

AGENDA ITEM III – A

YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES MAY 20, 2021

I. Call to Order & Roll Call (4:00 pm)

Present: Bains, Blaser, Buttacavoli, Fuhrer, Harris (via Zoom), and Shaw (Chair)
Absent: Hudson and Micheli

II. Presentations

Chairman Shaw presented a Transit Worker Appreciation Proclamation by the Board to the employees of Storer Transit Systems – Yuba-Sutter Division in recognition of their work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

III. Public Business from the Floor

None.

IV. Consent Calendar

Director Bains made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Buttacavoli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Director Blaser asked about the services that Storer Transit Systems provides the agency. Martin stated that they are the contractor who operates and maintains all of Yuba-Sutter Transit's services.

V. Reports

A. Yuba-Sutter Transit Operating and Capital Budget for FY 2021/2022.

Martin presented the final draft budget for Fiscal Year 2021/2022. The budget increased slightly since the preliminary draft budget was presented in March. This increase is due primarily to increasing fuel prices, but also to an expected increase in the number of vehicle service hours to be operated in response to the June reopening of local adult developmentally disabled workshops beginning at Community Resources Services.

The proposed FY 2022 operating budget is \$8.3 million which is a 4.8 percent increase over the budgeted amount for FY 2021 and a 9.7 percent increase over the now projected expenditures for FY 2021. The draft budget includes an estimated 85,000 vehicle service hours, which is 9 percent more than the projected year-end figure for FY 2021, but still 5 percent less than the number that was operated in FY 2019. Federal COVID relief funding from CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) will provide urban and rural operational assistance in FY 2022. CARES Act funding will be exhausted in FY 2022 while a portion of ARP funding will carry over into FY 2023. CRRSAA provided only rural funding for Yuba-Sutter Transit which is being allocated for the facility project.

Martin noted that the budget assumes continuation of Yuba-Sutter Transit's consulting agreement with the Regional Waste Management Authority and continued FRAQMD funding for the Discount Pass Program for area youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

The draft capital budget includes \$1 million for the projected purchase of the new property in FY 2021 as well as an allocation of additional funds in FY 2022 for the initial design and engineering for this project. It is likely, however, that the property sale will not close until after June 30, 2021. The FY 2022 capital budget also includes funding for the purchase of six replacement rural and demand-response vehicles as well as for miscellaneous capital expenditures.

Director Bains made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5-21 approving the FY 2021/2022 budget as proposed. Director Buttacavoli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

B. Local Transportation Fund (LTF) Apportionment for FY 2021/2022.

Martin presented the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) Apportionment for FY 2021/2022. The adopted apportionment is \$3,100,000 which is an increase of 10.7 percent (\$300,000) over FY 2021 amount which had been essentially unchanged since FY 2019 at \$2.8 million. The combined LTF estimates for the two-county region are up 26.6 percent or \$1.4 million over FY 2021. The relative LTF allocation is based upon the four-part funding formula in the Yuba-Sutter Transit Joint Powers Authority agreement. Martin noted that there will not be a shortfall from Marysville this year for the first time since 2014.

Director Bains made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 6-21 establishing the LTF contributions for each member jurisdiction for FY 2021/2022 as proposed. Director Buttacavoli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

C. Set a Public Hearing on Yuba-Sutter Transit's FY 2021/2022 Federal Funding Applications.

Director Bains made a motion to set a public hearing for 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 15, 2021, to receive comments on Yuba-Sutter Transit's FY 2021/2022 federal grant applications. Director Buttacavoli seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

D. Regional Housing Authority Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Grant Application.

Martin discussed the Regional Housing Authority Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Grant Application which is requesting \$30 million to construct a 176-unit complex called Richland Village in the Richland Housing area of Yuba City. A portion of the grant will be used to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions for residents in the community. While the original concept was to target zero emission transit vehicles with those funds, the grant consultants now believe that the best strategy is to redirect those funds to the transit facility project itself and to increase the amount to \$8.5 million. The major threshold issue is the ability to demonstrate control of the property through a fully executed purchase agreement. Without the purchase agreement, the funding would revert to a largely vehicle-only approach which would reduce the transit amount by up to \$4 million.

Chairman Shaw introduced Gustavo Becerra from the Regional Housing Authority. Mr. Becerra stated that he is available for questions and has been working with the transit staff regarding this project.

Director Fuhrer asked what the time frame was to close on the property. Martin stated there would be more discussion regarding this during the Executive Session, but the grant application only requires a purchase agreement, not closing escrow to obtain property control. The deadline to demonstrate property control is May 28, 2021.

Director Bains made a motion to authorize execution of a modified Cooperative Agreement and related representations with Sutter Community Affordable Housing for an AHSC Grant Application as proposed. Director Blaser seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

E. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program.

Martin presented the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program. This highly competitive annual program offers a maximum award of \$25 million, and the new transit facility would be an eligible project. Grant applications are due July 12, 2021, and staff is expecting to request at least \$15 million to fund a significant portion of the design and construction of the Next Generation Transit Facility. Martin continued that staff is considering engaging a consultant to assist with the application at a cost of \$25,000 to \$60,000 depending on the amount of support. While this is not likely to increase the chance of success during this round, a consultant may be necessary to support staff with the grant application and to explore other funding options for the facility project. If this does go forward, it would be brought to the board at the June meeting for a full discussion.

Chairman Shaw asked if the cost of a consultant had been factored into the budget. Martin stated that it had not, but that it would be captured with contingency funds. [Note: Staff later confirmed that an extra \$44,000 had been added to the FY 2022 budget for consultant services which could be used for this purpose.]

Director Fuhrer asked if a grant writer could be hired with a contingency that the application be successful, but Martin stated that you cannot use federal funds to cover such a contingency.

Director Buttacavoli noted that staff's reservation regarding proceeding with this application seems to be due to the lack of property control. Martin responded that property control is the biggest concern because without control award would be much less likely.

F. Annual Yuba-Sutter Transit Agency Safety Plan (ASP) Review.

Martin noted that the Yuba-Sutter Transit Agency Safety Plan is a requirement under the Public Transportation Safety Plan rule, and it is required that the Safety Plan be reviewed annually. Staff has reviewed the Safety Plan and is now recommending that no changes or updates be made to the plan.

Director Blaser asked if there are new mandates coming through every year. Martin stated that this is a relatively new rule as the first Safety Plan was adopted in November 2020. While there are no required updates this year, the plan does state that it be reviewed annually in April or May each year.

Director Buttacavoli made a motion to accept the 2021 Agency Safety Plan review as submitted. Director Fuhrer seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

G. Third Quarter Performance Report.

Martin presented the Third Quarter Performance Report noting that not much has changed over the two previous quarters. He did state that April was the first month offering a year-to-year comparison of ridership during the pandemic and that ridership was up a bit over April 2020 and that ridership is trending upward on the local fixed route bus system.

H. Project & Program Updates

1. COVID-19 Impacts & Response

Martin reported that even with the increase in ridership due to more students returning to school, removal of the 12 passenger capacity limits on the local fixed route buses has not resulted in crowding on buses. It is being tracked as drivers call dispatch when they reach 12 passengers to monitor ridership and the numbers are consistent with previous months. None of the school districts asked for supplemental service, but starting May 10, 2021, River Valley High School students were able to ride for free with a student ID card with the high school being billed for the 75-cent fare for each trip. During the first eight days of the program, 40 one-way rides were provided.

The free rides for vaccination appointments continues and the program is being extended at least through September. TSA has extended the mask mandate on all public conveyance at least through September 13th regardless of vaccination status. Mask use will continue to be encouraged and the drivers are still required to wear masks when passengers are on board. The adult day programs are resuming in June 2021 at 25 percent capacity so Dial-A-Ride ridership (and associated vehicle service hours) are expected to start picking up as well.

As a ridership promotion, staff has declared the week of June 21, 2021, as Fare Free Fair Week as a sponsor for the Yuba-Sutter Fair. This will include fare free service for both the local fixed route and Dial-a-Ride services all week. State Low Carbon Transit Operations grant funding will be used to off-set lost fare revenue.

2. Caltrans Planning Grant Application – Comprehensive Operational Analysis

While staff expects to receive notice this month regarding the award of a grant for the Comprehensive Operational Analysis, no such notice has been received from Caltrans.

VI. Correspondence/Information

None.

VII. Other Business

None.

VIII. Closed Session

The meeting adjourned to closed session at 4:45 p.m. to take up two matters as noted on the agenda.

A. Conference with Real Property Negotiators Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8.

B. Public Employee Performance Evaluation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957. Position Title: Transit Manager

The Board returned from closed session and Director Harris left the meeting at 5:52 p.m. Chairman Shaw announced that no reportable action had been taken and that matters would be continued to the next meeting.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2021 AT 4:00 PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTICED.

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