

BUS PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)

Agenda for Wednesday, December 13, 2006

Convene at 6:00 p.m. – Adjourn by 8:00 p.m.
Conference Room – Administration Building
1011 Andersen Drive, San Rafael



Co-Chairpersons: Ted McLean and Hobart Bartshire
Marin County: Paul Albritton, Hobart Bartshire, Kathleen Decker, Carolyn Hodge, Edwin “Ted” McLean, Jo Trotter, Donald Wilhelm
Sonoma County: Winifred Archibald, Michelle Donnelly, Dan Knight
San Francisco/East Bay: Robb Mills

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Meeting Summary for October 18, 2006
3. Bus Stopper¹ (10 minutes)
4. Marin County Transit District (10 minutes)
 - a. Service Status Report
 - b. Local Changes Effective December 10
5. Outstanding Business (20 minutes)
 - a. TransLink Update
 - b. BPAC Membership Recruitment Update
 - c. Muir Woods Route 66 Service for 2007
 - d. Regional Service Changes Effective December 10
6. New Business (25 minutes)
 - a. Transbay Terminal Citizens Advisory Committee Recruitment
 - b. Ridership Patterns as of October
 - c. Route 93 Service Adjustment Proposal
 - d. Potential Regional Service Adjustments for March 2007
 - e. Sale of Golden Gate Bridge Christmas Ornaments at Employee Price (\$13)
 - f. Other
7. Review of Events and Announcements
 - a. Staff (5 minutes)
 - b. Chairpersons (5 minutes)
 - c. Committee Members (2 minutes per speaker)
 - d. Public Comments (2 minutes per speaker)
8. Adjourn

The next regularly scheduled BPAC meeting will be on Wednesday, February 21, 2006.

¹ Members to submit observed problem in bus operations, preferably in writing, and provide a verbal summary in less than 3 minutes

BUS PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)



Meeting Summary of Wednesday, October 18, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Marin County: Edward "Hobart" Bartshire,
Ted McLean, Jo Trotter, Don Wilhelm

East Bay: Steve Kretz

Sonoma County: Winifred Archibald

District Staff Present: Ron Downing, Principal Planner; Helen Haas, Customer Relations Supervisor; Richard Hibbs, Transportation Superintendent/Safety-Training; Josh Widmann, Associate Planner

Committee Members Absent:

Marin County: Paul Albritton, Brian Cahill, Kathy Decker, Carolyn Hodge, Dan Knight

Sonoma County: Kristin Winter

San Francisco: Robb Mills

1. Roll Call. Ron Downing opened the meeting at 6:02.
2. Meeting Summary for August 16, 2006 will remain unchanged as discussion concerned a shuttle route that GGT has no influence over.
3. Bus Stopper
 - Jo Trotter reported about a new driver this quarter on Route 38 who is late 8 to 10 minutes every day at 7th & Folsom, which is the first stop in the northbound run. That means the transferees at Richardson & Lombard might have to wait 15 minutes in a location that will become increasingly miserable once the rainy season begins. Ms. Trotter asked the driver why she is late, and the driver replied that she has another route that takes her to the bus yard with barely enough time to use the restroom then take over the 38 bus. Ms. Trotter and other riders have also complained that the driver talks loudly to a woman in the front row the entire trip to Terra Linda, and does not always pay attention to her driving, sometimes making last-minute merges. Rich Hibbs said he would talk to the driver tomorrow to get her to tone down her conversation. He told Ms. Trotter that if she doesn't see an immediate change in behavior, she is to call Helen Haas and ask Ms. Haas to inform him. He said he would look into the driver's schedule to better enable her to get to San Francisco on time.
 - Hobart Bartshire brought up an issue regarding his ride on Route 23 the previous morning. A person in a wheelchair boarded in Fairfax with a non-service dog, who urinated in the back of the bus on its way to San Rafael. Mr. Hibbs explained that the driver can ask a person in a wheelchair if the animal is necessary to assist him, and if the response is "yes", the driver cannot really refuse the animal. If the animal becomes unruly (as in the case described), the bus driver can ask that it be taken off the bus. Ms. Haas said she would follow up on this situation to find out what happened.
 - Ms. Trotter asked about results of the Route 93 survey, and Associate Planner Josh Widmann, who is compiling the survey, said he is working on a report suggesting

schedule improvements effective next March. Ms. Trotter noted that, in general, transfers to get to the San Francisco Civic Center do not go smoothly, and many people must stand on the buses that travel there. More buses are needed between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. weekdays. She suggested running shuttles from neighborhoods to the Golden Gate Bridge toll plaza for transfer to Route 93, which should run every 5 minutes in early morning. She noted that waiting 10 minutes at the toll plaza is a cold, foggy experience and there is no heater in the new shelter.

4. Marin County Transit District (MCTD)

- a. **Service Plan Implementation Update.** Ron Downing reported that MCTD's significant route changes effective September 10th fell into place fairly smoothly; passengers were not left behind, services were correctly operated, and field personnel supplied valuable assistance at transfer locations. Spanish-speaking bus drivers, both on the buses and stationed at key locations, were particularly helpful. District personnel assisted MCTD with outreach and distributed GGT Transit Guides to help educate the public about the route changes.

Despite the apparent smoothness of the transition, many people had to make major changes in their travel. Comments indicate some people do not like the new routes, particularly where trips are no longer possible or expedient, such as from Novato to Marinwood. Lack of evening service in Mill Valley and Fairfax was identified as a problem; MCTD is already taking steps to address this issue in December. The change in Route 29 from half-hourly to hourly service along Andersen Drive and past the Larkspur Ferry Terminal caused concerns. Some service reliability fell short, most notably with Routes 22/23, which took longer to run than estimated during peak periods, but this will be also be rectified in December. Traffic and a few driver education issues also came up. Some trips in the Canal proved to be too frequent, and a few early morning routes and late evening Novato local routes reported carrying only 1 or 2 passengers. Overcrowding was limited – except for those buses heavily used by students with youth passes, particularly in the Larkspur Unified School District, where passes were distributed free to anyone who requested.

Members asked about new drivers' training and Mr. Hibbs said they get in-bus exposure to 90% of the routes. They were recently given updated route guides, maps, classes and on-road experience for the new local routes totaling approximately two hours per driver. In 30 days, 274 drivers were trained. Each driver has a Route Guide binder listing each left and right turn by route [and a hand-drawn map] updated every quarter.

- b. **Potential MCTD Local Changes for December 2006.** MCTD will change Route 52, the South Novato Blvd. route currently running only between Redwood & Grant and Ignacio. Its half-hourly weekday runs have been poor performers and will move to an hourly schedule. In addition to the headway change, MCTD will extend Route 52 down 101 from Ignacio to the San Rafael Transit Center. It cannot connect on pulse times [because there is not enough space at the SRTC and because of MCTD's desire to have a bus every 30 minutes along South Novato Blvd., which affects the arrival time at SRTC] so will arrive 3 to 11 minutes after the half-hourly pulse and leave 17 minutes after the hour, going northbound. Its timing is set to provide half-hourly service on Novato Blvd. between Sunset and Diablo.

5. Outstanding Business

- a. **Toll Plaza Transfer Point Improvement Project:** This is essentially complete and functioning fine. Members noted that on the east side of the toll plaza, people waiting for

the northbound bus stand in the old shelter rather than the new one, which is exposed to the elements. Member asked if the southbound Lane 1 could be converted to a FasTrak-only lane [eliminating drivers who pass through slowly] to expedite travel so riders do not miss their transferring buses. Mr. Downing will check and report at the next meeting.

- b. **Muir Woods Route 66 Service Recap:** Mr. Downing reported that Route 66 summer weekend buses carried 15,000 passengers in 2006 vs. about 10,000 in 2005, even with the addition of a \$2 round-trip fare. Effective marketing to San Francisco hotel concierges drew tourists as the primary riders. Planning is under way for summer 2007 and could reflect more frequent service as well as extra service meeting the Sausalito Ferry.
- c. **Regional Services Changes for December 2006.** Minor schedule changes will adjust five commute and two basic routes. A new trip will be added on Route 4, and one trip each will be eliminated on Routes 9 and 56 due to low ridership.

6. New Business

- a. **TransLink Update.** Ms. Haas explained that most testing on TransLink development has been completed and the Revenue Ready date is expected to be declared soon. Pre-Launch will begin at least two weeks after that, when public outreach will endeavor to solicit 500 bus commuters to test the system, including Passenger Advisory Committee members. Members of the test group must carry enough emergency fare cash in case of TransLink card malfunction.
- b. **Policy for Acceptance of Checks to Purchase Tickets.** The District will no longer be accepting checks for transit tickets effective January 1, 2007. Cash, money order and major credit cards will be the only form of payment permitted.
- c. **Fare Policies Regarding MCTD Services Not Operated by GGT.** Transfers between Marin County shuttle routes and GGT will be accepted for travel within Marin County only.
- d. **Installation of Underfloor Bike Racks on MCI Coaches.** This program was rolled out on October 16 and included demonstrations of loading and unloading procedures by the Marin County Bicycle Coalition at several key locations. All drivers were trained how to operate the appropriate machinery from their consoles.
- e. **Advisory Committee Membership Recruitment.** The District posted flyers in October requesting applicants for its advisory committees. Recruitment will last through January, and Bus applicants will be reviewed for selection at the February BPAC meeting.
- f. **Other.** Nothing added.

7. Review of Events and Announcements

Steve Kretz' contributions to BPAC were acknowledged by Mr. Downing. Mr. Kretz' employer has promoted him and he will no longer be using GGT bus service regularly. However, he wishes to continue to receive meeting agendas to remain informed of the committee's activities.

8. Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2007. Mr. Downing asked members to contact the District if they will not be attending a meeting: rdowning@goldengate.org, (415) 257-4583, or kpaulson@goldengate.org at 257-4417.