

MEETING SUMMARY

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

CAC ATTENDEES: Supervisor Michael Kerns/Sonoma County, Supervisor Cynthia Murray/Marin County, Mayor Pedro Gonzalez/South San Francisco, Vice Mayor Mindell Penn/Richmond, Joan Lundstrom/Larkspur City Council, Paul Albritton/Sausalito City Council, Allan Maris/Albany City Council, Arne Simonsen/Antioch City Council, Bill Seelinger/San Francisco, Peter Hillier/Berkeley, Nello Bianco/Martinez, Kevin Rose for Supervisor Mark Church, San Mateo County

MEETING DATE: September 24, 2003

FROM: Veronica Sanchez, Manager, and Karen Shelver, Assistant, WTA Community and Government Relations

DATE: January 20, 2004

—→ **NEXT MEETING: January 14, 2004 – 10am-12pm, San Francisco State University Extension, 425 Market St., Rm. 2601-2602, SF CA**

The Community Advisory Committee held its meeting on September 24, 2003 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. The meeting began at 10:10 am.

1. Call to Order and Motion to Approve Minutes of March 12, 2003 CAC Meeting

Chair Diane Howard called the meeting to order and welcomed Vice Mayor Mindell Penn (Richmond), the newest member of the Community Advisory Committee, to the meeting. A motion to approve the March 12, 2003 meeting minutes was made by Mayor Pedro Gonzalez (South San Francisco) and seconded by Councilmember Arne Simonsen (Antioch). There were no abstentions and no oppositions.

2. Report of Chief Executive Officer: Mr. Thomas G. Bertken

a. **FINAL PROGRAMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR).** After circulation and approval of revisions to the draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) by the Board of Directors, the Board certified the final EIR on July 10, 2003.

b. **FINAL IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATIONS PLAN:** The Implementation and Operations Plan (hereafter, "IOP" or "Plan") was submitted to the Legislature on December 12, 2002 pursuant to the requirements of the State's Legislation. After circulation of the EIR, revisions were made which resulted in revisions to the IOP. Upon revising and circulating the revised IOP, the WTA's Board of Directors approved the Plan on July 10, 2003, and was thereafter submitted to the Legislature.

c. **FORMATION OF FUEL CELL BOAT AD HOC COMMITTEE:** The WTA received a \$100,000 federal grant to design a fuel cell ferryboat for Treasure Island. Pending is a \$2.5 million federal grant to construct the vessel. The environmental community suggested the formation of a technical review committee to review the progress of the project. A subgroup of the Technical Advisory Committee, called the Treasure Ferry Boat Technical Review Group, was formed to review the design for the fuel cell boat and look at other possible technologies. The first meeting of the Technical Review Group was on August 23, 2003 during which the purpose of the review group was discussed and alternative technologies and fuels were identified that may be considered for future study. A presentation of a design of the boat will be presented at their next meeting on October 2, 2003 from 10am-12pm, 26th floor of 50 California Street, San Francisco, at the offices of Bay Conservation & Development Commission.

Mr. Arne Simonsen (Antioch) asked if the grant for the new fuel cell boat would be strictly for use on a Treasure Island route. Mr. Bertken answered that the grant has been designated to the Treasure Island Service but could be applied to other routes if the Treasure Island route is delayed.

Mr. Allan Maris (Albany) asked if anyone with an interest in the project could attend the technical review group meetings. Mr. Bertken answered that the meetings are open to the public.

Mr. Peter Hillier (Berkeley) asked if the grant would cover the cost of construction of the boat. Mr. Bertken replied that the plan that has been developed requires a total cost of just over \$3 million, which includes the 20% matching that money that will be used for the \$2.5 million grant.

Mr. Maris asked where the boat will be built. Mr. Bertken said the platform is a standard design catamaran, which will probably be built in Washington State, as the Bay Area does not have a boatyard that is familiar with the construction of aluminum catamarans.

d. **APPROVAL OF CITY OF ALAMEDA REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTMENT:** Mr. Bertken explained that because Mayor Ralph Appezato (Alameda) died last September, the Alameda City Council replaced him on the WTA Board with Mayor Beverly Johnson as Alameda's representative. As such, Mayor Johnson serves concurrently as a member of the Community Advisory Committee and the Board. He further said that it is recommended that the Committee recognize this dual role by their vote of approval. Ms. Cynthia Murray (Marin County) made a motion to approve the appointment of Alameda Mayor Beverly Johnson to the CAC. The motion was seconded by Ms. Joan Lundstrom (Larkspur).

3. STATUS REPORT ON PROPOSED FUNDING OPTIONS

State Legislation: Senate Bill 915 & 916 Ms. Veronica Sanchez (WTA) reported that Senate Bill 915, approving the WTA's IOP, moved through the Senate and Assembly and is currently awaiting the Governor's signature. The purpose of the legislation is to transition the WTA from a planning agency into an operating agency. The bill specifies that the WTA will coordinate with MTC for ferry response in an emergency situation. An amendment was added to the bill that requires the WTA to send out a notice to public bus agencies to invite them to submit a proposal for operating ferryboats in their service areas. The WTA's Board of Directors would review the proposal for cost-effectiveness and other applicable criteria and accept or reject such proposal. If the Board rejects the proposal, the WTA would be responsible for providing findings and facts for such rejection. No opposition to SB 915 was received throughout the legislative process.

A handout prepared by MTC summarizing the regional transit expenditure plan legislation, Senate Bill 916, was distributed. Out of the allotted funds, the WTA will receive \$84 million for two new vessels and facility improvements, including the improvements to the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal. A total of \$148.9 million in operating funds is earmarked for the Oakland/Alameda, Berkeley and Oyster Point services over a ten-year period. This funding also includes an allotment for further study on service to Port Sonoma and a planning study for Richmond. Finally, there is a \$3 million allocation to cover the WTA's administrative costs.

Mr. Maris asked if there is a smaller boat designated in the WTA's Plan for Berkeley-Albany. Ms. Sanchez responded that the WTA recommends operating a 149-passenger for the Berkeley service. The same size vessel would also service Oyster Point. Mr. Steve Castleberry (WTA) added that the shorter routes would require smaller boats and pointed out that the long trip from San Francisco to Vallejo would merit use of a larger boat since travel time is much longer on that route.

Mr. Peter Hillier asked if there could be conflict with regards to funding and, if one project does not get approved for funding pursuant to SB 916, would the funding allocated for that project get rolled over into another project. Ms. Sanchez responded that, pursuant to SB 916, MTC has flexibility to reprogram funds if specified projects cannot be delivered.

Mr. Maris asked if the language in SB 915 is consistent with the air quality standards language. Ms. Sanchez answered that the language in the bill is consistent with the mitigation recommendation in the EIR.

Ms. Ellen Johnck (Bay Planning Coalition) mentioned that the Bay Planning Coalition would send a letter to the Governor supporting funding of SB 916. She also made reference to the Regional Transportation Strategy, a broad transportation coalition spearheaded by the Bay Area Council, which is interested in possibly starting a funding authority to raise additional money for transit.

Ms. Lundstrom pointed out a title clarification in the description of the Greenbrae Interchange prepared by MTC. She also noted that the Greenbrae project is a much larger project than is described in the MTC handout. Ms. Sanchez responded that SB 916 contains broader language.

Ms. Mindell Penn (Richmond) asked, referring to the SB 916 handout, about the recommendation regarding funding the Richmond service after 2010. Ms. Sanchez answered that the Richmond service appears under the funding allotment to the WTA for further studies.

Mr. Albritton asked what would transpire after the Governor signs the bills, if they do get signed. Ms. Sanchez replied that a campaign would be organized and led by Senator Don Perata.

Federal Funding

Ms. Sanchez reported that legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives to increase the national pot of money available for ferries to \$150 million from the current \$38 million. Ms. Sanchez also reported on the efforts to change Federal laws to allow future bridge toll revenues to be used for operating costs. Senator Diane Feinstein took the lead in introducing this change in the pending Transportation Appropriations bill.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

a. **Ms. Culnane gave a PowerPoint Presentation on emergency response scenarios for the Bay Area.**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Ms. Cynthia Murray (Marin County) asked if the need to do emergency dredging was covered in the WTA's Plan. Ms. Culnane responded that the Plan does address emergency dredging.

Ms. Lundstrom commented that in an emergency situation, the Coast Guard would need to be notified of the WTA's response actions. Ms. Culnane added that the WTA would indeed coordinate with the Coast Guard and that they are a major stakeholder in the Plan.

Chair Howard asked at what point input from cities and counties would come in and how the information obtained would be distributed to the public. Ms. Culnane responded that each county's Office of Emergency Services (OES) would be the liaison in an emergency.

Ms. Murray commented that it would be a good idea to become involved by contacting a local OES, attending safety meetings, and having the OES make a presentation to local city officials in order to inform them of what to do in an emergency situation.

Ms. Lundstrom commented on the storm that temporarily shut down the Golden Gate Bridge and the earthquake of 1989, citing them as examples of emergency situations where ferries would effectively be used to respond. She asked if there were back-up generators for the ramps at terminals in case of a power outage. Ms. Sanchez answered that the new floats have electrical ramps so that they will still operate in a power outage.

Ms. Murray commented that the emergency back-up generators for the ramps currently in operation often do not work and ADA standards are often not met. Ms. Culnane responded that since some ramps are too steep to meet ADA standards, some terminals such as at Boston Harbor, meet ADA standards by having the terminals staffed at all times. This may be a solution to similar problems at terminals in the Bay Area.

b. **Steve Castleberry gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the future planning process of the WTA.**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. Gonzalez commented that the Water Transit Advocates for San Mateo County have met with city councils throughout the South Bay in order to lobby for votes for the Measure A sales tax initiative. He asked if the WTA had or would get funds to help outreach efforts like the Water Transit Advocates for San Mateo County. Ms. Sanchez responded that the WTA is not legally able to provide funds for campaigning, but it can provide educational materials about ferry expansion.

Mr. Maris asked when implementation would begin. Mr. Castleberry answered that the financial strategic plan cash flow schedule which is tied to delivery of each of the projects, will be reviewed by the Board at the October 23, 2003 Board meeting.

Mr. Bill Seelinger (San Francisco) asked what the latest information is with regard to the ratio of harmful emissions from cars, buses and boats, and which is the worst polluter. Mr. Castleberry answered that a calculation based upon the number of seats per vehicle was done to determine the standards. He also said that the studies done were based on a 5-20 year period forecast and that the tools used to support the findings are not available for ferry emissions forecasting as they are for auto emissions forecasting, but that the difference in emissions over a 20 year period for both is nominal. Ms. Culnane further added that the latest emissions report was given at the CAC meeting of June 18, 2003. The report was based upon studies done using particulate matter, NOx and hydrocarbon and by seat mile and shows significantly low emissions for ferries.

Chair Howard requested to have a list of bullet points explaining the emissions testing results to be sent out along with the meeting minutes. (See Attachment 1)

Mr. Albritton commented that reductions in service on ferries and on Golden Gate Transit are currently taking place and that the long-term effects of such reduction should be considered when the Plan goes into effect.

Mr. Maris asked if he meant reduction in ridership or funding for service. Mr. Albritton clarified that funding was being reduced, causing service to decrease or be eliminated. He also said that ridership has decreased by 27% due possibly to vacant office space and the changing economy which, in turn, reflects on changes in commute patterns.

Mr. Simonsen commented that farebox recovery should be one of the main concerns in maintaining ridership and service.

Ms. Lundstrom suggested that a future CAC agenda item could be a focus on the Marin/Larkspur ferry service and requested statistics on that service along with an update on the Golden Gate Bridge District's funding plan. Ms. Sanchez responded that the Golden Gate Bridge District's long-term financial strategic plan does not include a request for funding for future capital expenses for ferries. She also mentioned that the WTA staff is going back and restudying and reanalyzing its ridership studies in order to provide more updated data on ridership and, in particular, funding for service to Marin County.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

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

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