

MEETING SUMMARY

San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority Community Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

CAC List of attendees attached hereto.
ATTENDEES:
MEETING DATE: April 20, 2005
FROM: Veronica Sanchez, Manager, Community and Government Relations and Karen Shelver, Board Secretary
DATE: June 16, 2005

—→ **NEXT MEETING: September 21, 2005 – 10am-12pm, Location TBD, SF CA**

The Community Advisory Committee held its meeting on April 20, 2005 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. The meeting began at 10:00 am.

1. Call to Order and Motion to Approve Minutes of November 10, 2004 CAC Meeting

The minutes were approved unanimously. There was no opposition or abstention.

2. Report of Committee Chair

Chair Diane Howard reported on her attendance at the recent Redwood City Chamber of Commerce's Progress Seminar, noting that funding for transportation is being closely monitored and urged members to write to elected officials in Sacramento when any issues arise regarding funding for transportation. Chair Howard acknowledged Ms. Mary Frances Culnane's (WTA) recent appointment to the National Maritime Security Advisory Committee.

3. Report of WTA CEO

CEO Steve Castleberry reported on recent updates to the Implementation and Operations Plan, noting discussions with the City of Alameda about the WTA taking over operation of the Oakland/Alameda service which could happen in 6-12 months. He also mentioned that Harbor Bay service is currently receiving funding from Regional Measure 1 which MTC may not continue due to the service's underperformance. The WTA is working with MTC to decrease costs on that service. Mr. Castleberry introduced Mr. John Sindzinski, the WTA's new Manager of Planning and Development.

Mr. Allan Maris (Albany) asked if the reasons for the decreased service in Harbor Bay are known. Mr. Castleberry answered that because Alameda is an island it is a small catchment area and only makes three trips in the morning and three in the evening. Harbor Bay as an individual service does not meet the average 40% farebox recovery criteria imposed by MTC.

Mr. Geoff Potter (Bicycle Coalition & filling in for Bluewater Network) commented that ridership is decreased when the service goes down. Mr. Castleberry said that the WTA plans to work to help with marketing to increase funding and ridership.

4. Informational Presentation: WTA Ferries – Design and Procurement

Ms. Mary Frances Culnane, Manager, Marine Engineering (WTA) gave a PowerPoint Presentation on ferryboat design and procurement. She reviewed the Request for Proposal process, shipyard selection and vessel construction.

Ms. Veronica Sanchez (WTA) added that funding for the vessels is provided for by RM2. The vessels will be spares and will initially be made available for current operators as needed and then will be placed into South San Francisco service.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. Fred Hansson (San Mateo) asked how unique these boats are. Ms. Culnane answered that they are a standard catamaran construction but the emissions standards are ten times cleaner than any vessels currently operating on the Bay. Wake wash standards were also mandated. The vessels will also feature bow and side loading capabilities, which will allow for ease of maintaining schedules and turnaround of passenger loading and unloading. There will be additional bicycle space. The design is compatible for the Bay Area commuter.

Mr. Maris asked if there are other companies besides Nichols Brothers who build this type of vessel. Ms. Culnane answered that there are 31 builders in the United States with the capability to build vessels according to the WTA Vessel Performance Specifications and named a few of these boatbuilders.

Mr. Castleberry added that the boatyard selected to procure the vessels will be required to service and maintain the vessels within a certain timeframe.

Mr. Ed Balico (Hercules) commented that he is interested to know what the cost for parts will be and Ms. Jeanne MacLeamy (Novato) asked what the cost of maintenance will be once the vessels are procured. Ms. Culnane responded that the boatbuilders provide 25-year life cycle costs and Mr. Castleberry answered that all capital costs for operations, maintenance, terminal maintenance and crew pay come from RM2 or farebox recovery, segregated by route.

Ms. MacLeamy asked if the charges will be made on a pro rated basis if a boat goes down. Mr. Castleberry answered that the charges will be in perpetuity, that it is an annual allocation as long as RM2 funding lasts.

Mr. Maris asked if it will be possible to borrow a vessel for an additional service, such as charter service on the weekend. Mr. Castleberry answered that this issue has not arisen yet, but will be addressed in the same way as other transit operators work. Ms. Sanchez added that there maybe legal issues associated with chartering vessels using public funds to be worked out.

Ms. Kathy Hartzell (Larkspur) asked whether the passenger capacity for the new vessels is 120 or 150 and if the service will be better in an emergency. Ms. Culnane answered that the vessels will be able to carry less than 150 passengers, accommodating all 149 passengers in the interior of the vessel with 70 additional seats in the weather to give the feeling of openness with the extra seating. It is a 46 CFR Subchapter T boat.

Mr. Maris asked about seating and bicycle specifications/design. Ms. Culnane answered that she would be testing the seats to ensure they have enough room and will be designing for ample table space per passenger. They will also be WiFi accessible, which a service provider will supply. The Coast Guard will come to inspect the vessels to be sure they fall within the specifications of the 46 CFR Subchapter T specifications, such as 100 gross tons or under, number of required life jackets and life rafts available, and manning requirements.

Mr. Pedro Gonzalez asked if the CAC will be able to see the design plans and if there are other sources of funding for more than 2 boats. Ms. Culnane answered that the CAC would not review the design plans prior to being submitted for construction and that funding from RM2 only covers up to eight vessels.

5. Informational Presentation: Real Time Technology for Ferry System

Mr. John Sindzinski, Manager, Planning and Development (WTA) gave a PowerPoint Presentation on NextBus real time technology for the ferry system. The new technology allows for display signs at terminals to provide up-to-date schedules that the WTA is working with Golden Gate Transit, Vallejo and Alameda/Oakland to implement, with the information accessible by PDAs and cell phones.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Chair Howard asked if the signs will have the capability in an emergency to change to a disaster awareness message. Mr. Sindzinski answered that the technology allows for changing one, a group of signs or all signs.

Ms. Hartzell asked if the first signs will be implemented with Vallejo. Mr. Sindzinski said the first signs will be installed on Vallejo and Golden Gate Transit locations.

Mr. Balico asked if the information will work in the SMART corridor. Mr. Sindzinski answered that there are benefits to working with 511 for up-to-date intermodal information.

Mr. Albritton asked if Golden Gate is participating in the contract. Mr. Sindzinski answered that they are in partnership with the Authority on this technology.

Mr. Maris asked if the technology will tie in with land-based connections as well. Mr. Sindzinski answered that it would tie in eventually, but not right away. MTC will try to bring all systems together.

Mr. Gonzalez asked if the information will be available in English only. Mr. Sindzinski answered that the signs will be primarily in English but that other languages would be good to look into.

6. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION: Report on Status of Delivery of New Routes

Mr. John Sindzinski, Manager, Planning and Development (WTA) gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the status of South San Francisco environmental and design studies, Berkeley landside access studies, West Contra Costa/Richmond land use studies and Hercules intermodal rail and ferry project, Port Sonoma and Treasure Island. He mentioned that the WTA, MTC and BCDC staff will convene a meeting on May 5, 2005 to discuss transit oriented development adjacent to the ferry terminals.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. Peter Hillier asked if the CAC could expect to see a draft of the EIR. Mr. Castleberry answered that they would make the draft EIRs available.

Mr. Hansson asked if you are running the EIR parallel with the boat design, what the mitigation on the routes would be. Mr. Sindzinski answered that EIP will refer back to the Programmatic EIR for emissions, wake wash and other criteria.

BERKELEY

Mr. Maris asked if a parking study in Berkeley is available. Mr. Sindzinski answered that there isn't a parking study but is the design portion of the EIR for Berkeley. There will be workshops to get feedback from on these issues.

Mr. Albritton asked if AC Transit and buses will be included. Mr. Sindzinski answered that all studies include intermodal connections.

Mr. Maris asked if traffic/access for University Avenue has been done. Mr. Sindzinski said that has not been looked into. Mr. Castleberry added that the EIR will address these issues and that assistance from cities will be needed to gather the data.

RICHMOND/HERCULES

Mr. Balico commented that construction of a casino is being planned in Richmond, but there is a problem with security at that site and suggested doing an EIR in that area dealing with mixed-use issues. He added that Hercules is building for an additional 5,000 residents within 1/4-mile from where the ferry terminal would be built.

Mr. Maris asked what the pier issue is in Hercules. Mr. Sindzinski answered that Bay fill and habitat conservation are some of the issues. Ms. Sanchez added that initially the City of Hercules was planning to build a ferry terminal in a more remote location, away from landside connections, but the study conducted by the WTA suggests a terminal closer to the train station/transit center.

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO/REDWOOD CITY

Chair Howard asked to involve Mr. Richard Napier and Mr. Walter Martone of C/CAG in San Mateo County in discussions at the TOD meeting. Mr. Sindzinski said that they would be included.

Mr. Maris asked if the same intermodal criteria are being looked at in Redwood City as in Hercules. Ms. Sanchez answered that more ridership research needs to be analyzed and that landside issues are a long-term factor for Redwood City as well as in South San Francisco.

PORT SONOMA

Mr. Mike Kerns (Sonoma) corrected Mr. Sindzinski with regard to the location of the Port Sonoma study, noting that it would be at the Petaluma River and Highway 37.

Mr. Potter asked what the rail proposals are. Mr. Sindzinski answered that there are currently SMART plans for rail. Mr. Castleberry added that there are existing rail lines and that SMART has already addressed some viability issues for its rail plan that may be helpful to the Authority in its study.

Ms. MacLeamy commented that some environmentalist groups are concerned these plans will spur more development in the area. Mr. Kerns added that the fears are unfounded because the development will occur outside of areas with protected status.

TREASURE ISLAND

Mr. John Swegles (Sunnyvale) commented that he would like an update on Moffett/Alviso, adding that affordable housing is being built where light rail could work well. Mr. Castleberry answered that Sunnyvale was included in the initial study. Initially, the ambitious development plan at Moffett did not feature ferry transit. We will revisit this potential site by contacting the City of Sunnyvale to find out the status of its development plans in the area.

7. INFORMATONAL PRESENTATION: Financial Reports

Ms. Veronica Sanchez, Manager, Community and Government Relations (WTA) gave a status report on funding for ferries in Federal Appropriations and Transportation Authorization Legislation, noting that the TEA bill has passed out of the House and is pending action in the Senate. The bill is for \$75 million for the first year, then for \$5 million per year over the next 6 years. Senator Frist has not scheduled floor time for this due to appointments, so it is possible we do not get it by the May 30 deadline. A State bill has been introduced for RM2 reallocation for the Bay Bridge seismic retrofit, so it is important to be vigilant in and to oppose that bill. Proposition 42 funding can be made available where funding does not exist now.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. Kerns commented that he will be traveling to Washington, DC, in mid-May to meet with Senators Boxer and Feinstein and would like to bring materials to present to them regarding these issues. Ms. Sanchez answered that they would be made available.

8. Status Report on Community Outreach

Ms. Heidi Machen, Public Affairs Officer (WTA), gave an informational update on the WTA's upcoming marketing opportunities and community outreach. The Authority has hired a marketing firm, Johnson/Ukropina, to develop a marketing plan. A San Mateo County Transit Managers and Chamber of Commerce lunch was held in South San Francisco targeting employees in the area as potential riders. Mr. Castleberry added that we would design the service to be tailored to the way these passengers want to see the service. It is a rare opportunity for a transit agency to know who its riders will be. Ms. Machen continued to report on the development of the "Full Speed Ahead" newsletter (April 2005), which Chair Howard also suggested making available to the CAC so that they may hand them out to their City Council members. We are working on a new brochure and looking at ways to market the existing service. 2-for-1 promotional trips into the Ferry Building are

being offered starting Mother's Day through Father's Day. The promotion will allow us the opportunity to capture passenger information. We are working on a strategy to better market the Harbor Bay service to help increase ridership.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. Maris asked if Berkeley will be included in this promotion. Ms. Machen answered that last fall we ended up chartering two boats due to the high response level on that promotion. This time we are targeting existing services, Oakland/Alameda and Larkspur, to try to increase service on those routes. Ms. Sanchez added that we will be including in our marketing budget funding for more free promotional rides for Berkeley for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Seelinger asked how to obtain the best and latest plans for service in and out of San Francisco and a best estimate for when new service will start. Ms. Machen answered that all of this information is currently available on the WTA's website under Future Ferry Routes, and to call if his questions are not answered after reading the fact sheets online.

9. NEXT MEETING

September 21, 2005.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

Chair Howard adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

###

ATTENDEE	CITY/COUNTY REPRESENTING
Allan Maris	Albany
Arne Simonsen	Antioch
Bill Seelinger	San Francisco
Diane Howard	Redwood City
Ed Balico	Hercules
Fred Hansson	San Mateo
Jeanne MacLeamy	Novato
John Swegles	Sunnyvale
Kathy Hartzell	Larkspur
Paul Albritton	Sausalito
Pedro Gonzalez	South San Francisco
Peter Hillier	Berkeley
Supervisor Michael Kerns	Sonoma County