

Report of the TA Citizens Advisory Committee

Meeting of May 3, 2022

Committee Action

- Approved the Minutes of the CAC Meeting of April 5, 2022

Committee Motions Regarding TA Board Items for May 5, 2022

- Approved the Adoption of Resolution Making Findings that the Proclaimed State of Emergency for COVID-19 Continues to Impact the Board's and Committees' Ability to Meet Safely in Person
- Accepted the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ending March 31, 2022
- Accepted the Quarterly Investment Report and Fixed Income Market Review and Outlook
- Approved Award of Contracts to Provide Real Estate and Other Legal Services

Discussion Highlights

Award of Contracts to Provide Real Estate and Other Legal Services

Joe Hurley, TA Director, said that the contract provides for a bench of real estate and legal services to tap into should a conflict of interest arise with the TA's current legal counsel. Sandra Lang asked what the legal services would be and Mr. Hurley provided an example. Kevin Yin, Director, Contracts and Procurement, added that the go-to legal counsel would be Hanson Bridgett and the bench of other counsel would only be called upon if there was a conflict of interest. Vice Chair Fox asked if the TA had to pay a retainer regardless of whether services were used, and Mr. Yin said no.

Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2023

Grace Martinez, Acting Chief Financial Officer, provided the presentation. Rich Hedges said that the voters had been very generous and applauded the Wayfair decision, which has resulted in an increase of sales tax revenue for San Mateo County. Vice Chair John Fox noted the stability of sales tax revenues in the county.

San Mateo 101 Express Lanes Quarterly Project Update

Leo Scott, Co-Project Manager, Gray-Bowen-Scott, provided the presentation. He noted that there had been issues with damage to a fiber optic communications cable. Chair Barbara Arietta asked if the TA was the agency that was always responsible for paying for any damages. Mr. Scott said if the damage was done by anyone besides the contractors, then the project would be responsible while it is still under construction. If the damage was a result of contractors' work, then the contractor would be responsible. Vice Chair Fox asked what were the best outreach methods, and Mr. Scott said that the team would consider having such an evaluation. Mr. Hurley said the marketing team is emphasizing to the public that they must have transponders to use the express lanes and that effort has proven effective.

Public Comment:

Drew noted that on the south section of the express lanes that several lights are out on the poles supporting the median signs, and Mr. Scott said he would look into that. Vice Chair Fox said he was looking forward to see the public acceptance of the project over time.

State and Federal Legislative Update

Jessica Epstein, Manager, Government and Community Affairs, provided a summary of federal and state legislation. She said there was a lack of funding for pandemic relief. She said the TA has made a request for earmarks for the Highway 101/92 Area Project. She said at the state level, they are looking to the May revision of the Governor's budget. She said both the Governor and the Senate had put out their own budgets, both of which have a lot of money for transportation. She provided an overview of bills that they are currently watching. Mr. Hedges asked if the bill that supported reduction of greenhouse gases would be anti-highway. Ms. Epstein said CAPTI (Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure) projects support highways that included transit and other multimodal components. Ms. Lang asked about the Governor's gas tax proposal. Ms. Epstein said there are a number of proposals, including a flat rebate. There is another proposal for all transit to provide three months of free fares. She said anything related to the gas tax is not fully agreed to in Sacramento.

Report of the Chair

Chair Arietta provided an update on the California High Speed Rail Project milestones, which included the completion of several major environmental reports.

Report from Staff

Mr. Hurley said applications due on May 27 for the ACR/TDM (Alternative Congestion Relief/Transportation Demand Management) call for projects. He said there had been a successful ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 8 of the new South San Francisco Caltrain Station. He encouraged the members to provide feedback on the new TA website.

Member Comments/Requests

Mr. Hedges said that the decision to have a future high-speed rail go to Las Vegas versus Southern California is likely in response to alleviating the traffic between Barstow and Las Vegas. He requested to hear further details about the equity program the next time the TA receives a report on the 101 Express Lanes. Chair Arietta said her husband was very pleased with Caltrain service.