

MINUTES FOR THE HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

August 2, 2023

PRESENT

Board Members

Tami Trent, City of Fortuna
Alex Stillman, City of Arcata
Leslie Castellano, City of Eureka
Steve Ladwig, City of Trinidad
Natalie, Arroyo, County of Humboldt
Debra L. Garnes, City of Rio Dell

ABSENT

Julie Woodall, City of Rio Dell
Mike Wilson, County of Humboldt

Staff

Greg Pratt, General Manager

Brian Connors, Operations Manager

Consuelo Espinosa, Human Resources Manager
Katie Collender, Finance Manager
Carolann Aggeler, Admin. and Finance Assistant
Andi Evans, Bookkeeper
Sherry Dunlap, Safety & ADA Coordinator

Jim Wilson, Director of Maintenance
Jerome Qiriazzi, Transit Planner

Also in attendance were Nancy Diamond, HTA Legal Counsel; Oona Smith, HCAOG; and Colin Fiske, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Arroyo called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

ROLL CALL & Introductions

Introductions were made.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMUNICATION

None

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

CONSENT CALENDAR

By motion, recommended the approval of the following items considered to be routine and enacted in one motion. Items may be removed from the Consent Calendar upon request and will be heard separately. *Motion by Councilmember Stillman, second by Councilmember Trent to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carries unanimously.*

1. Minutes from July 5, 2023, Regular Meeting.
Action Recommended: Approve Minutes

Items removed from Consent Calendar

None

Reports

1. Draft May statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA
Finance Manager Katie Collender gave the board an update on the financial statements for all systems, and that all systems are showing good growth and overall improvement. Katie Collender also made mention that HTA learned at the Symposium that using pre-covid numbers is now in the past. HTA is looking for growth with the new normal, as ridership improves. Moving forward, stats will no longer display pre-covid numbers.

NEW BUSINESS

2. 2021/2022 Fiscal & Compliance Audit
Finance Manager Katie Collender informed the board that the Humboldt Transit Authority is audited on an annual basis to determine compliance. Additionally, that although there were no findings in the audit and added that no excess TDA funds were received. The Finance Manager also explained that although Assembly Bill 90 provides a waiver for the imposition of penalties for not maintaining the required ration of 10% farebox, HTA's farebox was at 13.6% during the pandemic.

Motion by Councilmember Castellano, second by Councilmember Trent to Authorize Staff receive and file 2021/2022 Fiscal & Compliance Audit. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Clam against HTA
General Manager Greg Pratt announced that this is the second claim presented by Attorney Erik V. Kirk against the Humboldt Transit Authority on behalf of Ted Sheets and Charles Edwards on July 3, 2023. A Notice of Insufficient Claim was sent out on July 18, 2023, and on July 27, 2023, and an amended claim was received. Nancy Diamond, HTA's legal counsel requested that the board reject this claim

No public comment was made.

Motion by Councilmember Ladwig, second by Councilmember Castellano to Authorize Humboldt Transit Authority to Reject the Claim submitted by Attorney Eric V Kirk on behalf of Ted Sheets and Charles Edwards and moved to closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

4. HTA Projects Update
Transit Planner Jerome Qiriazzi gave the board an update on the following project updates:
 1. The Redwood Coast Express system is on track for January 1, 2024.
 2. HTA's Legal Counsel Nancy Diamond presented the delegation of authority to HTA Board TIRCP Grant Ad Hoc Committee to make interim decisions concerning hydrogen fueling station design-build Contractor procurement.
 3. The hydrogen pilot bus is on track for delivery in December 2024.
 4. HTA's Legal Counsel Nancy Diamond is working with staff to develop a draft MOU amongst the City of Eureka and CalPoly Humboldt for the Earth Center.
 5. HTA is still working on simplifying the fare structure and unified branding.
 6. The credit card validators for the Arcata & Mad River Transit System are on hold due to the completion of Wi-Fi installation in the buses by the end of August 2023.

Councilmember Leslie Castellano recommended event planning around the roll out plan for hydrogen buses. General Manager Greg Pratt announced that HTA is working with HCAOG on a marketing plan.

Member of the Public Colin Fiske thanked staff and is excited for the future to better serve underserved areas using micro-transit. He asked that HTA remember areas like Trinidad and CalPoly during the routing process.

5. Microtransit Pilot Program

General Manager Greg Pratt proposed utilizing downtime on the Dial-a-Ride (DAR) system to open rides to the general public. HTA is looking to explore the use of microtransit to provide service within the DAR service area including the Peninsula. Greg also announced that staff received \$100,000 from the State Assistance Fund for operating assistance to provide another DAR vehicle. The additional vehicle will focus on the Eureka Service area where demand is expected to be highest. Additionally, Greg announced that staff are proposing fares at \$4.00 per zone for microtransit users with no cap, and that staff seeks to focus on improvements to the overall transportation system in Humboldt County.

Motion by Councilmember Castellano, second by Councilmember Ladwig to approve the Microtransit Pilot Program, Service Area and Fare Structure. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Marketing to Promote Ridership

General Manager Greg Pratt announced that HTA is brainstorming marketing ideas for promoting ridership by working with HCAOG. More information and strategies to be announced in the next couple of months.

7. Delegation of authority to HTA Board TIRCP Grand Ad Hoc Committee to make interim decisions concerning hydrogen fueling station design-build Contractor procurement.

Legal Counsel Nancy Diamond announced that HTA staff and its contract partners have begun RFQ development on an accelerated timeline, necessitated by the multifaceted nature of the project and the protracted California Transportation Commission (CTC) grant fund allocation approval process. Staff requested that the Board authorize the Ad Hoc Committee to approve the design build contractors and authorize the General Manager to issue the RFQ for construction of the hydrogen fueling station.

Motion by Councilmember Stillman, second by Councilmember Ladwig that Humboldt Transit Authority delegate to the HTA TIRCP Grant Ad Hoc Committee:

1) approved the short list of qualified design build contractors, and 2) authorized the General Manager to issue a RFP for construction of the hydrogen fueling station. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Humboldt Transit Authority Personnel Policy for Unrepresented Employees

Human Resources Manager Consuelo Espinosa presented changes to the Personnel Policy Manual for unrepresented employees. All changes require board authorization, and the majority of the changes were made due to CalPERS Circular Letter; 200-003-20, which identified that HTA will only contribute the employers share for PEPRAs members as well as additional clean up language.

Motion by Councilmember Stillman, second by Supervisor Arroyo to approve Amendment to the Humboldt Transit Authority's Personnel Policy for Unrepresented Employees by Adopting Resolution 23-11. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

General Manager Greg Pratt reported that people from the Far North Group and Caltrans collaborated with HTA while hosting the Transit Symposium in July. HTA's Finance Manager Katie Collender and HTA's Transit Planner Jerome Qiriazzi gave a great presentation. Greg also thanked staff Carolann and Andi for doing a great job in the overall planning with the symposium. HTA looks to host one again in the next couple of years.

CLOSED SESSION

No public comment on this item.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 (a), the board met in Closed Session to discuss pending litigation filed by Charles Edwards and Ted Sheets dba ADS in MOTION.

And, pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6. Agency designated representative: Greg Pratt; Employee organization: Local 1684, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the board went into closed session at 10:45 am.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.1, at the conclusion of the closed session, HTA's Legal Counsel reported that there was nothing to report on either item.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.