

**San Mateo County Transportation Authority
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, California**

**Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
Meeting Minutes**

August 1, 2023

Members Present: B. Arietta (Chair), D. Bojack, I. Bucio, J. Fox (Vice Chair) (left at 6:14 pm),
(In Person) K. Kuklin, G. Mattammal, P. Ohtaki (arrived at 5:00 pm), M. Swire

Members Present: None
(Via Teleconference)

Members Absent: K. Chin, S. Lang, J. Londer

Staff Present: P. Skinner, C. Mobley-Ritter, A. Linehan, J. Brook

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Barbara Arietta called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Jean Brook, CAC Secretary, called the roll and confirmed that a quorum was present.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments.

4. Consent Calendar

4.a. Approval of Minutes of the CAC Meeting of May 30 2023

TA Board Meeting Agenda for August 3, 2023

**4.b. TA Board Item 5.b Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the
Period Ending May 31, 2023**

**4.c. TA Board Item 5.d Acceptance of Quarterly Investment Report and Fixed Income Market
Review and Outlook**

**4.d. TA Board Item 5.e Authorize the Request for Allocation of \$2 Million in Regional
Measure 3 Funding for the US 101/ State Route 92 Direct Connector Project**

Motion/Second: Fox/Bucio

Ayes: Arietta, Bojack, Bucio, Fox, Kuklin, Mattammal, Swire

Absent: Chin, Lang, Londer, Ohtaki

5. TA Board Item 5.a Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of June 1, 2023

There were no comments.

6. TA Board Item 5.c Information on Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ended June 30, 2023

Jeannie Chen, Manager, Budgets, said that staff is still working on the year end audit, which would be on the agenda for the October TA Board meeting.

7. TA Board Item 11.a US 101 Express Lanes: Quarterly Update on Variable Rate Bond and Operations

Connie Mobley-Ritter, Director of Treasury, provided the presentation on the variable rate bond, showing that it is the most effective and least cost-intensive way of funding the \$100 million loan.

Mike Swire asked how much the bonds added to the \$581 million total project cost. Peter Skinner, Executive Officer, Transportation Authority, said that \$581 million was the total project cost.

Vice Chair John Fox said that contractually some payments are due on certain dates and does the TA have the liquidity to make the payments on those dates. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said they had allowed a three-year-plus runway.

Lacy Vong, Program Manager, HNTB, provided the presentation on the operations of the Express Lanes.

Peter Ohtaki arrived at 5:00 pm.

Gus Mattammal asked why the other agency costs of 22 percent were so high and if they would continue to be high going forward. Ms. Vong noted that the percentage represented mainly overhead and other fixed costs and was likely to remain stable, although the ratio between revenues and expenses may change. He asked if the revenue was allocated for a certain purpose. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said when the TA originally issued the bonds, the intent was to get enough of a runway and revenue stream that the JPA would be able to take responsibility for their own debt and use the revenues to the best benefit of the County. Ms. Vong said after that process, the TA has to have an expenditure plan and bring that before the Board. Mr. Mattammal asked if they would do a presentation on the metrics to gauge the success of the initiative, and Ms. Vong said they could do so at a future CAC meeting.

Mr. Swire asked if the revenues were going to increase going forward. Ms. Vong said they expect revenue to increase as there was still capacity in the lane and motorists will continue to get the speed and time benefit of using the lane. She added that the non-financial metric would be congestion relief.

Vice Chair Fox said he would like to see a metric about solo drivers versus three-plus in vehicles. He suggested that the more we can document for the public to improve public acceptance. Ms. Vong said the suggestions from the CAC were helpful in suggesting what data needs to be collected to impact future policy and to manage congestion.

Ivan Bucio asked why they tracked other agencies' costs separately. Ms. Vong said those are actual operating and administrative costs, which are essentially expenses. Mr. Bucio noted that more than 50 percent of the revenue is being used to maintain the system. Ms. Mobley-Ritter responded that the infrastructure expenses are expected to go down as revenue increases.

Peter Ohtaki asked if the TA had learned from Alameda County about post-pandemic versus pre-pandemic congestion levels on I-880. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said they do not have the comparison data yet.

Chair Arietta expressed concerns regarding the expenditures for the CHP (California Highway Patrol) to provide toll enforcement. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said since they have only been in operation for less than a year and dealing with some new vendors. Ms. Vong said the toll enforcement is an overtime duty for the CHP. Chair Arietta asked how many CHP officers are working per shift, and Ms. Vong said they would get back to her on that metric.

8. TA Board Item 11.b First Amendment to Reimbursement Agreement to Extend Expiration Date of Letter of Credit Supporting the \$100 Million Variable Rate Bonds

Ms. Mobley-Ritter presented the staff report. She said that since they issued the bonds, the interest rates have increased.

Mr. Ohtaki asked if the amendment was related to the variable rate. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said the letter of credit allowed the TA to increase their agency rating, increasing the bonds' marketability.

Motion/Second: Bucio/Kuklin

Ayes: Arietta, Bojack, Bucio, Fox, Kuklin, Mattammal, Ohtaki, Swire

Absent: Chin, Lang, Londer

9. TA Board Item 11.c Approval and Ratification of the Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Authority Insurance Program

Ryan Hinchman, Director, Financial Planning and Analysis, presented the staff report.

Motion/Second: Bojack/Bucio

Ayes: Arietta, Bojack, Bucio, Fox, Kuklin, Mattammal, Ohtaki, Swire

Absent: Chin, Lang, Londer

10. TA Board Item 12 State and Federal Legislative Update

Amy Linehan, Government Affairs Officer, provided a summary of federal and state legislation.

She said the House would be in recess until September 12 and the Senate would be in recess until September 5. She said the House only passed on of their appropriations bills. She said the Senate has not yet passed any appropriations bills. She said there is not a clear plan to get the bills over the finish line. She said a CR (continuing resolution) may be necessary if no bills are passed before the deadline of September 30. She noted several leadership changes in the Senate.

Chair Arietta said that the transportation trailer bill is a point of contention for LA Metro (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority) because it would remove that agency's control over its budget and put it under the control of the State. She requested that staff provide more information about the bill's impact on the TA, and Ms. Linehan said she would get back to her.

Mr. Ohtaki asked if the TA is monitoring the breakdown of what funds go to operations versus capital improvements. Ms. Linehan said SamTrans and Caltrain balance where they apply funds for operational and capital needs. Mr. Skinner noted the TA does not have any control over how the transit operators invest the funds, but SamTrans and Caltrain are working closely with MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission).

Mr. Swire asked about the earmark from Kevin Mullin, and Ms. Linehan confirmed it was for the 19th Avenue Fashion Island Boulevard Bike Path project.

11. Report of the Chair

Chair Arietta noted that public transportation use went up to record levels by fans attending the Taylor Swift performances on the weekend of July 28-29. She said the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury released a report on July 10, 2023 regarding making bicycling safer in the County. She said the report details the measures that each municipality in the County is taking.

Chair Arietta noted that Caltrain held an electric train preview event on Saturday, July 29 at the San Jose Diridon Station.

12. Report From Staff

Mr. Skinner said the report was in the packet. He summarized his experience in a ride-along with a CHP officer patrolling the Express Lanes. He noted the majority of people who were pulled over for express lanes toll violations were driving electric vehicles. Chair Arietta expressed her concern that the officers were paid overtime for their Express Lanes patrolling duties and suggested having a dedicated enforcement team. Mr. Skinner noted express lanes enforcement throughout the state is conducted on an overtime basis. Mr. Mattammal noted that there was currently a shortage of CHP officers.

Mr. Swire asked if the enforcement mainly centered about the number of occupants in the car. Mr. Skinner said express lanes enforcement is focused on toll violations, but motorists can be ticketed for any moving violation, such as speeding, in the express lanes.

13. Member Comments/Requests

Mr. Ohtaki thanked Chair Arietta for providing details of the Civil Grand Jury report on bicycle safety.

Mr. Swire concurred about the Grand Jury report. He noted that Smart Growth America focuses on sustainable neighborhoods and healthy communities; according to Mr. Swire, they recently did a national survey which indicated that most people do not believe that highway widening reduces congestion. He said he felt that America's perception of transportation is changing to favor transit, and Chair Arietta concurred. He also surveyed Nextdoor members on the mid-Peninsula asking if the \$581 million spent on highway widening in San Mateo County had reduced congestion and was worthwhile, reporting that 85 percent of survey respondents indicated that the money was not well spent and that the project had not improved congestion.

Vice Chair John Fox left at 6:14 pm.

Mr. Ohtaki suggested having a future agenda item on transportation choices. Mr. Skinner noted that the funds managed by the TA have categories that were approved by the majority of the County voters. He said they have no legal ability to move funds between expenditure plan

categories; however, the TA Strategic Plan would be updated in 2024 and would include reexamining the evaluation criteria for expenditure plan categories.

Doug Bojack said he would like to see the additional data from HTNB about the Express Lanes that might be useful for projecting usage, capacity, and congestion. He said he thought some of the findings from the Civil Grand Jury report on bicycle safety could be implemented by staff in how the buckets are poured out for each of the funding categories.

Mr. Mattammal welcomed the TA summer interns in attendance. He noted that the pitch for the express lanes was that the project is going to reduce congestion for the people who are willing to pay for it, and said that you are essentially taking the people who have more money than time and taxing them.

14. Date/Time of Next Regular Meeting

Chair Arietta announced that the next meeting would be held on Monday, September 5, 2023, at 4:30 pm in person at the SamTrans Auditorium and via Zoom teleconference.

15. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm.

An audio/video recording of this meeting is available online at <https://www.smcta.com/about-us/board-directors/video-board-directors-cac-and-smcel-jpa>. Questions may be referred to the CAC Secretary's office by phone at 650.508.6223 or by email to cacsecretary@smcta.com.