



SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO) BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES* AUGUST 23, 2024 – 9:00 AM

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) convened on Friday, August 23, 2024, as a hybrid meeting.

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 CALLED TO ORDER at 9:02 AM by Board Chair Brown.

2 SAFETY DEBRIEF

Gregory Strecker, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director, provided a debriefing on safety, emphasizing METRO’s response to a fire, earthquake and/or medical emergency, evacuation routes, and an active shooter situation.

3 ROLL CALL

The following Directors were **present**, representing a quorum:

Director Kristen Brown	City of Capitola
Director Rebecca Downing	County of Santa Cruz
Director Jimmy Dutra AR 9:09	City of Watsonville
Director Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson	City of Santa Cruz
Director Manu Koenig	County of Santa Cruz
Director Donna Lind	City of Scotts Valley
Director Bruce McPherson	County of Santa Cruz
Director Scott Newsome	City of Santa Cruz
Director Larry Pageler	County of Santa Cruz
Director Quiroz-Carter* AR 9:07	City of Watsonville
Director Mike Rotkin	County of Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt	Cabrillo College
Ex-Officio Director Edward Reiskin	UC Santa Cruz

*Attended via teleconference at 628 Crown Road, Santa Cruz, CA

Corey Aldridge	CEO/General Manager
Julie Sherman	General Counsel

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 Today’s meeting is being broadcast by Community Television of Santa Cruz County.

4.2 Language Line Services was unable to secure Spanish interpretation services for today’s meeting.

5 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Director Downing thanked Danielle Glagola, METRO's Marketing and Communications Director, and her team for staffing the booth at the Aptos Village stroll. She received many compliments on their interactions with the public. She also thanked the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commissioners Brown and Pageler for joining the stroll with Santa Cruz County's Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Community Development and Infrastructure, Matt Machado. The public appreciated their participation.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Brown moved to the next agenda item.

6 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

One written communication from Jim Fox on August 22, 2024 was noted and sent to all the Board Directors prior to the meeting (attached).

Portia Barnes, member of the public, suggested METRO consider a bus route to the Santa Cruz County fairgrounds on a regular basis, not just when the fair itself is happening. She also requested improving the bus stop near the fairgrounds for wheelchair access.

Oxo Slayer, member of the public, praised METRO for the service provided to San Lorenzo Valley and the Youth Cruz Free Program. He also expressed appreciation to METRO and the City of Santa Cruz in partnering to develop the Pacific Station North project and prioritizing transit and bike infrastructure. He enjoyed taking the 3A from Capitola Mall directly to UCSC before it was truncated and supports bringing back that direct service.

Eduardo Montesino, Temporary Reimagine METRO Recruitment and Training Coordinator, provided a recruiting update to the Board and thanked the Human Resources team for their support.

Director Dutra recommended METRO collaborate with the fairground's management to see what can be done to improve that bus stop.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Brown moved to the next agenda item.

7 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

Jaime Renteria, newly elected Chairperson for SMART, Local 0023, introduced himself and appreciated the support already received from some of the Board members and looks forward to engaging with all the members of the Board.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Brown moved to the next agenda item.

8 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

Having none, Board Chair Brown moved to the next agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items appearing on the Consent Agenda are recommended actions which are considered to be routine and will be acted upon as one motion. All items removed will be considered later in the agenda. The Board Chair will allow public input prior to the approval of the Consent Agenda items.

- 9.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK JOURNAL DETAIL FOR THE MONTHS OF JUNE AND JULY 2024
Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer
- 9.2 ACCEPT AND FILE MINUTES OF:
 - A. JUNE 28, 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
 - B. JULY 11, 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETINGCorey Aldridge, CEO/General Manager
- 9.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE METRO PARACRUZ OPERATIONS STATUS REPORT FOR APRIL, MAY AND JUNE 2024
Rina Solorio, Assistant Operations Manager, Paratransit Division
- 9.4 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE METRO SYSTEM RIDERSHIP REPORTS FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF FY24
John Urgo, Planning and Development Director
- 9.5 APPROVE: FY25 RENEWAL OF PROPERTY INSURANCE COVERAGE WITH ZURICH AMERICAN INSURANCE COMPANY AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES LIABILITY COVERAGE WITH LEXINGTON INSURANCE CO.
Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer
- 9.6 APPROVE: METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) VACANCIES
Corey Aldridge, CEO/General Manager
- 9.7 APPROVE: REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE INCREASING MINIMUM STARTING WAGE TO \$21 PER HOUR FOR CUSTODIAL SERVICE WORKER AND VEHICLE SERVICE WORKER I POSITIONS
Dawn Crummié, Human Resources Director
- 9.8 APPROVE: REVISED CLASS SPECIFICATIONS AND WAGE SCALES FOR POSITIONS WITHIN FLEET, FACILITIES AND PLANNING
Dawn Crummié, Human Resources Director
- 9.9 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AWARDING A CONTRACT TO FAAC INC. FOR A BUS OPERATOR TRAINING SIMULATOR
Margo Ross, Chief Operations Officer
- 9.10 APPROVE: RECOMMENDED ACTION ON TORT CLAIMS
Gregory Strecker, Safety, Security and Risk Management Director
- 9.11 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF DECLARING VEHICLES AND/OR EQUIPMENT AS EXCESS FOR PURPOSES OF DISPOSAL OR AUCTION
Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer

There was no public comment.

The Board Chair called for a roll call vote.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

SECOND: DIRECTOR PAGELER

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Lind, McPherson, Pageler, Quiroz-Carter, and Rotkin). Directors Koenig and Newsome were absent.

REGULAR AGENDA

10 PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE LONGEVITY AWARDS (JULY AND AUGUST):

(10 YEARS) JOSE RAYGOZA-RAMIREZ, MECHANIC II

(10 YEARS) DARIO ROCHA, MECHANIC II

(15 YEARS) CLARENCE ARAGON, BUS OPERATOR

(15 YEARS) JULIO GARCIA VELASCO, BUS OPERATOR

(25 YEARS) SALVADOR CALDERON, BUS OPERATOR

(25 YEARS) EDUARDO MONTESINO, TRANSIT SUPERVISOR

(35 YEARS) SERGIO LONA-GONZALEZ, BUS OPERATOR

Board Chair Brown thanked all of the employees for their service to METRO. Eduardo Montesino was present to receive his certificate. He provided a brief history of his tenure at METRO and thanked a variety of co-workers that helped him in his career.

Mr. Slayer thanked all the Bus Operators for their kindness to the riders and their skill set in navigating the mountain routes.

Director Rotkin thanked Mr. Montesino for being a great example of someone who takes the initiative to make a difference for the people he works with and going beyond what is asked of him.

Director Dutra also thanked Mr. Montesino for his dedication to the organization. He joked that he sees the "We're Hiring" signs all over town but did recommend the signs get upgraded.

Director Quiroz-Carter thanked all of METRO's long-term employees, but especially Mr. Montesino. She sees him all the time at events recruiting drivers, talking to the community and making them feel welcome.

Hearing nothing more, Board Chair Brown moved to the next agenda item.

11 RETIREE RESOLUTIONS OF APPRECIATION FOR:

HUNG LEE, BUS OPERATOR

DELVIS SEDA, BUS OPERATOR

ANGEL VALDEZ, BUS OPERATOR

ISRAEL ZARAGOZA, PARATRANSIT OPERATOR

Board Chair Brown congratulated all on their retirements and thanked them for their service to METRO.

Nate Abrego, SMART, Local 0023, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with Israel Zaragoza. Mr. Zaragoza took on extra duties as a Paratransit Operator and made sure the underserved communities were taken care of so that they can live their lives with dignity.

Hearing nothing further, the Board Chair called for a roll call vote.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE RETIREE RESOLUTIONS OF APPRECIATION FOR HUNG LEE, DELVIS SEDA, ANGEL VALDEZ, AND ISRAEL ZARAGOZA

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

SECOND: DIRECTOR LIND

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Lind, McPherson, Pageler, Quiroz-Carter, and Rotkin). Directors Koenig and Newsome were absent.

12 CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' PENSION REFORM ACT OF 2013 (PEPRA) LITIGATION UPDATE – ORAL REPORT

Julie Sherman, General Counsel, provided a brief history on the PEPRA litigation and subsequent issues with the certification of grants for federal transit worker protections. She provided an update on the litigation's current standing and stated she understood that METRO would submit its grant requests before September 20, 2024, when the certification of grants is expected to stop.

Discussion followed on:

- ATU's (Amalgamated Transit Union) basis for their objections. General Counsel Sherman responded that ATU feels that PEPRA is not as protective to union workers as the federal transit worker protections.
- Pending grant applications. CEO Aldridge mentioned that METRO has submitted every grant it can to the FTA (Federal Transit Administration) and is working on their certification before the deadline.

CEO Aldridge added that the California Transit Association is actively working on this issue with the Governor's office and METRO hopes progress will be made through that avenue.

13 CEO ORAL REPORT

Corey Aldridge, CEO/General Manager, provided the following items:

- September 11 – 15, 2024 – Santa Cruz County Fair – Ride for free on Routes 79F, 79, and ParaCruz. Riders who take METRO to the fair will receive a discount on fair tickets.
- September 12 – Fall service changes include:
 - Hwy-17 Express: Two new roundtrips added, one additional trip added to downtown San Jose/SJSU in the AM and PM.
 - Route 73: Extended to run from Capitola Mall to the Watsonville Transit Center.
 - Route 35: Weekend frequency improved to every 30-minutes.
 - Route 16: School-Term service returns.
- September 26, 2024 – METRO will be participating in an agency summit hosted by Monterey-Salinas with San Luis Obispo, Monterey-Salinas, Santa Barbara and San Benito County transit agencies.
- October 3, 2024 – CA Clean Air Day – METRO is offering free fares on this day
- October 19, 2024 – METRO Bus Roadeo – Save the Date.
- Since our last Board Meeting in June, METRO has hired 17 Bus Operators and 1 Paratransit Operator, 3 Mechanics, and 2 Vehicle Service Workers.
- Leadership Santa Cruz County - Class 38 is starting and the METRO participants include: Corey Aldridge, Juan Serrano, and Danielle Glagola.

- METRO is a finalist in the 2024 Star Awards hosted by CAPIO and awarded by the Southern California and Nevada chapter of NATOA (National Association of Telecommunications Officers of America). These awards recognize excellence in government video programming. The ORAT video is a finalist in the Community Awareness category.

Lastly, CEO Aldridge commented that he enjoys being at METRO and having an amazing group of employees who are passionate about the success of METRO. He wants to see METRO improve, not only through service, but also through work culture--improving relationships and making sure everyone knows that their voice is heard and that they matter.

Director Kalantari-Johnson mentioned that the Bus Roadeo on October 19th is right after the Cal Cities Conference in Long Beach, CA so some council members may have a conflict. She also thanked Ms. Glagola for getting METRO in this competition. It says a lot about her and her team's work. Director Kalantari-Johnson has noticed a shift in the narrative about METRO—people are talking about the buses, young people are riding the buses, and that's due to Ms. Glagola's communicating and articulating what METRO is all about visually.

There were no public comments.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Brown moved to the next agenda item.

14 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Board Chair Brown announced the next regular Board meeting will be on Friday, September 27, 2024, at 9:00 AM at the METRO Admin Office, 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz.

15 ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 9:47 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer
Executive Assistant