



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES*
APRIL 23, 2021 – 9:00AM
MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) convened on Friday, April 23, 2021, via teleconference.

The Board Meeting Agenda Packet can be found online at www.SCMTD.com. *Minutes are “summary” minutes, not verbatim minutes. Audio recordings of Board meeting open sessions are available to the public upon request.

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- 1 CALL TO ORDER** at 9:01 AM by Board Chair Lind.
- 2 ROLL CALL:** The following Directors were **present** via teleconference, representing a quorum:

Director Jimmy Dutra	City of Watsonville	
Director Aurelio Gonzalez	City of Watsonville	
Director Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson	City of Santa Cruz	AR 9:14
Director Manu Koenig	County of Santa Cruz	
Director Donna Lind	City of Scotts Valley	
Director Bruce McPherson	County of Santa Cruz	
Director Donna Meyers	City of Santa Cruz	
Director Larry Pageler	County of Santa Cruz	
Director Kristen Petersen	City of Capitola	
Director Dan Rothwell	County of Santa Cruz	AR 9:04
Director Mike Rotkin	County of Santa Cruz	
Ex-Officio Director Dan Henderson	UC Santa Cruz	
Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt	Cabrillo College	AR 9:03

Additional METRO staff:
Alex Clifford
Julie Sherman

CEO/General Manager
General Counsel

- 3 ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Today’s meeting is being broadcast by Community Television of Santa Cruz County.
- 4 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS**
Hearing none, Chair Lind moved to the next agenda item.

5 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Several members of the public (David Van Brink, Mark Mesiti-Miller, Matt Farrell, Veronica Elsea, Barry Scott and Cara Lamb) spoke to and encouraged the METRO Board of Directors to accept the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis (TCAA) & Rail Network Integration Study (RNIS) Business Plan. An email (attached) by Coleman Segal also voiced support for the TCAA/RNIS Business Plan.

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, encouraged the METRO Board of Directors (Board) to support opening the Coastal Corridor now for active transportation (slide attached).

Ben Vernazza, member of the public, recommended exploring the 1996-98 Use Corridor Bus Map (attached) and was a proponent of a bus-hike-bike-trail share plan.

Eduardo Montesino, METRO Transit Supervisor, expressed concern on providing our riders a better experience by opening the restrooms at the transit centers. Discussion among the assembly ensued. Alex Clifford, CEO/General Manager, responded that staff would reevaluate the situation and provide a timeline on reopening the restrooms to the Board.

Having nothing further, Chair Lind moved to the next agenda item.

6 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

James Sandoval, SMART Local 23, General Chairperson, presented a letter and petition (attached) from the METRO labor organizations requesting the Board discuss and negotiate pandemic relief/hazard pay stipend(s) through the American Rescue Plan. Joan Jeffries, SEIU SEA Chapter President, added SEIU's support for this recommendation.

This topic was briefly discussed and it was determined that it will be agendized to closed session at the May 21, 2021 Board meeting for further discussion.

Having nothing further, Chair Lind moved to the next agenda item.

7 METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Hearing none, Chair Lind moved to the next agenda item.

8 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

Hearing none, Chair Lind moved to the next agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

9.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK JOURNAL DETAIL FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2021

9.2 ACCEPT AND FILE: MINUTES OF THE MARCH 26, 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, THE APRIL 9, 2021 FINANCE, BUDGET & AUDIT STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING, THE APRIL 9, 2021 CAPITAL PROJECTS STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING, AND THE APRIL 9, 2021 PERSONNEL/HR STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

9.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: YEAR TO DATE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF FEBRUARY 28, 2021

9.4 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FY21 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET

- 9.5 CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT AWARDS FOR VEHICLE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES NOT TO EXCEED \$250,000
- 9.6 CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO TO USE THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION (CALACT)/MORONGO BASIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MBTA) PURCHASING COOPERATIVE CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO CNG BUSES FROM GILLIG, LLC
- 9.7 RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FY22 APPROPRIATIONS AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION EARMARK REQUESTS
- 9.8 APPROVE: METRO EXTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

SECOND: DIRECTOR GONZALEZ

MOTION PASSED WITH 11 AYES (Directors Dutra, Gonzalez, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Lind, McPherson, Meyers, Pageler, Petersen, Rothwell and Rotkin)

REGULAR AGENDA

10 PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE LONGEVITY AWARDS: MICHELLE FITZPATRICK & DAVID VALDEZ (25 YEARS)

Chair Lind read a short bio on Ms. Fitzpatrick and thanked her and Mr. Valdez in absentia. There was no public comment.

11 RETIREE RESOLUTIONS OF APPRECIATION: EDUARDO BIDDLECOME, WILLIAM DOVE AND JOSE HERRERA

Due to technical difficulties, Director Rotkin stepped in for Chair Lind to read the short bios and thanked the recipients in absentia.

Director Gonzalez said he had known Jose (Tony) Herrera a long time. He expressed that Tony is a very dedicated, kind-hearted individual and thanked him for his service.

Mr. Dove thanked METRO, Paratransit Supervisors, and the Union for their support in rough times due to health issues and helping him get to retirement.

There was no public comment.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE RETIREE RESOLUTIONS AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

SECOND: DIRECTOR PAGELER

MOTION PASSED WITH 11 AYES (Directors Dutra, Gonzalez, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Lind, McPherson, Meyers, Pageler, Petersen, Rothwell and Rotkin)

12 CEO ORAL REPORT / COVID-19 UPDATE

CEO Clifford welcomed the following new hires:

- HR Analyst II: Manasi Sabnis
- Bus Operators: Isaiah Benavidez, Jesus Estrada Almaraz, Matt Kaminski, Gabriela Martinez, Johnny Ramirez and Mario Rodriguez

And, congratulated the following employees who were promoted by qualification to Mechanic II:

- Ivan Ballesteros
- Cesar Alvarez-Castillo

And, congratulated the following employee who was promoted to Bus Operator:

- Jose Carranco

He went on to provide the following updates:

- Funding updates from the various federal and state legislative bodies:
 - On behalf of METRO, Congressman Panetta is submitting an earmark under the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill for one CNG articulated bus and two CNG fixed-route buses.
 - Congresswoman Eshoo is submitting two METRO projects under this bill. One project is for a zero-emission bus procurement for Hwy. 17 as well as replacements for seven paratransit vans.
 - APTA is sending a letter in support of Congressman Panetta's H.R.583. This is the Green Bus Tax Credit Act for zero-emission bus manufacturers. If this is successful, the presumption is that some of the tax credits manufacturers could receive, would flow down to METRO to procure cheaper electric buses.
- COVID updates:
 - METRO has had no new cases since March 15, 2021.
 - To date, 62% of METRO employees have been vaccinated.
 - Effective May 1, bus capacity will increase from 15 to 25 seats on 40' buses and to 17 seats on 30' buses. There will be no increase on Hwy. 17 buses due to Santa Clara County restrictions. We will continue to reevaluate this as announcements are made at the local and state levels.
- A new contract with Flixbus will be in effect on May 1, 2021.
- The fourth Proterra bus has arrived.

Director Dutra inquired if the paratransit vans requested will be electric. CEO Clifford responded not at this time due to range issues, but METRO continues to monitor that situation.

Director Gonzales and Chair Lind appreciated METRO's involvement in training Watsonville and Scotts Valley fire departments on the electric, hybrid and CNG buses. CEO Clifford thanked Curtis Moses, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director, for coordinating this training.

There was no public comment.

13 BOARD SUPPORT OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS LEGISLATION AB703 AND AB361
CEO Clifford provided commentary to the staff report.

Discussion ensued on the pros/cons of virtual versus live meetings.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE BOARD SUPPORT OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS LEGISLATION AB703 AND AB361 AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

SECOND: DIRECTOR MEYERS

MOTION PASSED WITH 11 AYES (Directors Dutra, Gonzalez, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Lind, McPherson, Meyers, Pageler, Petersen, Rothwell and Rotkin)

14 REVIEW OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION UPDATE

Julie Sherman, General Counsel, announced there is one item to be discussed in today's closed session. This is the performance evaluation for the CEO/General Manager. She did anticipate a report out after the closed session.

15 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING: MAY 21, 2021

Chair Lind announced the next meeting on May 21, 2021 and reminded the assembly to check the SCMTD website for venue updates, as we remain dependent upon the public health orders in place at the time.

16 RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION - 10:31 AM

SECTION II – CLOSED SESSION

17 PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54957(b)(1)

CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54957.6

AGENCY DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE:

DONNA LIND, BOARD CHAIR

TITLE/UNREPRESENTED EMPLOYEE:

ALEX CLIFFORD, CEO/GM

Following the Closed Session, and after a 15-minute recess, the Board may consider potential actions to amend the Employment Agreement of the CEO/General Manager.

Jayne Ackemann, former METRO Marketing, Communications & Customer Service Director, sent the attached letter to the Board in relation to CEO Clifford's evaluation.

SECTION III – RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION – 12:09 PM

18 REPORT OF CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

Chair Lind announced the Board took no reportable action in the closed session. There will be a continuance of this matter to closed session at the May 21, 2021 Board meeting and there will be opportunities for public comment.

19 ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lind adjourned the meeting at 12:11 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer
Administrative Specialist

Attachment

From: [Coleman Segal](#)
To: boardinquiries@scmtd.com
Subject: Public Comment- Support for TCAA Business Plan
Date: Friday, April 23, 2021 8:57:02 AM

Hello,

I am writing to voice support for acceptance of the TCAA Business Plan. Voting against the plan is voting to allow money that could be spent in Santa Cruz to go elsewhere instead. Please vote to accept the TCAA Business Plan next month. Thank you,

Coleman Segal

315 Sumner St., Apt A, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

GRIDLOCK along the Santa Cruz Boardwalk



- ❑ Santa Cruz County has 3 transportation corridors
 - Highway 1
 - Soquel Drive
 - Coastal Corridor
- ❑ All corridors needed across the County
- ❑ Train not effective transit solution
 - <2% impact on Highway Corridor traffic
 - Zero impact on Soquel Corridor traffic
 - Coastal Corridor remains closed for decades
- ❑ Train not affordable
 - \$25M / year for the SINGLE transit route
 - \$50M / year for ALL Metro transit
- ❑ Coastal Trail affordable and effective
 - Measure D sufficient to fund
 - 15K – 25K users a day

Attachment

Agenda Item 5

Open Coastal Corridor NOW for Active Transportation!

Attachment

HEY, IS EVERYONE OUT THERE BLIND?
Bus-Trail Choice in the TCAA Study Solves Coastal Trail Dilemma!
Oral Presentation SCC Metro Board Meeting
April 23, 2021

There was a fourth choice in the recent TCAA rail-trail study – Bus/Trail. The Bus-Hike-Bike-Trail-Share plan was the first choice in studies made during 1996-98. So, let us see, for example, how a new express route might be amazingly effective in moving students and employees between Watsonville and UCSC with unload/load stop in Cabrillo (20 minutes), then direct to the UCSC entrance at Bay and High Streets (20 minutes). That is a total of 40 minutes (new Highway 1 bus-only lanes in 2023 mean commute or non-commute times are the same).

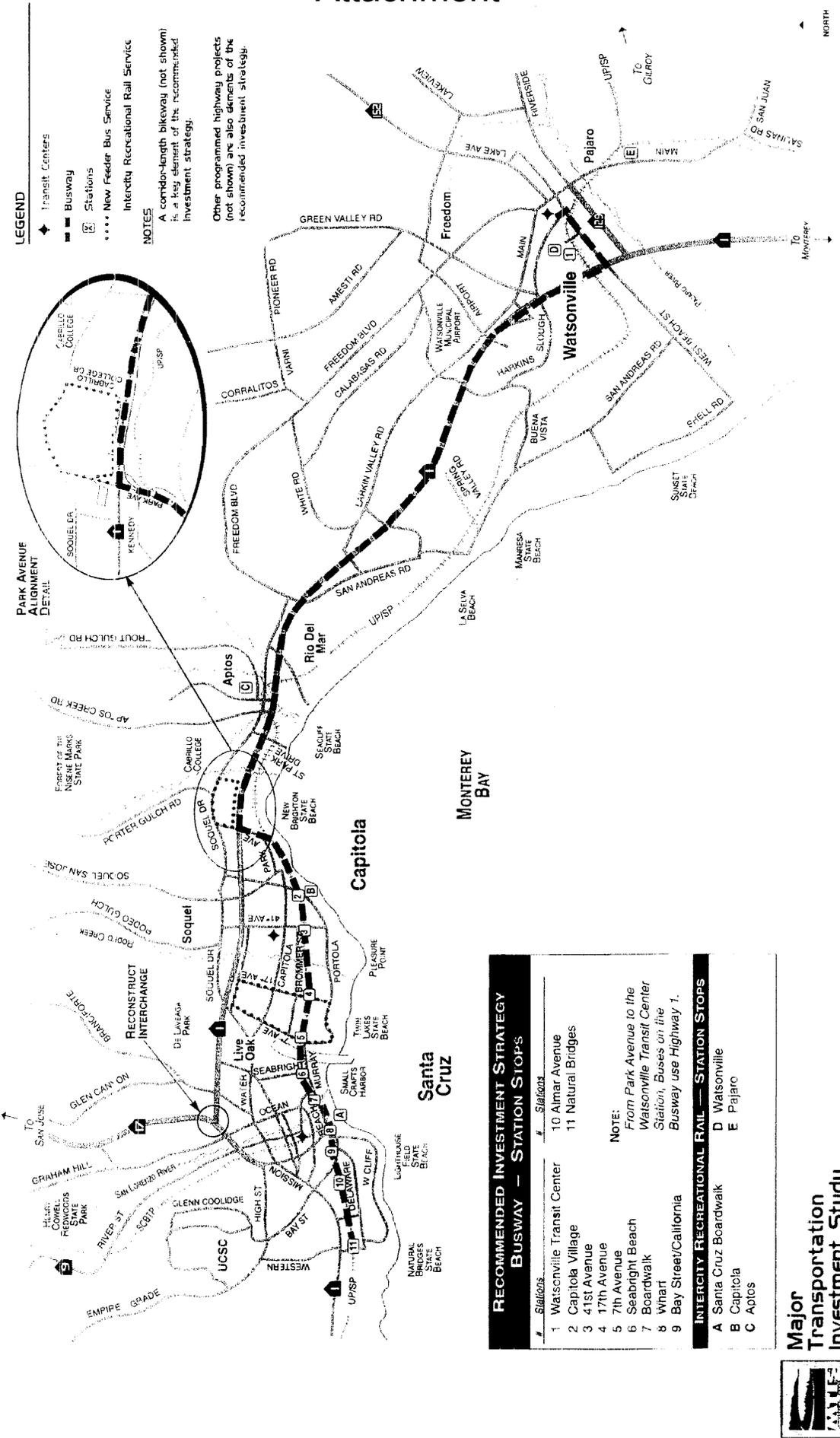
We'll call it the new 99XX route: Same as 91X from Watsonville to Cabrillo; then Park Avenue to Monterey and up Cliff Drive to 47th Avenue to get on the Coastal Bus-Trail to the Boardwalk and then up Bay Street to High St at the entrance to UCSC all in 40 minutes.

A one-track railroad cannot compete with efficient bus service in Santa Cruz County. The answer is RAIL-BANK and get on with a Bus-Hike-Bike-CoastalTrail-Share!

Interesting Note: There is not a need now to share the S.C. Coastal Trail beyond 47th Avenue so over the trestle is a wonderful hike & bike trail through mid-county villages and then on to Watsonville. And did you know that in the 7 miles between 47th Avenue to La Selva there are only six streets to cross? Yes, very safe, and good exercise.

Agenda Item 5, Received after postin

RECOMMENDED INVESTMENT STRATEGY INTERCITY RECREATIONAL RAIL — BIKEWAY — BUSWAY



Major Transportation Investment Study



Figure 7-4

Attachment



Metro Board of Directors,

Here at METRO, it has long been the practice to take extreme pride in our work serving the community. No matter the obstacle, we always rise to the challenge to do what is right for the people and get them where they need to go. This did not change during last year's unprecedented situation.

Throughout the pandemic, we have answered the call for the community, continuing to provide solid service in defiance of the ever-looming threat Covid-19 presents. Through media scares, medical emergencies, and for some of us, symptoms of this terrible affliction, we have held the line for the people. We never stopped to ask for anything more than reasonable safety precautions, and Metro has met those concerns by supplying us with the needed tools and procedures to navigate these waters safely.

It is in that great spirit of cooperation between our organizations, that we ask you now to recognize the work we have all done, from cleaners to drivers, office staff to mechanics by not only rewarding our dedication but also supplying us with the financial ability to weather this storm at home, as we have done for you at work.

We invite you to sit with us at the table, as friends and partners, to discuss and negotiate fair compensation for our dedication in the form of pandemic relief/hazard pay, which is available to Metro through the American Rescue Plan.

In Unity,

Agenda Item 6, Received after posting

Attachment

Name	Unit
James Sandoval	SMART
Jordan Vascones	SEA
Rhiannon Axton	SMART
Edgardo Madrigal	SMART
Juan B Montesinos Zarate	SMART
Travis Havens	SMART
Efren J Escamilla	SMART
Sergio Tabag	SMART
Joe Escobar	SMART
Anthony L Frey	SMART
Peg Flechtner	SMART
Benjamin bidmon	SMART
Michael Richards	SMART
Manny Perez	SMART
Johnny lopez	SMART
Katlyn Hemrick	SMART
Joshua Chelise	SMART
Jorge Henriquez	SMART
Alma Gutierrez	SMART
Patrick Forthun	SMART
Deanna Lopez	SMART
Clint Nabor	SMART
Jesus Manuel Garcia	SMART
Maribel N Negrete	SMART
Daniela Leal	SMART
Wesley Guild	VMU
Brandon Freeman	SMART
Ignacio Mata	SMART
Angelina Avila	SMART
Michael Thorn	VMU
Allison Hernandez-Adair	SMART
Isidro Guevara	SMART

Agenda Item 6, Received after posting

Attachment

Miguel Angel Maldonado Aparicio	SMART
Lino vasquez	VMU
Jaime S. Hernandez	VMU
David W. Horvath	SMART
Eulalio Abrego	SMART
Todd Pinsky	SMART
Miguel A Duarte	SMART
Ivan Garcia	SMART
Gustavo Magana	SMART
Cayla Hill	SEA
Pablo David Berrelleza	PSA
John Nevin	PSA
Xiomara brioso	SMART
Elizabeth Thompson	PSA
Lenore Young	SMART
Josefina Cruz	SMART
Jose carranco	SMART
Andrea Eusse-Gil	SEA
Fitzpatrick, M.	SMART
Carolyn Bowers	SMART
Phylcia Mattos	SMART
Eric perez	VMU
Mariano Bernal	SEA
Jane Ng	SEA
Cindi Farrell	SMART
Ronald Catley	SMART
Eduardo Bibriesca	PSA
Elena Zyulina	SMART
Lynn Hersey	SMART
Juan R. Garcia	SMART
Nanez,Jose	SMART
Michael Rios	PSA
Cesar Medina	SMART

Agenda Item 6, Received after posting

Attachment

Francisca Fernandez	SMART
Julio Garcia Velasco	SMART
Efrain Arellano	SMART
Christopher Leonard	VMU
Jose G Raygoza-Ramirez	VMU
Julio currea	VMU
Ivan Ballesteros	VMU
Daniel Zenteno	VMU
Chris perez	VMU
Edward	VMU
David Hernandrz	SMART
Holly Alcorn	SEA
Heriberto Estrada	SMART
Uriel mendoza	SMART
Mario Arellano	SMART
J Miguel Villarruel	VMU
Pío quinto carrillo	SMART
Pete Rasmussen	SEA
Amy Lona	SMART
Lanea Hightower	SMART
Sergio Lona	SMART
Juan M Garcia	SMART
Eileen Wagley	SEA
Rickie-Ann Kegley	SEA
Simone Coke	SEA
Vickie Sanchez	SEA
Anson Mayweather	SEA
Lupe Sanchez	SEA
Manuel Madrigal	SMART
Molly Gallet	SEA
maria padilla	SEA
Araseli Campos	PSA
Robert Valdiva	SEA

Agenda Item 6, Received after posting

Attachment

Cynthia Valtierra	SEA
Sandra Howard	SMART
Esmeralda Arias	SEA
Efraín Hernández	VMU
Raymundo marquez	VMU
Cristobal Rivera-Vasquez	SEA
Luis Abundez	PSA
Arturo valdes	SEA
Darío Rocha	VMU
Antonio Zamora Garcia	VMU
Uriel Estrada	VMU
Sheldon Griffitb	SEA
Jess martinez	PSA
Jose Valtierra	PSA
Adela Fonseca	SEA
ANTONIO CASTILLO	PSA
Les Beck	SMART
Mike Montes	VMU
Ezequiel osorio	SMART
Norma Osorio	SMART
Erlyn Osorio	SMART
Blanca Eusse-Valdez	SMART
John Thomas	SMART
John Fuentes	SMART
José Flores	SMART
Lyle Toline	SMART
Delvis Seda	SMART
Joan Jeffries	SEA
Tanya Gilliam	SEA
Rick Jimenez	SEA
Adrienne Jenkins	SEA
Rob Willis	SEA
Elmer Torres	SEA

Agenda Item 6, Received after posting

Attachment

Ezequiel Rodriguez	SEA
Brian Lam	SEA
Lucus Iriguchi	SEA
Stefan Woliczko	SEA
Alex Ronduroz	SEA
Julio	SMART
Madrigal	SMART
Amanda Bidmon	SMART
Cortney Martin	SEA
Delee Brubeck	SEA
Wondimu Mengistu	SEA
Lorraine Bayer	SEA
Tom Szeszowski	SEA
Joy Olander	SEA
Donna Bauer	SEA
Pedro Gutierrez	SMART
Jesus	SMART
Isidro Habriel	SMART
Freddie Martinez	SEA
Eduardo Montesino	PSA
Oscar mendez	SMART
Sasha Sandoval	SEA
Ángel Valdez	SMART
Adrian Jimenez	SMART
Cesar Alvarez	VMU
Ed Cummins	VMU
Jose Zamarripa	VMU
Jason Logiudice	VMU
Wayne Sakae	VMU
Teodoro Guerrero	VMU
Luis Rocha	VMU
Marisela Mendoza	VMU
Ryan MacDonell	PSA

Agenda Item 6, Received after posting

Attachment

Greg Woolever	VMU
Mark Saunders	SMART
Sara Hewitt	SMART
Maria Hernandez	SEA
Eddie Torres	SMART

Attachment

From: [Jayme Ackemann](#)
To: bruce.mcpherson@santacruzcounty.us; cmathews@cityofsantacruz.com; dmeyers@cityofsantacruz.com; aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org; openup@cats.ucsc.edu; jdanthwell@gmail.com; dilindslind@earthlink.net; jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org; ladykpetersen@gmail.com; shebreh4santacruz@gmail.com; rskoenig@gmail.com; larry.pageler@gmail.com; boardinquiries@scmted.com
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item 17 4-23-21 Board Meeting
Date: Thursday, April 22, 2021 5:54:41 PM
Attachments: [Alex-Independence Day Emails.pdf](#)
[Blocked Email.pdf](#)
[Agenda Item 17 Public Comment Letter.pdf](#)

Dear Santa Cruz Metro Board Members,

Please find a letter attached regarding Agenda Item 17: CEO Personnel Evaluation scheduled for Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District's April 23, 2021 Board Meeting

In addition to sending this to the board email, I am sending this to your separate council and board addresses because after I resigned my position with Metro Alex retaliated against me by having my personal email blocked. In the year since leaving Metro, I have had several professional interactions to resolve problems with 1099 reporting and to communicate with staff. To conduct that business, staff has been forced to make special requests to have my email address unblocked for short periods. I am including an email interaction with staff regarding my blocked email as further evidence of the direct impact that step has had on Metro's ability to conduct business.

While I was the Manager of Customer Service, METRO was required to seek a restraining order to block an abusive customer from contacting the District via email. As an employee who resigned her position in good standing, never facing any discipline, and receiving only positive performance reviews, it is unclear to me that Alex Clifford is within his rights to block the email of a Santa Cruz County resident and taxpayer who may have cause to do business with the public transit district within her own county.

I am including a copy of an email with staff as further evidence that Alex has periodically blocked my email to the board. Finally, I have grave concerns with Alex Clifford's leadership, please see the additional concerns raised in my letter and supporting documents.

Sincerely, Jayme Ackemann

Agenda Item 17: Public Comment (received after posting)

Attachment

Dear Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District Board Members,

I am one of at least 7 managers who have chosen to leave Santa Cruz Metro as the result of a hostile, paranoid, retaliatory environment that is very much reflective of Metro's current leader, Alex Clifford. I've worked for two decades in Bay Area local public transportation and I've never experienced such an oppressive work environment. I spent nearly a decade with the San Mateo County Transit District and Caltrain rising through positions of increasing authority from Public Information to Director of Marketing and Communications. I also position of responsibility with Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and San Jose Water, I've seen a broad swath of local government leadership upon which to offer my assessment.

After 15 years of commuting over the hill from my Ben Lomond home, I was eager to bring my background in transit advocacy, marketing and communications to serve in my local community. I understood this would mean trade-offs, a smaller salary for one, and a far leaner staff. But I viewed that as a fair trade for the quality-of-life improvement and the opportunity to build my skill set; I would oversee Customer Service in addition to Marketing and Communications, a career first for me.

But because of that leaner administrative staff, the management team has greater pressure to operate efficiently. With such high management turnover, often as a result of poor interpersonal dynamics, it is difficult to achieve that efficiency.

High turnover at the top of any company is a symptom of rot. It places undue strain on those staffers left to cover another employee's duties when someone leaves. In a lean office environment, it is even more critical that those tasks don't fall through the cracks because it can be more difficult for a small agency to recover from accounting or project management errors.

In the last few years, nearly every member of Metro's executive team has turned over, some positions multiple times. While it's true that some of those departures were retirements, several of those retirees stated openly that they were choosing to leave early due to executive-level disfunction.

Barrow Emerson retired a full year earlier than he had planned, in part due to long-standing tensions with the Finance Chief, an issue that had been repeatedly brought to Alex's attention. His inability to address the ongoing problems between the grants team and the finance team cost Metro its first Director of Planning.

Erron Alvey, the Procurement Manager, made clear that part of her departure was a direct result of errors in the management of a salary compensation study conducted prior to the implementation of the latest contract. She indicated that tensions and disagreements with Alex over the outcome of that study were part of the reason she was leaving Metro in her closing remarks to the Board at the Aug. 23, 2019 meeting.

Alex assigned the implementation of the Access pass for legally blind individuals to me several weeks after I joined METRO, a project that should have required the close coordination of the Chief Operating Officer and his team. When I raised concerns with Alex that the previous COO had failed to respond to emails or attend meetings on the subject, he told me, "I know that several of my senior managers are weak performers, but this is a challenging hiring environment." He did nothing to address the problem. This is emblematic of the way he sows division between his top managers rather than finding ways to resolve their differences.

Agenda Item 17: Public Comment (received after posting)

Attachment

Over the last few years Metro has also seen tremendous turnover in the roles of HR Director, Safety and Security Director, and Customer Service. While it's not clear that those labor losses are directly attributable to Alex, his management style couldn't have helped and it's not clear that any substantive changes have been made to improve organizational culture and employee retention.

When I chose to resign, I was managing my own department, overseeing Planning and Grants because Metro had been unable to find a replacement for Barrow, and taking over parts of the Deputy Finance Director's job, who had made the decision to retire – also in part due to poor organizational dynamics, according to what I was told.

The Holiday Memo was the final incident that crystallized my decision to resign my position. Each year Metro issues a memo to staff indicating the dates upon which it will observe the holidays it promises to employees as part of their hiring package. Metro-observed holidays are also outlined in the Management and Labor contracts. That was why I found it so shocking and disrespectful when Alex announced to his management staff that it would no longer enjoy paid holidays if the holiday fell on a weekend. Specifically, this related to the upcoming July 4th holiday, which fell on a Saturday in 2020. Initially, Alex announced that Management would not observe the holiday with a day off on Friday, as is indicated in the management contract.

I'm including a copy of his original email announcing the decision. The management team was shocked. Our union employees who had holiday pay and work rules specifically outlined in their contracts, would get to observe the holiday or be paid extra for working it, but the management team would not.

I emailed him, addressing the contractual violations he was raising with this new policy, and asking him to voluntarily reconsider. By Friday of that week, Alex had not rescinded the ridiculous policy change, so I submitted my resignation in protest. Later he changed his mind, I suspect after an opinion from legal convinced him that he may be creating a bigger problem for himself.

The fact that he even considered such an act was a clear indication of the low esteem with which he holds his subordinates. As the CEO, he was responsible for creating a harmonious and attractive working environment that retains talent. He does not appear to be succeeding.

It's time to move on. Santa Cruz Metro deserves a leader that reflects the community it serves and the riders who rely on it. Modernizing Metro, post-pandemic, offers some exciting opportunities for a team unconstrained by divisive leadership.

There's never a "good" time for change. There will always be another union contract to negotiate, a recession to respond to, or some other crisis to handle. The Board's most challenging and important responsibility is choosing the right person to lead the agency it oversees. Indeed, it is the most profound way for Board members to set the tone for the kind of organizational culture they want.

Metro's labor agreements expire in 2022. During the last labor negotiation, Clifford's contract extension was put off nearly a year while the board "waited" for a new labor agreement to be reached. Extending Clifford's contract, puts the next contract right back in the middle of the next labor negotiation. Will that serve as another justification for one more contract extension? And what about the next election, that's coming too. The best time to consider staffing changes is when the Board has the luxury of a window in which to do so, that window is here.

Agenda Item 17: Public Comment (received after posting)

Attachment

Change is difficult and I understand why Boards are reluctant to pursue it. But as John F. Kennedy said, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past and present are certain to miss the future."

Sincerely,

Jayne Ackemann

Former Santa Cruz Metro Director, Marketing and Customer Service

Attachment



Jayme Ackemann <jaymeackemann@gmail.com>

Inaccurate 1099 - ADAF2B80-106813

Holly Alcorn <alcornh1118@gmail.com>
To: jaymeackemann@gmail.com

Fri, Jan 22, 2021 at 9:52 AM

I'm trying to get your email unblocked at metro

On Fri, Jan 22, 2021 at 9:13 AM <jaymeackemann@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Square,

Please respond to this email to confirm next steps to correct this inaccurate 1099.

Regards,

Jayme Ackemann

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Jayme Ackemann
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 5:08 PM
To: 1099k@squareup.com
Subject: Inaccurate 1099 - ADAF2B80-106813

I received a 1099 for money I did not personally collect. This needs to be corrected with the IRS. please advise next steps.

Agenda Item 17: Public Comment (received after posting)

Attachment

Alex-

The Management Plan posted online indicates that exempt management employees will observe the following holidays WITH PAY. I don't receive pay on Saturdays so is METRO planning to compensate us with an additional 8 hours of pay that day if we are not planning to observe the day on a different date. Here is the language currently posted as part of our management plan:

V. HOLIDAYS

An employee shall be entitled to the following holidays with pay: Thanksgiving Day Christmas Day New Year's Day Labor Day Independence Day Memorial Day Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Further, this is pretty much considered a no-no based on HR best practices:

Realistically speaking, most employers do follow the customary practice of giving employees time off when holidays fall on a weekend. "Unless you want resentment and low morale, you must give a day off for both Christmas and New Year's," said Bruce A. Hurwitz of [Hurwitz Strategic Staffing, Ltd.](#)

Joe Campagna, an SPHR certified HR Consultant and head of a consultancy named [My Virtual HR Director](#), agrees. "The standard I have always seen, used, and recommend is that when a holiday falls on a weekend, the employer still provides a workday off with pay. Unless a company wants to risk losing good employees, the temptation to save some money by not providing paid time off in these situations is short-sighted and unwise."

<https://fingercheck.com/observing-federal-holidays-when-they-fall-on-the-weekend/>

Please reconsider.

Jayme

From: Alex Clifford <AClifford@scmt.com>

Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2020 12:15 PM

To: Angela Aitken <AAitken@scmt.com>; Anna Marie Gouveia <AGouveia@scmt.com>; Ciro Aguirre <CAguirre@scmt.com>; Daniel Zaragoza <DZaragoza@scmt.com>; Dawn Crummié <DCrummie@scmt.com>; Debbie Kinslow <DKinslow@scmt.com>; Eddie Benson <EBenson@scmt.com>; Freddy Rocha <FRocha@scmt.com>; Harlan I. Glatt <HGlatt@scmt.com>; Isaac B. Holly <iholly@scmt.com>; Jayme Ackemann <JAckemann@scmt.com>; Monik Delfin <MDelfin@scmt.com>; Rufus Francis <RFrancis@scmt.com>; Jaron West <JWest@scmt.com>

Subject: 2020 Independence Day

Team:

The Holiday Closures Memo has not been issued yet, and likely will not for another month or two. The first Holiday in 2020 that is covered by the next Holiday Closures Memo is Independence Day.

I am hearing some chatter about Independence Day falling on a Saturday and speculation about METRO Admin closing Friday before or Monday after. METRO will observe the Holiday on the Holiday (July 4th). METRO Admin will be open the Friday before and the

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Monday after and all service will run on their normal weekday schedules the Friday before and Monday after.

Independence Day (July 4th) service levels will be as the typically are for this type of Holiday, which is no fixed route and no ParaCruz and Hwy 17 running on a weekend schedule.

For you contract employees, there is very specific language in their MOU addressing employees who work Monday – Friday and situations in which the Holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday. The MOU language for SEIU and SMART will be followed for our contract employees. Unless on an approved vacation, managers are expected to work the Friday before and the Monday after. However, if you wish to take an extended weekend using your paid leaves, please work that out with your immediate supervisor.

Please call with any questions,

Alex