

MINUTES*

MAC MEETING OF August 17, 2022



The METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) met on Wednesday, August 17, 2022. The meeting was held via teleconference. *Minutes are "summary" minutes, not verbatim minutes.

1. **CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:01 PM.

2. **ROLL CALL** - The following MAC Members were **present** via teleconference, representing a quorum:

James Von Hendy, Chair
Joseph Martinez, Vice Chair
James Cruse
Jessica de Wit

Veronica Elsea
Michael Pisano
Becky Taylor

3. **COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Hearing none, Chair Von Hendy moved to the next agenda item.

4. **RECEIVE AND FILE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 20, 2022**

MOTION: ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 20, 2022 AS PRESENTED

MOTION: ELSEA

SECOND: PISANO

MOTION PASSED WITH 6 AYES: Von Hendy, Martinez, Cruse, Elsea, Pisano, and Taylor. De Wit was absent.

5. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC)**

Chair Von Hendy referenced his letter in the agenda packet welcoming Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager, to METRO and inviting him to attend MAC meetings. One of the agenda items proposed at the April 20, 2022 MAC meeting was for CEO Tree to provide his views/priorities in this role. CEO Tree is unable to attend tonight's meeting but will attend a future meeting.

6. **UPDATE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS (ITS)**

Isaac Holly, IT and ITS Director, provided a status update on the ITS project with Clever Devices. We are in the FAT (Factory Acceptance Testing) phase. We are experiencing some supply chain delays in hardware due to the pandemic but hope to resolve this soon so we can move forward with deploying a mini fleet of buses to test the system. Discussion ensued on MAC getting a preview of the new system when it is deployed. Director Holly said he would touch base with the team and see if that can be arranged.

Mr. Cruse asked which routes would be used for the testing. Director Holly replied that as a mini fleet, this group of buses will be deployed throughout METRO's system.

7. **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Dawn Crummié, HR Director, reported that since the April MAC meeting there have been 81 positive COVID-19 cases at METRO. We continue to be in a minor outbreak status at our Operations facility, which means everyone wears a mask and tests once a week. None of these cases have been traced back to METRO. Discussion followed on a contact tracing app used by the State of California. Director Crummié said the app is available to anyone but METRO does its own contact tracing.

8. SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR – SEPTEMBER 14 – 18, 2022

Margo Ross, COO, gave a brief report that METRO will be participating in the Santa Cruz County Fair September 14 – 18, 2022. We will have new vehicles on display and will extend service to provide rides to and from the fairgrounds.

9. SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE

a. Quarterly Ridership Report

John Urgo, Planning and Development Director, gave an update on ridership for Q4 of FY22. Overall, ridership increased 173% over FY21, but we're still 41% below pre-COVID levels. Highway 17 is still about half of pre-COVID levels. Nonstudent ridership is 33% below pre-COVID levels. UCSC is 43% below pre-COVID levels. Only about a quarter of Cabrillo students have returned back to riding the buses.

b. Bus Stops

b.i. Update on Braille Bus Stop Signage

Director Urgo apologized to the committee that he did not have an update on this item. He suggested that he and Ms. Elsea get together to discuss the locations and the correct information to use on the signage. Ms. Elsea was in agreement.

c. Other Projects

c.i. Pacific Station Lobby Access

Director Urgo reported that the Pacific Station Lobby is still closed but the restrooms are open.

c.ii. Fall Schedule Changes

Director Urgo gave a preview of the changes to the fall schedule. With our Bus Operator shortage, we are forced to make some service cuts. We did this in a way that didn't remove service in the system. Adjustments were made to Routes 22, 20, 4, 35, 91X, 71, 69W and the Watsonville circulator. Discussion ensued on cuts to the San Lorenzo Valley route that serves the Country Club area and options available. Suggestions were made that could be considered for the winter service. Discussion continued on the current class of Bus Operators and the timeframe for completion. Ms. Elsea asked if METRO would bring back the hands-on training for people with disabilities. COO Ross replied that she understands the importance of the one-on-one interaction, but not until it is safe and the pandemic is behind us would that be considered.

10. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO CEO

None.

11. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

None.

12. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA

- Update on ITS
- COVID-19 Update
- Recap of Santa Cruz County Fair
- Service Planning Updates
- Choose 2023 Dates for MAC Meetings
- Elect a New Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Pisano made a request for a demonstration of the Bus Operators' bidding process. COO Ross explained that this is not open to the public but is basically done by seniority and for personal reasons. Brandon Freeman, Bus Operator, added that the bidding process is contractual between the union and METRO. The union does not want any of this process or personal information shared with anyone outside of Operations management so that we can protect the privacy of the Bus Operators. We do not want passengers influencing or criticizing the Operators for the way they bid or choices that they make.

13. DISTRIBUTION OF VOUCHERS

Donna Bauer, Executive Assistant, will mail out the vouchers on Thursday, August 18, 2022 to all members in attendance at this meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 6:00 PM. Meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer
Executive Assistant