

Board of Directors
NATALIE ARROYO
County of Humboldt
LESLIE CASTELLANO
City of Eureka
DEBRA GARNES
City of Rio Dell
STEVE LADWIG
City of Trinidad
ALEX STILLMAN
City of Arcata
TAMI TRENT
City of Fortuna
MIKE WILSON
County of Humboldt

HTA Board Staff
GREG PRATT
General Manager
CONSUELO ESPINOSA
Secretary to the Board



**Humboldt Transit Authority
Governing Board of Directors
HTA Conference Room - 133 V Street Eureka
AGENDA**

Public Participation In-person or Teleconference
Microsoft Teams
Join on your computer, mobile app or room device
[Join the meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 279 119 307 736
Passcode: wo6ZY3Mq

February 12, 2025

9:00 AM

Regular Board Meeting

A. Call Meeting to Order

B. Roll Call & Introductions

C. Community Members Communication

Members of the community are invited to comment on items or issues not on the agenda.

D. Special Presentation

None

E. 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.

1. Minutes from December 4, 2024, Regular Board Meeting.

Staff: [Consuelo Espinosa](#)

Action Recommended: Approve Minutes

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F. Items Removed from Consent Calendar

G. New Business

1. Elections

At the beginning of the year, new officers are elected to the Following positions:
Chair, Vice-Chair, and Finance & Operations Committee.

The HTA Chair also serves on the Policy Advisory Committee for HCAOG.

Current Positions:

Chair: Supervisor Arroyo, Vice Chair: Councilmember Stillman

Finance & Operations Committee: Castellano, Garnes, & Trent

2. Recognition: Councilmember Steve Ladwig

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Staff: [Greg Pratt](#)

Staff has prepared a resolution of appreciation for Councilmember Steve Ladwig's eight years of Service on the Humboldt Transit Authority Board of Directors.

Action Recommended: Adopt Resolution 25-01 Recognizing and Commending the Services of Supervisor Steve Ladwig.

3. HTA Projects Update

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Staff: [Jerome Qiriaz](#)

Staff will update the Board on current and future projects.

Action Recommended: Review, Discuss, and Make Recommendations if Necessary.

H. Reports

1. Draft October/November 2024 statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA.

Handout

Staff: [Katie Collender](#)

No Action Required

I. Board Communications

J. Staff Communications

K. Closed Session

None

L. Adjournment

Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) is committed to a policy of non-discrimination pursuant to the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Persons who require special accommodations, accessible seating, or documentation in alternative formats under the American with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact HTA at least two days prior to the meeting.

Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) se compromete a una norma de no discriminación de acuerdo a los requisitos del Artículo VI del Acto Derechos Civiles de 1964. Las personas que requieren alojamiento especial de acuerdo con el American with Disabilities Act, o personas que requieren servicios de traducción (libre de cargo) deben comunicarse con HTA al menos dos días antes de la reunión.

MINUTES FOR THE HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

December 4, 2024

9:00 am

PRESENT

Board Members

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

ABSENT

Tami Trent, City of Fortuna

Attended Via Teams

Vance Law, City of Arcata; Colin Fiske, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities; Kelsey Martin, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities; Netra Khatri, City of Arcata; and Oona Smith, HCAOG.

Staff

Greg Pratt, General Manager
Consuelo Espinosa, Human Resources Manager
Katie Collender, Finance Manager
Carolann Aggeler, Admin & Finance Assistant
Jerome Qirazi, Transit Planner
Andi Evans, Bookkeeper
Jim Wilson, Director of Maintenance

Also in attendance were Nancy Diamond, HTA Legal Counsel; and Joanne McGarry, Member of the Public.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Natalie Arroyo called the meeting to order at 9:07 am.

ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMUNICATION

Joanne McGarry mentioned that she recently bought a portable chair and is excited about the upcoming installation of new bus shelters with seating options. She also expressed concern about the lack of bus stops south of Samoa, where she lives, and requested that the area be reviewed for potential service. Additionally, she pointed out that some meeting locations, like the Wharfinger building, do not have bus service. Oona Smith from HCAOG announced that the Unmet Transit Needs meeting, originally scheduled for December 19th, was moved to December 12th due to a lack of quorum.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

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 Councilmember Castellano, second by Councilmember Ladwig to approve the Consent Calendar.

Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes from November 6, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

Action Recommended: Approve minutes.

Items Removed from Consent Calendar

None

REPORTS

Draft June and September 2024 statistics and financial statements for all systems operated by HTA.

Finance Manager Katie Collender gave an overview of the statistics, noting a 15% increase in ridership compared to last year. She reported an 81% rise in credit card usage over the past year, along with an increase in free promotions. The farebox revenue is up by 22%, although still 3% lower than last year, but remains strong overall. She also mentioned that ridership on Saturdays has declined, likely due to limited service.

NEW BUSINESS

Special Item Added: Support Letter for Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant

HTA added this special item to the agenda in hopes of obtaining a signed support letter from the board for the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant. This funding opportunity, usually provided by state or federal agencies, supports the development of transportation plans that promote sustainability, reduce environmental impacts, and improve mobility. The grants typically focus on encouraging alternative transportation modes (such as biking, walking, and public transit), improving air quality, reducing traffic congestion, and enhancing the overall efficiency and resilience of transportation systems. This grant will also support the redesign of the HTA facility as a whole.

Motion by Supervisor Wilson, second by Councilmember Ladwig to Approve a Signed Support Letter for Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant with findings. Motion carried unanimously.

City of Arcata's intent to transfer administration, vehicles, planning, operations, maintenance services, and local transportation funding to the Humboldt Transit Authority.

General Manager Greg Pratt shared that a letter from the City of Arcata was included in the board packet, requesting the transfer of all aspects of the Arcata & Mad River Transit System (AMRTS) to the Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA). Netra Khatri, from the City of Arcata, praised HTA's staff and explained that HTA already maintains all systems, with the AMRTS office currently only being used for ticket sales. The office will close on February 1, 2025. Councilmember Leslie Castellano expressed concerns and suggested that residents in Arcata need an alternative location to purchase bus tickets, recommending City Hall as a possible option. Councilmember Stillman pointed out that HTA bus drivers currently use the AMRTS facility and would need continued access, advocating for the option to remain available for bus operators. She also raised concerns about customers who require assistance on a daily basis and how the transition will affect them, especially those transferring from other bus systems. Vance Law, who works at the AMRTS office, mentioned that it's helpful for passengers to have someone available for guidance and ticket sales. Councilmember Debra Garnes asked if there was a way to continue staffing the AMRTS office until HTA officially takes over. Chairperson Natalie Arroyo thanked Vance for his service to the community, and Greg Pratt stated that HTA would present a more comprehensive solution at a future meeting.

Public member Joanne McGarry shared that having the AMRTS Transit Center is valuable for one-on-one assistance, especially for those unfamiliar with the area and navigating transit. Colin Fiske expressed his support for merging the systems and hoped that some form of transit hub could be maintained for the community. Netra Khatri concluded by expressing hopes for the future use of the building but noted that it would be feasible for HTA staff to support a solution, potentially extending the office's closure until April 2025. Councilmember Ladwig praised Vance as a "wonderful human being" and personally thanked him for his service.

Motion by Councilmember Ladwig, seconded by Councilmember Stillman, to review the implications of transferring AMTS to HTA, with special consideration given to community needs, and to bring recommendations back to the Board. Motion carried unanimously.

HTA Projects Update

HTA's transit planner announced that, as of this morning, HTA has successfully finalized and signed a contract with LDA Partners Inc, to work on the fuel cell bus. He also mentioned that General Manager Greg Pratt has led efforts in collaborating with Cal-ITP to test the Starlink internet service as a potential solution for the North State Express (NSE) line, as well as for neighboring transit systems, Trinity Transit and Yurok Transit. If the pilot is successful, it could enhance real-time data service for the NSE line and potentially allow these and other rural routes across the state to adopt tap-to-pay and real-time GTFS data streams. The Director of Maintenance also reported a setback with New Flyer regarding the pilot bus due to damaged components.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Chairperson Natalie Arroyo thanked Councilmember Steve Ladwig for his eight years of service on the HTA Board and expressed a desire to have him return in February for a final meeting to recognize his contributions. Councilmember Ladwig reflected on his time attending many meetings, stating it had been an honor to serve on the board and with the organization. He remarked that if Sacramento is discussing what Humboldt is doing, it shows HTA is a leading agency. He also mentioned that Trinidad would be hosting a Boat on the Trailer Parade on December 15th.

Councilmember Alex Stillman shared that the Open Door Clinic had reached out regarding the bus stop on Sunset, and that Netra would be reviewing it. She also expressed concern about the low ridership on Old Arcata Road and noted that Danco has a new project coming to HTA, though no timeline is available yet. Supervisor Wilson shared that during the November CSAC meeting, they discussed the gas tax and how to address it. He also mentioned that autonomous vehicles are now operating in San Francisco and suggested it would be interesting to try the technology. Finally, Councilmember Leslie Castellano reported that Measure F performed well on the ballot and that progress is being made on the development of the Transit Center.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

General Manager Greg Pratt expressed his gratitude to Steve Ladwig for his support of the organization, highlighting him as a great board member.

Finance Manager Katie Collender shared that progress is being made on the marketing front, and that new tickets for the North State Express Route 101 have arrived. She also reminded the board about the upcoming Symposium in July 2025.

Director of Maintenance Jim Wilson announced that Eureka High students would be touring the shop on December 5, 2024.

Closed Session

None

ADJOURNMENT

10:16 am

**RESOLUTION 25-01
THE HUMBOLDT TRANSIT AUTHORITY
RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE SERVICES OF
COUNCILMEMBER STEVE LADWIG**

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of Directors and staff of the Humboldt Transit Authority wish to acknowledge and honor the dedicated service of Councilmember Steve Ladwig, who represented the City of Trinidad on the Board; and

WHEREAS, Steve began his term as a member of the Humboldt Transit Authority Board in 2017. Over the past eight (8) years, Steve’s dedication, commitment, and genuine interest have been instrumental in advancing the mission and goals of the Humboldt Transit Authority. Throughout his tenure, Steve worked collaboratively with fellow board members to help build one of the most effective and cohesive boards that the staff has had the privilege of working with. Notable achievements during his term include improvements to integrate countywide bus schedules with real-time tracking and mobile app accessibility across multiple bus systems. Steve also played a key role in supporting HTA staff with decisions regarding the transition to alternatively fueled buses, the development of the Earth Center, fare integration across all systems, the launch of the Redwood Coast Express service, the establishment of a temporary hydrogen station, and the ongoing acquisition of hydrogen buses. Due to the length of his service, Steve has witnessed and contributed to numerous improvements to the Authority, its facilities, and the services it provides.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Humboldt Transit Authority Governing Board of Directors and staff extend their sincere gratitude to Steve Ladwig for his dedicated service on the HTA Board. We thank him for his commitment to ensuring the health and progress of the organization, for his foresight in developing and executing key initiatives, and for his leadership in maintaining a balanced and effective board. Through his hard work and dedication, Steve has made invaluable contributions that have had a lasting impact on the growth and success of the Humboldt Transit Authority.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this sixteenth day of February 2025, on the following vote:

AYES: Arroyo, Castellano, Garnes, Stillman, Trent, Wilson

NOES:

ABSENT:

Chair of the HTA Governing
Board of Directors

ATTEST:

HTA Secretary to the Board



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TO: HTA Chair Natalie Arroyo
All Governing Board Members

FROM: Jerome Qiriaz, Transit Planner

DATE: February 12, 2025

SUBJECT: Humboldt Transit Authority Project Updates

TIRCP Cycle 5 Grant

This project funds the purchase of fuel cell electric buses, construction of a hydrogen fueling station, upgrades to maintenance bays, and construction of an intermodal transit center.

- Hydrogen Fueling Station
 - a. Temporary Fueler: planned delivery is currently between March 10 – March 21
 - b. Permanent Station:
 - i. HTA was officially awarded \$7M from the Federal Highway Administration Carbon Reduction Program to augment TIRCP funds for the permanent station.
 1. This federal funding requires completion of NEPA. CalTrans District 1 is generously providing staff resources to complete this process. A Preliminary Environmental Study (PES) has been completed. HTA staff anticipates completion in July.
 - ii. Staff are striving to bring a contract recommendation to the March Board meeting regarding the proposal from Linde
- Maintenance Bay Upgrades:
 - a. Design and permitting is in full swing with A&E firm LDA Partners, with GHD as a subcontractor. The project team is targeting completion of construction documents in June.
 - b. The consultant Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) is assisting with managing this project, along with support from the Schatz Energy Research Center.
- Demolition of the Cedar House
 - a. HTA has started work with Whitchurch Engineering who has kicked off the project and initiated the permitting process.
 - b. The project team is currently targeting a demolition date in early November.

TIRCP Cycle 7 Grant

This project funds the planning and capital costs of developing a 15-minute headway service, development of bus stop design guidelines, public art installations at transit facilities, additional amenities for the Eureka transit center, establishment of the North State Zero Emission Training Center, and procurement of fuel cell electric buses.

- HTA staff has kicked off the contracting process with CalTrans for this grant.



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Regional Projects Coordination

- HTA is working with the City of Eureka on the Sunset Heights affordable housing project and their planned application for AHSC funding.
- HTA staff have continued to stay engaged with the Regional Climate Action Plan effort.
- Continued engaging with the Shast Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) on the development of their North State Intercity Bus to Rail Plan.
- HTA staff continue to collaborate with transit agencies in the North State Super Region in the development of coordinated intercity express service of which HTA's North State Express 101 is a part.

Next Generation Operations Facility Project

- HTA was unable to submit a grant application to the CalTrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant. HTA has received a full quote for the cost of completing the planned scope of work, and is currently looking at other options for funding this.

Operations

- Staff continue to identify and pilot options for meeting stop announcement requirements our fixed routes. Staff will likely need to seek additional grant funding to cover the capital costs.
- Staff are updating the posted schedules and schedule holders at bus stops
- Staff continue to assess potential additional Flex-Only stops to increase the service area and convenience of the RideHumboldt Flex system.

Action Recommended:

- ***Review, discuss, and make recommendations of other items if necessary.***