

SamTrans Board Liaison Report

Meeting of January 10, 2024

Board Received/Actions

- Approved Minutes of the Regular Board of Directors Meeting of December 6, 2023 and the Special Meeting of December 18, 2023
- Accepted the Statement of Revenues and Expenses for the Period Ending November 30, 2023
- Authorized the Filing of an Application with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for Transportation Development Act, State Transit Assistance and Regional Measure 2 Funds for Fiscal Year 2023-24
- Elected Director Marina Fraser as Board Chair and Director Jeff Gee as Vice Chair for 2024
- Approved a Proclamation Recognizing January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month
- Approved Adoption of the 2024 Legislative Program
- Accepted the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Board Highlights

April Chan, General Manager/CEO, congratulated the new Chair and Vice Chair. She announced that service for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday would be running on a non-school day schedule. Regarding fare collection for the Ride Plus microtransit service, she said they are wrapping up testing of the Clipper 2.0 readers from MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission), which were experiencing configuration issues. She said they hope to receive the readers early next week and would inform the public that fare collection would commence two weeks following receipt of the readers. Ms. Chan said there has been much work at the regional level to have a regional funding measure for transit and local transportation. She noted that the bill introduced by Senator Wahab to consolidate all regional transit agencies in the Bay Area was pulled prior to reaching the Senate floor. She said the Lunar New Year bus wrap would be rolled out and introduced at the February 7 Board meeting. She announced that Casey Fromson would be leaving her Chief Communications Officer position at the end of January and then assuming the role of Chief of Staff for Caltrain; she thanked Ms. Fromson for all her contributions to Communications and Marketing.

Legislative Committee

State and Federal Legislative Update - Casey Fromson thanked the Board, Ms. Chan, the executive team, and staff for their support during her tenure as Chief Communications Officer. Ms. Chan noted Jessica Epstein's recent promotion to Director, Government and Community Affairs.

- Ms. Epstein introduced Eve O'Toole, Joe O'Brien, and Lauri Hettinger, Holland & Knight LLP, the lead lobbyists for SamTrans in Washington, DC. They provided a presentation on state and federal legislative activities.

- At the state level, Ms. Epstein said the Governor had released his budget. She said that at this time, they do not anticipate any impact on transportation when the Governor makes budget cuts to address the deficit. She noted personnel changes in the Assembly and Senate. She said they expect the Wahab bill to eventually come back as a study.

Adoption of 2024 Legislative Program - Ms. Epstein noted that based on an issue raised by a member of the TA Citizens Advisory Committee, they have emphasized safety as one of the key priorities. She said a change was made to the draft program that was presented at the December 6 Board meeting whereby the objective to “improve quality transportation choices” was amended to read “improve safe and quality transportation choices.”

Community Relations Committee

Accessible Services Update - Tina Dubost, Manager, Accessible Services, provided an update on Same-Day Paratransit Service.

Finance Committee

Acceptance of Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023 - Annie To, Director, Accounting, introduced Ahmad Gharaibeh, Partner, Eide Bailly LLP, who provided the presentation, which included an assessment of SamTrans’ long-term fiscal health, the audit scope and results, and the auditor’s opinions and communications. Ms. To presented a slide on SamTrans’ long-term fiscal health and thanked the Chief Financial Officer and General Manager/CEO for their support. Joan Cassman, Legal Counsel, noted that the SamTrans Audit Committee had met in December to review the ACFR (Annual Comprehensive Financial Report). She said that the Audit Committee agreed to expand the scope of the committee to review other audits the agency is periodically subject to, including the triennial audits. Committee Chair Jeff Gee noted the importance of sharing and reviewing this information with the full Board and the public, especially when doing good work.

Strategic Planning, Development, and Sustainability Committee

Reimagine SamTrans Phase 3 Implementation - Millie Tolleson, Director, Planning, provided the presentation on service changes starting February 11. Director Josh Powell said he was excited to see the changes. Chair Marina Fraser thanked Ms. Tolleson and her staff and said that Pacifica riders would be happy with the changes to Route 110. Committee Member Peter Ratto asked everything has been restored all pre-pandemic service levels. Ms. Tolleson said they are nearly there and may get to 100 percent by February. Committee Member Ratto said that riders of Route 249 would be happy to have that service return and noted that mailers are an effective community outreach approach. Committee Chair David Canepa said it was great to see the increased service frequency and noted that the ECR (El Camino Real) route’s new frequency of every 15 minutes was significant. Ms. Chan thanked Ms. Tolleson and the whole team. She invited the Board members to attend the future launch of the new Route EPX service.