

MINUTES FOR THE HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

December 6, 2023

PRESENT

Board Members

Tami Trent, City of Fortuna
Alex Stillman, City of Arcata
Leslie Castellano, City of Eureka
Debra L. Garnes, City of Rio Dell (Alt)
Natalie Arroyo, County of Humboldt
Mike Wilson, County of Humboldt
Debra Garnes, City of Rio Dell

ABSENT

Julie Woodall, City of Rio Dell
Steve Ladwig, City of Trinidad

Staff

Greg Pratt, General Manager
Consuelo Espinosa, Human Resources Manager
Carolann Aggeler, Administration and Finance Assistant
Andi Evans, Bookkeeper
Brian Connors, Operations Manager
Jerome Qiriazzi, Transit Planner
Sherry Dunlap, Safety & ADA Coordinator
Jim Wilson, Director of Maintenance

Katie Collender, Finance Manager

Also in attendance was Nancy Diamond, HTA's Legal Counsel; Beth Burkes, HCAOG; Stevie Luther, HCAOG; Oona Smith, HCOAG; Vance Law, AMRTS; Gordon Shaw, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc; Aaron Zell, Humboldt County Department of Health, and Human Services; Alissa Norman, Tri-County Independent Living; Colin Fiske, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities; and Members of the Public; Joann McGarry.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Arroyo called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

ROLL CALL & Introductions

Introductions were made.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMUNICATION

Colin Fiske with CRTP announced that the annual Champion Award was presented on local news to all HTA Drivers, Mechanics, and Staff. The annual award is given to locals who further CRTP's mission of promoting public transportation.

Joann McGarry, member of the public shared three (3) transit needs:

1. Route Improvement: More service to Loleta and Ferndale. Relocation of the AMRTS bus stop to west of town.
2. Fares: Concern regarding drivers being lenient in collecting bus fares. Easier access to pay fares without stumbling for change. Seek funds for free bus rides.
3. Signage: The Transit App signage is posted very small and hard to read on the bus. Suggested that HTA partner with Cal Poly for ideas to improve on signage and how to get the word out for those navigating transit without smartphones.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Gordon Shaw with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc presented a final report regarding the adopted 2023-2028 Transportation Development Plan (TDP), which aims to improve public transit now and in the future. Additionally, provided feedback which identified potential changes that could improve public transit over the next five years that included ridership, funding, converting fleets to zero emissions vehicles, branding, fares, coordination, demographic factors, population growth, service frequency, paratransit, bus stop improvements, supporting first and last miles from a new transit center, and existing transit needs for all systems operated by the Humboldt Transit Authority. Additionally, expressed the need to remove Saturday Willow Creek Service, and the expansion of micro transit into the McKinleyville area.

Councilmember Alex Stillman inquired about details for a new Transit Center for the City of Arcata.

Supervisor Natalie Arroyo and Mike Wilson suggested that HTA look into how to finance and streamline Dial-a-Ride in the Eureka area. Also requested that planning be placed on the agenda for future discussion.

Public Comment:

- Colin Fiske suggested meeting targets to increase ridership.
- Joann McGarry expressed the need for extending weekday late night and Sunday service. Also suggested a network for people riding micro transit who may not be able to navigate or access the app, as well as a call by phone option.
- Alisa Norman gave a shout out to General Manager Greg Pratt for increasing transportation options.

CONSENT CALENDAR

By motion, recommend 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 Supervisor Wilson, second by Councilmember Trent to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes from December 6, 2023, Regular Board Meeting

Items Removed from Consent Calendar

None

REPORTS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Free Bus Rides on Extreme Weather Days

Supervisor Arroyo announced that last year HTA provided 100 monthly bus passes for distribution through service providers affiliated with the Continuum of Care and nonprofit programs supporting transportation challenges to community members, including those experiencing homelessness and individuals with disabilities. She also expressed the need to continue working with HTA to expand the pilot program to service providers, as well as the board adopting a new policy offering free bus rides to emergency shelters to anyone on declared extreme weather days.

Public Comment:

- Colin Fiske emphasized the need to provide emergency transportation for those in need.
- Aaron Zell made mention that this year the county coordinated several warming centers that will be open to the public during extreme weather situations. Also, made mention about having some kind of pilot program this year.
- Joann McGarry suggested the possibility of placing under utilized shuttles into service to get people to those warming centers.
- Aaron Zell made mention that so as long as people get to the Arcata terminal, there are waking distance hubs that can be accessed.

Motion by Supervisor Wilson, second by Councilmember Castellano to Approve an Implementation Policy Offering Free Bus Rides to Anyone on Declared Extreme Weather Days for the 2024 Calendar Year Only. Motion carried unanimously.

2. HTA Projects Update

HTA's Transit Planner Jerome Qiraizi gave the board an update on future projects:

- *The Hydrogen Fueling Station RFP has been further delayed until January. The Board TIRCP Adhoc Committee will approve the RFP prior to release.*
- *HTA staff attended a pre-production meeting for the first New Fyler's production bus.*
- *HTA is working with HCAOG on the CalTrans Sustainable Communities grant.*

Public Comment:

Oona Smith with HCAOG added the need to pursue a comprehensive transit analysis of travel patterns in the County and how that information can be used to inform improvements to all fixed route systems.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

CLOSED SESSION

Public Comment

None

The board meet in closed session at 10:35 am, pursuant to Government Code Section 54957 (b)(1) for an employee performance evaluation of an Unrepresented Employee, HTA's General Manager Greg Pratt.

Report out of closed session.

Board meeting to be continued on December 11, 2023, at 9:00am.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting to be continued on December 11th, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

MINUTES FOR THE HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY
CONTINUATION MEETING OF THE DECEMBER 6TH, 2023, REGULAR BOARD MEETING
December 11, 2023

PRESENT

Board Members

Tami Trent, City of Fortuna
Leslie Castellano, City of Eureka
Debra L. Garnes, City of Rio Dell (Alt)
Natalie Arroyo, County of Humboldt
Mike Wilson, County of Humboldt
Debra Garnes, City of Rio Dell

Staff

Greg Pratt, General Manager
Consuelo Espinosa, Human Resources Manager

Also in attendance was Nancy Diamond, HTA's Legal Counsel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Arroyo called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

ROLL CALL & Introductions

Introductions were made.

CLOSED SESSION

Public Comment

None

The Board meet in closed session pursuant for the following:

- A. Government Code Section 54957(b)(1) (employee performance evaluation): General Manager.
- B. Government Code Section 54957.6 (meeting with designated representative, unrepresented employee): Unrepresented Employee, General Manager, Designated representative, Board Chair.

Report out of closed session.

Nothing to report.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 am.