

**Santa Clarita Transit
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting
June 7, 2012**

Meeting location: City of Santa Clarita, City Hall, Century Room

Members Present: John Taylor, Kurt Baldwin, Clark Bridgewater, Keith Curry

Others Present: Denise Ware, Suzy Ochoa, Arnetha Pierce, Lisa Isayo, Irene Shapiro, James Hogan, Raychel Martinez, Chuck Zoetewey, Alfredo Torales, Adrian Aguilar

A motion was made prior to starting the meeting regarding the resignation of Sam, recommendation to remove Ken Schwartz due to illness, and remove William Hart School District based on attendance.

Second by Keith Curry. Motion was carried.

Meeting called to order

Approval of Minutes: Keith Curry

General Public Comments:

Adrian invited anyone interested in joining the Advisory Committee to submit a cover letter expressing interest in becoming a member of the committee and a short resume before the next scheduled meeting in September.

A user of DAR commented her appreciation of DAR service and the advantages she sees by using the transportation system.

Arnetha expressed her concern regarding the ETA given by the call center. She stated that these times are usually inaccurate.

Suzy and Adrian explained the use of Rangers, a GPS unit used to track vehicles based on real time location this system gives the call center an ETA from dispatch.

A member wanted to know how is the information gathered and how accurate it was.

Adrian further explained that Paratransit vehicles have older units and the accuracy of these units is within 100 feet though the GPS signal is highly accurate due to the use of a satellite.

Another citizen suggested using one standard time in transportation such as the 24-hour clock.

Others chimed in that using a 24-hour clock would be difficult for them to use and not everyone uses a 24-hour clock system.

Arnetha wanted to know if there was something that could be done to alleviate over booking as a reason given by some drivers for being late.

Adrian mentioned changes are made each day considering additions and cancellations to driver's schedules. Layover time is built into the system to count for minor delays. Extra boards are used for scheduling to routes that are overloaded, cover drivers are also asked to fill these gaps. The City does have the capacity to add drivers and routes if needed but the challenge is the amount of vehicles available to use as they are getting to the limit of their existing fleet. The City is working on getting vehicles ready to rectify this issue.

Member Comments:

A member asked what factors is used to determine which bus stops are provided shelter and which are not. Her dad was waiting at a bus stop by the Saugus speedway and he was being overheated. She noticed one on one side but not the other.

Adrian addressed this by stating there were certain factors in making this decision. First, usage of the actual stop, how many people get on and off at a certain location. Second was the infrastructure around the bus stop such as: the size of sidewalks around the bus stop, complying with ADA regulations, and some sidewalks are fixed with no room for expansion, therefore limiting in terms of clearance. There was a challenge in many areas with no sidewalks.

A member mentioned a circumstance with someone she knew in a wheelchair that lived over by Orchard Village, an area with no sidewalks and only option was riding in the street and has been stopped by the police several times for doing so.

Adrian stated that the City is currently using \$2 million to improve the streets in certain areas and approximately 60 feet of sidewalks are being added this year. He also mentioned that the City is aware of the Old Orchard vicinity and its challenges. Adrian mentioned that he would pass the comment along to the Capital Improvement Project department.

Clark stated he did see an improvement in transportation but was concerned about having some passengers waiting on the bus for 2 hours before getting to the Adult Day Care Center. This proposes a problem making it hard to fill the center when passengers are discouraged due to the long wait on the bus. He also stated that the last bus gets to Adult Day Care between 9:30 – 9:40 and the program has already started making them miss 1 hour of the program. He asked if there was a way to call patrons before pick up to make sure they are ready. Clark stated they already have helpers at the center to load and unload passengers for a more speedy process.

Suzy said that call center could call patrons but could not guarantee that this would be done all the time but they would try their best to do so.

Adrian asked if the time for patrons to get to the Adult Day Care Center had changed from 10 a.m. to an earlier time.

Clark stated, "Yes." He would like to have patrons arrive by 9 a.m. Clark also informed that the building being used by the Adult Day Care Center was sold to a set of doctors therefore the center would be using a smaller facility and more cars would be using the parking lot. The building was going to be under construction starting in 2 weeks for a period of 1-2 months.

Clark addressed 2 concerns one that was brought up were passengers on Jocelyn's bus saying they had been on the bus for 2 hours. Another concern was passengers stating that they wait on the bus for passengers to get ready before boarding sometimes waiting up to 10 minutes.

Jim stressed his concern regarding Adult Day Care and the distance it takes to get to the center. He feels that the Adult Day Care Center should be more centrally located; this would help alleviate the problems of passengers being on the bus for long periods. The distance to Adult Day Care Center is a big disadvantage for DAR and Access users.

Adrian stated that they would look at the routes and trips scheduled to see what can be done to alleviate passengers on board for long periods.

Kurt wanted to mention the meeting for fixed routes between the San Fernando Valley and Santa Clarita; he was hoping to see the representative working on the TDP. Kurt mentioned last month's PRC meeting went very well and in August, they were going to be adding a teleconference in which people could call in and participate. The meeting will be held in Culver City.

New Business:

Elections: Skipped

Old Business:

Adrian announced updates for performance in May, which included an increase of 12.6% in call volume. There was a significant increase in transit related calls by 18%; DAR had an increase of 7.5%. The calls received were related to new programs being offered such as the hotel trolley, beach bus, and fare changes. An 8.6% increase in ridership on board service for 9,367 trips on both DAR and Access services. Access had a 5.4% increase from last year and DAR significantly increased by 10.5%. The City has received new buses, which are in the process of installing fare boxes and rangers for upcoming service. Four vehicles will be retired within the next 12 months and the City will be keeping 1-2 of these vehicles as backup vehicles.

Someone asked if Adrian if he had the complaint report for May. Adrian stated that he did not have this information at the time but would email the information to everyone. Adrian reported Access had a total of 85 “no shows” and DAR had a total 186 “no shows.” 9,367 trips were made on both DAR and Access services.

The On Time Performance (OTP) for the month of May was as follows: Access 89% and DAR 88.2%, for an overall total of 88.5%. The figures had lots to do with the increase in trip volume and other issues contributed to these figures such as vehicle breakdowns related to the CNG fleet. The life expectancy on CNG vehicles was not as expected or as great as the gasoline or diesel vehicles. CNG vehicle engines tend to last only 80,000 miles. There was a plan to have the entire CNG fleet retrofitted by July.

Someone asked if the savings was still there in using the CNG vehicles. Adrian responded that the saving was still there as far as fuel was concerned but the City would be breaking even with the cost of repairs. Adrian mentioned using the CNG vehicles also included many other benefits that the regular and diesel vehicles did not offer.

Adrian also informed all on the fixed route fleet, in which 10 new CNG vehicles are currently on order. These vehicles will replace the older diesel powered vehicles. They also have low floor buses, which will make the buses more accessible. These new buses will be equipped with the current technology used on all vehicles such as AVL system, fare boxes and camera system. Delivery of these vehicles is expected by June of 2013. Adrian stated that the City is looking forward to ordering 11 more CNG vehicles next year, which will then give the City an entire fleet of only CNG powered local vehicles.

Adrian reiterated anyone interested in joining the Advisory Committee to submit a cover letter expressing interest in becoming a member of the committee and a short resume before the next scheduled meeting in September.

Alfredo informed everyone that Access recently received funds to start an Access work program. This program would work with customers to guarantee them that they would get to work on time. Access will be checking with standing orders first to identify who is using services to get to work. Participation would be based on income requirements and participants would have to apply.

A citizen expressed her concern regarding using this program to get to work, since she works on Sundays and has to be at work at 8 a.m. and Access starts picking up citizens at 8 a.m. She does use Access to get home from work. She wanted to know if Access was going to be offering earlier pick up times to get to work on time.

Alfredo responded by offering to take her information and giving her an application to see if Access would be able to help.

Someone else asked if this program would be eliminating the need to transfer to different regions. Alfredo stated that the program would not be eliminating the transfers for travelling out of the Santa Clarita Valley.

A citizen expressed his concern about having to submit an application every 3 years to continue using Access services. He stated if someone is permanently disabled the timeline to resubmit applications to continue using services should be every 5-10 years. He also stated the high cost of having to retake his photo each time he had to resubmit his application. Adrian informed that the City goes out to the Senior Center once every 6 weeks to help the citizens with their applications and take their photos as well.

Kurt stated the need for annual reassessment because things do change. The City of Santa Clarita is constantly changing and some people may not qualify not because their disability has changed but because their environment has changed or the use of adaptive equipment allowing citizens to become more functional and able to use the fixed route.

Jim stated a need to revise the bylaws of the current terms of office, which are every 2 years. He felt that members interested in continuing as members should reapply by July 1 the year their term is up to show interest and add or maintain their names on the list for re-election and also state whether they are an even or odd number for sake of keeping track of who is up for re-election each year.

Denise stated that the call center initial hold time was down by 2% at 37.5 seconds. Denise was hoping to see improvement being On Time. She stated that Adult Day Care was getting better at loading and unloading of citizens as well.

Someone mentioned it being hot in DAR vehicles. Denise stated that the inside temperature of DAR vehicles is only lowered by 10-15 degrees from outside temperatures. A citizen asked if DAR buses will be serviced to make sure that all A/C units are operating properly especially with the summer months coming. Adrian stated that the entire fleet underwent servicing of all A/C units in March.

Someone stated that sometimes she feels the heater is on at the same time as the air conditioning coming in. Adrian stated this was a training issue because it is possible for both systems to be on at the same time. Adrian mentioned the training manager would be informed of this issue to resolve this from happening again.

Elections

Nomination of Chair and Vice Chair

A nomination was made as John Taylor as Chairman. The five members present voted, the outcome was 3/2 for John Taylor as Chairman. Another nomination was made Keith Curry as Vice Chairman. The five members voted Keith Curry as Vice Chairman.

These new appointees would only serve for one year and resubmit to remain

A motion was made to form a nominating committee and the two newly elected officials to form the committee. The motion was carried.

Jim was impressed with procedure of calling out the 5-minute window to dispatch.

Keith made a motion to have the meeting adjourned.

Next meeting September 6, 2012.