2008.

Staff agreed that partial report sections would be distributed to MTC as completed.

C. ACTION ITEMS

C-1 Letter from Amy Simpson 234-TAXI LLC (formerly DBA Grover Beach Taxi); SLO Certificate of Convenience

Amy Simpson, applicant, discussed the cab service expansion into San Luis Obispo proper and noted there was clear demand for her operation. She requested a total of six vehicles be permitted to operate throughout San Luis Obispo and South County, dispatched from the airport and the university.

Mr. Doyle stated that a qualified 24/7 operator should be allowed to establish and create better service through competition and availability.

Ms. Knox discussed her concerns about the discrepancy between 234-TAXI's \$50 wait time and Beach Cities Cab's \$25 wait time.

Leland Simpson, applicant, felt that all fares should be market-driven and would be posted. He explained the pricing behind the "wait time" fare.

Mr. Webster noted that the Council sets rates within the City.

Karlene McFarland, 234-TAXI driver, stated she favored the price differential in wait times.

Mr. Doyle moved to uphold the staff recommendation to Council that the

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Certificate of Operation be granted with Council considering making the wait times comparable with existing service rates and that all rates be posted clearly on the interior and exterior of all cabs.

Ms. Rains seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

C-2 Review and Approve 2007-08 Program of Projects

Mr. Bochum discussed programming of federal dollars and funding sections, e.g. 5307. He noted that this year's slate of proposed projects is similar to last year's, with increased dollar amounts. He recommended that MTC recommend to Council that the Program of Projects be approved as presented.

Mr. Doyle moved to accept staff recommendation that Council approve the Program of Projects as presented.

Ms. Rains seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

C-3 Review and Approve MTC Calendar for 2008

The MTC agreed to schedule the November 2008 meeting to be held on November 5, 2008 as opposed to November 12, 2008.

Ms. Rains moved to approve the amended MTC Calendar for 2008.

Ms. Martinez seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS

D-1 Transit Manager's Report

Mr. Webster recapped several points in the report for discussion. He noted that Sabrina Haggie had accepted another position and that her current position was being recruited.

D-2 Operating and Performance Reports and New Schedule/maps

Mr. Webster recapped several points in the report for discussion.

Mr. Bochum reported that staff intended to carefully scrutinize the effectiveness of Routes 2 & 3 evening services.

D-3 Resignation of Diana Gould-Wells (Alternate)

Mr. Webster reported that there had been no replacement named to this now-open MTC position.

D-4 FTA Triennial Review

Mr. Webster reported that the review went extremely well and there were only three issues identified: individual maintenance policies, Title 6, and fare decals.

Mr. Bochum reiterated that the review result was outstanding and that the FTA expressed being very impressed with the high ratings.

D-5 Ramona Drive Route Complaints

Chair Knox advanced discussion of this item to 2:10 pm.

Deputy Director Bochum and Transit Manager Webster gave a brief report on the issues and how Routes 6A and 4 were implemented on Ramona Drive between La Entrada and Tassajara as part of the service changes earlier this year. The issue was being review and would be part of the Short Range Transit Plan Update.

Many SLO Transit bus routes are currently on residential collector streets throughout the City. Staff responded to questions from the Committee on various issues including those raised from the public correspondence.

Chair Knox opened public comments on the item. (note: public speaker cards were not filled out by most of the speakers)

Mr. Foster, 282 Ramona Drive, expressed concern regarding the safety of having buses along Ramona. He felt the street was too narrow to have buses and cars.

Don Rawlings, 360 Ramona Drive, expressed concern that the road was too narrow, that buses were shaking his home, disrupting the neighborhood and the rerouting has lowered his property value.

Cherrie Enos (?), expressed similar concerns and said she had measured street as 21 feet between parked pick up trucks. She expressed concerns that the street was too narrow for safety.

Chair Knox closed the public comment period however, comments were made that a private letter sent out said the MTC would discuss this item at 3:15. Chair Knox kept the comment period closed but said she would reopen comments at 3:15 pm if additional members of the public showed up.

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The Committee requested that the Ramona Drive route item be agendaized with staff commentary and analysis for the January 9, 2008 MTC meeting.

Mr. Doyle suggested looking into alternatives at Tassajara/Foothill and was concerned that a problem had been created to solve another problem.

Mr. Webster reiterated that based on his observations of the routes and experience, the vehicles were not exceeding the speed limit but acknowledges that because of vehicular size the residents' perceptions may well be that the buses are speeding.

Mr. Blakeman noted that the Police Department may use the radar speed trailer on Ramona when it becomes available.

Mr. Bochum noted that the issues of property devaluation will not be addressed in returning staff report/analysis.

Chair Knox closed discussion on the Information Item and said the item would take additional public comment after 3:15 if additional members of the public showed up for comment.

Comment on Item D-5 was reopened at 3:25pm because additional members of the public had arrived.

Ruth Smith, 271 Ramona, stated strong concerns about safety issues and felt the street was too narrow to accommodate the buses, especially when large SUVs were usually parked on either side of the street.

Betsy Schwartz-Foster, 282 Ramona, was very upset that the bus had been re-routed without any notice to residents or opportunity for residents' input. She stated buses exceeded the speed limit and did not feel bus routing was appropriate for the R-1 zone of that section of street and felt it was better suited for the R-4 zoning/high-density further down the street. She agreed the street was too narrow to accommodate the buses, sightlines were poor, and the buses increased pollution, vibration, and noise issues. She felt the bus route should be re-directed and Foothill Blvd. be re-stripped for the routing to return to its original path. She strongly reiterated her request that the bus route be eliminated from that section of Ramona Drive.

Diana Schmielt, 305 Ramona, agreed with all the previous complaints and comments and stated the bus traffic was intolerable in the neighborhood. She felt ridership had not been increased due to the routing and strongly requested that the bus routing return to Foothill Blvd.

Jeff Foster, 282 Ramona, agreed with previous comments and noted no additional bus stops have been added on his section of Ramona. He too requested that the bus route return to Foothill Blvd.

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The MTC and staff agreed to take all of the residents' comments under advisement and stated that the matter would be fully addressed in the upcoming SRTP.

E. MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no Committee member comments.

Mr. Blakeman stated they are looking for service animals to be photographed for a poster campaign. He also reported that the "stuff the bus" food drive had begun.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m. to the Wednesday, January 9, 2008 regular meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Woske, Recording Secretary