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**SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT**

**MOBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## MEETING MINUTES

July 13, 2023

**CALL TO ORDER** **ATTACHMENT 1**

The in-person and zoom webinar meeting was called to order at **2:30 p.m.**

**Present Members:** Alan Ruzick, Helen O’Connell, Charles Johnson, German Ayon, Frank Trujillo, Jeff Thom, Gene Lozano, Pam Flohr, Margie Donovan, Hugh Laffer **Absent:** All members present. **SacRT Staff:** Ron Forrest, Rose Patton, Adam Green, Carmen Alba, Sangita Arya, Albert Kennedy, Tony Bizjak, Henry Li, Richard Mitchell, David Topaz, Chris Flores, Jamie Adelman, Jamie Poole-Canavari, Kathy Sachen, Charity Oakley, Jessica Gonzales, Priscilla Vargas **Guests:** Josh Leachman, Ryan Whittle, Brian Crilly, Shane Snyder, Beth Hassett, Jeffrey Tardaguila, Shari Roeseler, Regina Marie, Jim Kaiser, Elias Rashmawi, Gary Vickers, Alicia Brown, Tiffany Manosh

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ACTION:** Jeff Thom motioned to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2023, meeting as amended. German Ayon seconded the motion. Gene Lozano abstained. The motion was carried by voice vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Johnson reminded the MAC that the recruitment process has started and is ongoing. Chair Johnson introduced SacRT GM Henry Li.

Mr. Li presented SacRT updates. In honor of the National Disability Independence Day July 26, 2023, SacRT will offer system-wide free rides for all riders. Mr. Li expressed appreciation for SacRT and the MAC for partnering to serve the community. Mr. Li commented on the recent Sacramento Transportation Authority grant funding that will supplement SacRT’s SmaRT Ride service. Mr. Li also reported that the Light Rail Modernization program has made significant progress. In the last 3 years, SacRT secured over $400 million for the Modernization Program, and the funding supports the purchase of 44 new low-floor light rail trains. SacRT will receive another $100 million to complete the Light Rail Modernization project. Last week, the state budget was signed and includes $3 billion in public transit funding to be allocated to Metropolitan Planning Organizations based on population. With the shift to a population-based allocation, SacRT will receive about $100 million dollars this upcoming fiscal year. SacRT will use this funding to upgrade infrastructure and improve service. Mr. Li gave another update on customer service and SacRT GO. SacRT’s Human Resources Department is increasing recruitment to fill more paratransit driver vacancies and increase on-time performance. SacRT is allocating additional funding from the General Fund to retain and recruit operators and supplement and improve SacRT GO and senior and disabled services. Mr. Li opened for questions from the MAC.

Chair Johnson asked Mr. Li about the use of funding for operations. Mr. Li affirmed that funding would be used for operations including for seniors and disabled riders. Mr. Li said that SacRT will consult further with the MAC on how to do this most effectively, and described an example of how SmaRT Ride and SacRT GO can be made available for special events.

Ms. Donovan stated that she hoped to move from SacRT GO to SmaRT Ride, but she was not able, and emphasized the need for more service. She praised the SacRT GO drivers in Folsom.

Mr. Lozano praised SacRT’s work in finding resources but stated the need for SacRT to hire an independent ADA consultant to do a full ADA self-evaluation and transition plan, as a strategic guide for capitol development, and website and document accessibility. Mr. Li said SacRT will investigate this suggestion.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Vehicle Update (Albert Kennedy, Director, Bus Maintenance)**

Mr. Kennedy gave an update on full size bus procurements. 30 buses were purchased from Gillig last year, and this year they ordered 41 more buses: 32 for SacRT, 1 expansion bus, and 8 for Elk Grove services. Several new buses will begin in service in approximately 2 weeks.

1. **SacRT GO Open House Update (Priscilla Vargas, ADA Compliance Officer)**

Ms. Vargas reported that instead of an open house in August and December, there would be one event on October 14, 2023, to take place at the Pannell Center, with a virtual open house on October 13, 2023. Mr. Lozano asked about the possibility of a hybrid and in-person open house on the same day.

1. **SacRT GO Paratransit Services Operation Update (Richard Mitchell, Director, Community Bus Services, and David Topaz, VP, Labor Relations)**

Mr. Mitchell provided data tables on both paratransit ridership and paratransit on-time performance, from SacRT GO and UZURV, for July 2022 to May 2023. Ridership increased during FY 22-23. Mr. Mitchell added that both May and June 2023 had experienced an increase in riders of over 26,000. Mr. Thom asked about more data showing improvements in SacRT GO.

Mr. Topaz reported that SacRT is working with the unions on finding a pay and benefits structure to help with operator recruitment.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Beth Hassett (CEO, WEAVE) and Shane Snyder (Society for the Blind)**

Ms. Hassett reported on WEAVE’s partnership with The Office of Violence Against Women and work on surveying assault on blind/low-vision people. WEAVE is working with Society for the Blind and SacRT to find ways to help train drivers, raise awareness of signs of abuse, and provide other assistance. Mr. Snyder spoke about this collaboration. Mr. Snyder commented on the ongoing modifications to light rail stations to accommodate low-floor trains and improve accessibility for blind/low-vision people. He described the need to communicate to the blind community about changes in platform terrain and in bus routes. Mr. Li affirmed desire to communicate further with WEAVE and Society for the Blind. Mr. Lozano commented on railings for platforms and other wayfinding methods, asked why railing is not yet installed, and expressed need for training. Mr. Thom commented on need for discussion on how drivers can be sensitive to perceived abuse. Mr. Tardaguila commented on the need for communication on the ramp at the Sac Valley Station.

1. **Railyards Station Plan (Sangita Arya, Senior Systems Engineer) and Ryan Whittle (Stantec and Associates)**

Ms. Arya, Mr. Whittle, and Mr. Crilly discussed the plan for the proposed 7th Street light rail station, which includes truncated domes, a landscape strip, and three canopies. The central canopy contains Railyards branding, vending machines, and benches. There are two mini-high platforms. Funding is expected in mid-fall and construction could begin next year and could be completed in Q1 2025. Mr. Lozano asked for clarification about the project. Ms. Arya mentioned its proximity to MLS Stadium. Mr. Lozano asked about further opportunities to comment on the project. Mr. Tardaguila asked about the ramp size for electric wheelchairs.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Lozano requested Accessible Services to access or purchase a 3D Printer for accessible mockups. Ms. Vargas announced that SacRT’s equivalent facilitation request was granted by the FTA. Ms. Flohr mentioned the program featuring Mr. Li’s interview on KVIE.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Johnson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting; Helen O’Connell moved to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Alan Ruzich. No abstentions. The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Mobility Advisory Council is scheduled for August 3, 2023, from 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.