

# MINUTES\*

MAC MEETING OF AUGUST 16, 2023



The METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) met on Wednesday, August 16, 2023. The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting. \*Minutes are "summary" minutes, not verbatim minutes.

1. **CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:03 PM.

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

**Jessica de Wit, Chair**  
**Joseph Martinez, Vice Chair**  
James Cruse  
**Veronica Elsea**

**Michael Pisano**  
**Becky Taylor**  
**James Von Hendy**

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

Chair de Wit mentioned the additional written communication received by Cindy Odom on August 15, 2023 (attached with METRO response).

Ms. Elsea mentioned that construction has started on Front Street as well as some challenges with Customer Service.

Hearing nothing further, Chair de Wit moved to the next agenda item.

4. **RECEIVE AND FILE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 19, 2023**

**MOTION: ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF APRIL 19, 2023 AS AMENDED**

**MOTION: ELSEA**

**SECOND: PISANO**

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

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

Ms. Elsea asked if a semi-annual report was provided to the Board at the June 23, 2023 Board of Directors (Board) Meeting. Chair de Wit mentioned that she attended the Board Meeting and provided a MAC update and it is included in the agenda packet.

Hearing nothing further, Chair de Wit moved to the next agenda item.

6. **SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE**

a. **Quarterly Ridership Report**

John Urgo, Planning and Development Director, said that the quarterly ridership report will be going to the Board on August 25, 2023. He reported that we are now closer to 70% pre-COVID levels. METRO set a goal of doubling its ridership within the next five years. To meet this goal, ridership would need to increase 15% per year on average. METRO is on track to meet that goal. Director Urgo also mentioned that METRO has had one complete quarter of Youth Cruz free ridership, showing a 300% increase in youth ridership.

**b. Bus Stops**

**b.i. Update on Braille Bus Stop Signage**

Ms. Elsea mentioned that she engaged in a survey of all the visually impaired people she could find around the County. She said that what most people wanted on a sign was the Stop ID and phone number. Director Uργο thanked Ms. Elsea for the update.

**c. Other Projects**

**c.i Update on Reimagine METRO**

Director Uργο said that a recommendation will be going to the Board on August 25, 2023 for service changes in December. In June, we opened a public comment period and have been doing a lot of outreach on two alternatives.

Ms. Elsea and Mr. Pisano mentioned that they attended some of the Reimagine METRO meetings. Discussion followed on the Reimagine METRO project.

**7. UPDATE ON FACILITY TOUR**

Margo Ross, COO, said that a tour of our Judy K. Souza Operations Facility will be provided.

Hearing nothing further, Chair de Wit moved to the next agenda item.

**8. SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR – SEPTEMBER 13 – 17, 2023**

Margo Ross, COO, reported that METRO will be participating in the Santa Cruz County Fair September 13 – 17, 2023. We will be offering free fares on Route 79F (daily) and 79 (weekends only). Ross mentioned that we will be posting more information on our website and will also be partnering with the Santa Cruz County Fair to put information on their website as well.

Hearing nothing further, Chair de Wit moved to the next agenda item.

**9. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO CEO**

Hearing none, Chair de Wit moved to the next agenda item.

**10. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Hearing none, Chair de Wit moved to the next agenda item.

**11. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

- Update on Mobility Training Coordinator
- Choose 2024 Dates for MAC Meetings
- Elect a new Chair and Vice Chair
- Recap of Santa Cruz County Fair
- Service Planning Updates

**12. DISTRIBUTION OF VOUCHERS**

Vouchers distributed by Elizabeth Rocha, Administrative Specialist.

**13. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING**

Chair de Wit announced the next MAC Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 6:00 PM at the METRO Admin Office, 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair de Wit adjourned the meeting at 6:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Rocha  
Administrative Specialist





# Attachment

**From:** Cindy O <[celtiqueco@gmail.com](mailto:celtiqueco@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 21, 2023 10:08 PM  
**To:** [boardinquiries@scmtd.com](mailto:boardinquiries@scmtd.com)  
**Subject:** Fwd: ROUTE CHANGES -Agaenda item 3(?)

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**From:** Cindy O <[celtiqueco@gmail.com](mailto:celtiqueco@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Aug 15, 2023, 10:25 AM  
**Subject:** ROUTE CHANGES -Agaenda item 3(?)  
**To:** <[mac@scmtd.com](mailto:mac@scmtd.com)>

I am writing with my concerns over the Metro's proposed changes in routes which severely negatively impact Watsonville. I am a 72 year old woman who lives in Watsonville & uses the bus 4-5 times a week to go to Capitola or Santa Cruz with my bike. Before I moved here 7 years ago I lived in Santa from 1971. Although I had a car until 1991 I mostly have used a bicycle. Since living in Watsonville, you have only cut bus routes here. Last winter's elimination of an early express bus and the 69A altogether was a huge hardship for Watsonville working people. The route through Rolling Hills was ridiculous & useless. Not once when I rode the bus did we pick up/drop off anyone. Now you are planning to cut express busses to Watsonville. This is unconscionable, depriving the least affluent working people of an efficient travel mode to work. This is done to provide more service to UCSC students from privileged, wealthy families who can afford a university. Many parents buy houses here for their kids. The university has built no housing for the them, at the same time there are many times more students than were ever planned for the campuses. They don't pay taxes here, they are here only part of the year. The idea of giving them preference over Watsonville citizens is the antithesis of "public service/ public transit". One could also call it classist or racist considering the large percentage of Hispanic citizens ride the bus from Watsonville.

Your servers were completely bogus as they were only on-line, targeting students & young people. Older people, Hispanic people never saw them! To be fair you need to put paper surveys, signs, notices on the busses, at the bus stations. Please, don't load your own surveys, then claim you never hear from South County. The people who come up with new schedules & routes NEVER RIDE THE BUS, let alone depend on it for transportation to work.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cindy Odom 831 201 3249

Talk to your bus drivers! They all tell me you don't