

AGENDA ITEM III – A

**YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 19, 2020**

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

Present: Cardoza, Fletcher (Vice-Chair via teleconference), Leahy, Shaw, Sullenger and Whiteaker (Chair)

Absent: Hudson and Samayoa.

II. Public Business from the Floor

None.

III. Consent Calendar

Director Fletcher made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Cardoza seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

IV. Reports

A. Preliminary Draft Yuba-Sutter Transit Operating and Capital Budget for FY 2021.

Martin presented the preliminary draft of the operating and capital budget for FY 2021. Pursuant to the agency Joint Powers Agreement, the preliminary draft is due by the end of March and the budget is to be adopted by the end of May so that the local jurisdictions will know their LTF apportionments for the next fiscal year. He noted that this preliminary budget will likely change due to the current uncertainties regarding the COVID-19 coronavirus.

The preliminary draft operating budget of \$8,556,000 represents a 3 percent increase in expenditures compared to the FY 2020 budget. Budgeted revenues for FY 2021 are similar to what are currently being projected for FY 2020, but that is likely to change before May's final budget. The draft capital budget is much smaller this year than it has been in the past due to the recent bus replacement projects. Just one small bus replacement and minor fleet expansion project is scheduled for FY 2021. Factors for consideration include the long term status of the Yuba College Sutter Campus Shuttle which is now suspended due to the recent move by Yuba College to on-line classes only; and pending state legislation which has now been suspended that combined would impose free fare requirements for youth, seniors and college students.

Director Cardoza asked if any of the relief funding being considered by the federal government would be available to Yuba-Sutter Transit. Martin stated that conversations are ongoing at both the federal and state level to assist transit operators to continue providing service. While there is yet no concrete proposal, we are a part of the conversation.

B. Authorizing Resolution for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grant Documents.

Director Fletcher made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2-20 authorizing the Transit Manager to execute all federal grant and contract documents under Sections 5307, 5309, 5310, 5311, 5317 and 5339. Director Cardoza seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

C. Annual Authorization for the Transit Manager to Certify as Counsel for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grants.

Director Cardoza made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 3-20 authorizing the Transit Manager to certify as counsel for FTA grants. Director Sullenger seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

E. Project & Program Updates

1. Yuba College Sutter Center Student Shuttle Start-Up

Martin noted that the Yuba College Sutter Center Student Shuttle has suspended service as of March 12, 2020 due to the closure of the campus to in-person classes because of the COVID-19 outbreak. Ridership was poor prior to the suspension and the service will most likely not be in operation until the summer semester, but it will need to be re-evaluated during the fall semester to determine if the shuttle is necessary.

2. Next Generation Transit Facility Plan

Martin noted that the Next Generation Transit Plan consultants are currently working on a scoping plan, but their early assessment is that the site needs to be roughly eight to ten acres based on the preliminary plan. Staff is meeting with the consultant team tomorrow to further discuss site parameters.

3. Computer Assisted Dispatch System Implementation

Martin discussed the current status of the computer assisted dispatch system noting that Tap Ride was to be an automated dispatching system for the Dial-A-Ride service. Ultimately, the system did not work as promised by DoubleMap, but Storer has experience working with a system call Strategen and is testing it for our use. After testing this system, staff will be bringing this issue back to the board in a few months for discussion of the related contractual issues.

4. COVID-19 Coronavirus Planning & Response

Martin introduced Renick House, Storer General Manager, to discuss the steps Storer is taking regarding driver and rider safety and staffing. House detailed the sanitation process for cleaning the buses every night, including deep cleaning all high touch areas every night and additional cleaning between drivers. Social distancing is also being practiced by

creating some defensible space on the buses for drivers and riders to try and stop the spread as much as possible. The drivers have also been discouraged from congregating in the break room and are encouraged to take their breaks outside or in their vehicles. Starting Friday, March 20, 2020, dispatch will be screening riders on the demand response vehicles for symptoms of COVID-19 by asking if they are feeling well or if this is a necessary trip to lessen the chance of transmission. Due to reduced ridership and a corresponding reduction in Dial-A-Ride service hours, Storer is offering voluntary layoffs for those who are concerned about contracting the virus and wanting to stay at home. There are other contingency plans in case other layoffs are needed.

Director Leahy asked if there was a redeployment plan for when this is all over. House explained that there is a plan in place and all employees understand that they are subject to recall. In addition, new employees that are now in training will also be available.

Director Cardoza asked if Storer was supplying masks for the drivers. House responded that Storer is supplying gloves and cleaning materials, but not masks though drivers are allowed to wear their own masks if they so choose.

Director Shaw asked if Storer was assisting the drivers in applying for unemployment benefits when they are being laid off. House stated that Storer is providing laid off employees with the information and materials necessarily to file correctly with EDD.

Director Shaw asked if drivers could deny someone access to the bus if they are sick. Martin stated that drivers always have the ability to refuse service, but they are not medical personnel, so it is difficult to screen someone at the bus stop. Screening will be happening when customers call in to schedule a Dial-a-Ride since that is a more personal connection in a smaller bus and sometimes requires close contact to secure a wheelchair. House added that drivers have all been trained to recognize the virus symptoms.

Martin then addressed how the services have been impacted to date. Compared to a similar week in February, weekday fixed route service is currently down 63 percent; Saturday fixed route service was down 38 percent; weekday Dial-a-Ride ridership is down 61 percent; and, Saturday Dial-a-Ride ridership was down 51 percent. For the Sacramento services, commuter ridership was down 56 percent on Wednesday and down 66 percent Thursday morning with midday ridership down 64 percent. He stated that we will continue to operate as we can because we are an essential service in this area.

Martin noted that a draft contingency plan has been developed that will continue to be adapted as circumstances change. Currently, Dial-A-Ride service hours have been reduced in response to much lower ridership and the Sutter Campus Shuttle has been suspended indefinitely. Ideas being considered include making services fare free which would allow for the closure of the Administration Office to the public and rear-door boarding on the fixed route buses to reduce driver and passenger exposure. Most of the service options will be dependent on driver availability.

Martin noted that dropping fares for the rest of the month of March if ridership remained steady would reduce cash fare receipts by approximately \$10,500. For April, this cost

would be approximately \$21,800. Including a loss of pass sales revenue commensurate with the current ridership reduction, the total exposure in terms of lost revenue through April has been estimated at less than \$50,000. Martin continued that similar actions have been taken and are under consideration across the country.

Director Leahy stated that he was confident in the direction that staff has laid out and believes that the lost revenue can be recouped. Martin stated that services like meal delivery and other necessary services would be a possibility as well.

Director Whiteaker stated that with information and directives changing almost hourly, the draft plan is acceptable.

Director Fletcher stated that he felt it would be difficult to shut down all service, but that he would like an update in approximately five days to see what direction the services are headed.

Martin stated that he would provide an update, but he also recommended that board members register on our website for service updates for the most real time information from our office.

V. Correspondence/Information

None.

VI. Other Business

None.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:46 pm.

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020 AT 4:00PM IN THE YUBA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS.