

Tuolumne County Transit Agency

September 14, 2016, 2016 Meeting Minutes

The September 14, 2016 meeting of the Tuolumne County Transit Agency (TCTA) was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chairman Ayala. Also in attendance were: Councilmember Connie Williams, Councilmember George Segarini, Councilmember John Gray, Councilmember Evan Royce, Executive Director Darin Grossi, Sr. Administrative Analyst, Diane Bynum, Transportation Planner; Alex Padilla and Administrative Technician, Denise Bergamaschi.

Also present at today's meeting was Carl Baker representing Caltrans District 10

1. Oral communication (15 minutes) to allow the public to speak on any item not on the printed agenda.

There was no Oral Communication at today's meeting.

Consent Calendar:

2. Approval of the August 10, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

3. Presentation of the Year End Transit Report

Councilmember Gray motioned to approve all items on the Consent Calendar as presented. Councilmember Royce seconded the motion.

Motion approved with a 5-0 vote.

Regular Agenda:

4. Public Hearing for Proposed Service Cuts on Tuolumne County Transit

Executive Director Grossi instructed Councilmembers to take into consideration the numbers just presented on the Year End Transit Report as to why some of the services need to be cut. He added that a number of routes are not meeting the required 10% farebox recovery and that several other routes have very low ridership. He stated that once all input has been reviewed after the hearing tonight, the final recommendations will be presented at next month's meeting.

There were no questions from Council.

****At this time, 3:06 p.m., the Public Hearing for Proposed Service Cuts to Tuolumne County Transit was open.**

Jim Grinnell approached the podium and informed Council and audience members that beginning October 17th Wal Mart will be open 24 hours/7 days per week. He feels that this would be an opportunity for transit to provide service to the additional employees that will be working odd hours. He suggested more “reasonable” transit service costs for those employees.

Sylvia Waterson from Willow Springs approached the podium and stated that she works at Columbia College and is an avid promoter of the transit service. She questioned how much advertising is done to promote the transit service because she hasn’t seen any in the past 10 years and that a lot of her fellow workers were not aware that transit service was available to the College. She stressed that more advertising should be done.

Jeff Simpkins approached the podium and stated that he lives in lower Cedar Ridge and that it is a 2 minute walk to the school bus stop and that he would like to see a transit bus there. He also added that he currently hitch hikes and takes cabs to his destinations.

Tim Greener approached the podium and stated that he has been in Sonora for about 7 years and that the gas prices don’t matter because not everyone drives. Thank you.

Patricia approached the podium and stated that she has been in Sonora for over 27 years and that she relies on Fixed Route 6. She also added that after bill there is not much left for food and that she is disabled. She stated that she finds the transit expensive. She also stated that walking down Phoenix Lake Road, which she has done numerous times, is very dangerous! She asked that staff please reconsider the elimination of Route 6.

Mike Galvin from Tuolumne approached the podium and stated that the 6:23 a.m. bus is his only access for his 8-5 job. It is the only one that connects with the College for early classes and also for anyone handling legal matters with the courts. He added that his wife lives in an assisted living home and that with this route he can get there by 9 and spend the whole day with her. If this route is eliminated, it would drastically cut his time visiting her.

Harold on Bluebell Road approached the podium and stated that he uses Route 5 on a daily basis – some days 2-3 times. He said that it is a nice route for the mornings and evenings. He suggested that the bus stop 500 more feet from where it currently does in order to make it safer for children. He also added that Dial a Ride is only available on week-ends and is impossible to get a ride! It is always booked – 2 months out! He suggested adding another Dial a Ride service.

Tanya from East Sonora approached the podium and stated that she is a full time college student and that if Route 5 is eliminated; several of her peers would not be able to attend school anymore. She then asked how the Dodge Ridge Ski Bus is paid for and that she considers it a luxury. Executive Director Grossi explained that it is paid for by Dodge Ridge. Tanya then stated that she would be willing to pay more for transit as opposed to eliminating certain routes altogether. She suggested posing this option to the riders.

Kathleen from Tuolumne approached the podium and stated that she rides Route 5 using the morning bus for doctor appointments and then catches the Calaveras bus to get to Arnold. She also added that she is unable to get a Dial A Ride appointment because it is always booked. She also stated that Dial a Ride doesn't really help Tuolumne residents but that Route 5 is able to get her to Kaiser. Kathleen also stated that Calaveras offers rides on the Gold Run service and that it is a great thing. She then reiterated how difficult it is to get an appointment on Dial A Ride – as far as two weeks out.

Frankie Vonziha approached the podium and stated that he has lived off of Phoenix Lake Road for a little more than a year. He stated that the transit drivers are very nice and efficient. He also recommended a fare increase because riding transit beats taking a cab and he cannot drive his own vehicle for the price of the public transit. He highly recommended staff considering a fare increase.

Pauline Parrett approached the podium and stated that she has been in Tuolumne for over 30 years and that Route 1 gets her shopping, running errands, movies, and anywhere else she needs to go. She also suggested a fare increase. Pauline also stated that the drivers are awesome!

Carol Dowd approached the podium and stated that she feels staff is not promoting transit in the community as much as they should be and that many opportunities have been missed for transit to have an impact. She mentioned several community events that transit could have provided service and did not. Carol also mentioned the parking garage of the Yaney building and that court employees are using it when it is for the public and that staff should look into using it for transit.

Steve Arami approached the podium and inquired about the cost of running the transit service and asked if there was something that could be passed reducing the 10% required farebox being imposed?

****At this time, 3:33 p.m., the Public Hearing was closed.**

Executive Director Grossi informed Council that all comments will be reviewed and that a Findings Report will be brought forth next month. He also added that staff is looking at smaller buses making it easier to monitor passengers getting on and off. He also stated that he has never received support from legislation with regards to the 10% farebox recovery being imposed. Mr. Grossi added that with all of the support being offered for a fare increase that he and staff will look into it.

There was no action required for the Public Hearing.

5. Public Hearing to consider adoption of the Final Fiscal Year 2016/17 Budget for the Public Transit System and adoption of Resolution 34-16.

Executive Director Grossi reminded Council Members that the recommended budget was adopted at the May meeting and that the purpose of this item is to adopt the Final Budget.

Sr. Administrative Analyst, Diane Bynum provided a list of adjustments that were made, such as modifications to the Law and Justice Center, YARTS Grant funds, reduced fare box revenue

estimates and employee wages and benefits. With those changes being mentioned, Executive Director Grossi recommended that Council accept adoption of the Final Budget.

****At this time, 3:39 p.m., a Public Hearing was open for consideration of the Final Budget.**

There were no comments from the audience or Council Members.

**** At this time, 3:40 p.m., the Public Hearing was closed.**

Councilmember Williams moved to approve adoption of the Final Fiscal Year 2016/17 Budget for the Public Transit System and adoption of Resolution 34-16.

Councilmember Royce seconded the motion.

Motion approved with a 5-0 vote.

6. Adopt Resolution 35-16 authorizing the Auditor Controller to execute and administer an internal borrowing program and establishing policy guidelines for the program.

Sr. Administrative Analyst, Diane Bynum explained to Committee Members that adoption of this Resolution would allow the TCTC and TCTA to borrow between one another's funds which would help keep expenditures flowing.

Councilmember Gray stated that the County did this a few years ago; and thinks it is a great idea.

Councilmember Royce moved to approve adopting Resolution 35-16 authorizing the Auditor Controller to execute and administer an internal borrowing program and establishing policy guidelines for the program.

Councilmember Gray seconded the motion.

Motion approved with a 5-0 vote.

7. Reports

Executive Director Grossi stated that a Notice to Proceed between the County and the TCTA has been signed allowing the project to continue. He also added that it is a week and a half out for the "pad" and that the foundation should be going by mid-October.

There being no further items to discuss, this portion of the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bergamaschi
Administrative Technician