

Agenda Item No. 1b
For: April 10, 2008

BUS PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)

Agenda for Wednesday, March 19, 2008



Note Change of Location

Convene at 6:00 p.m. – Adjourn by 7:30 p.m.

**Art Room – Pickleweed Park Community Center
50 Canal St., San Rafael, CA 94901**

*This will be an abbreviated business meeting to allow
BPAC members to attend the Toll Increase Open House
scheduled from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose
Room at the Pickleweed Park Community Center.*

(Bus routes & directions from District offices on Page 2.)

Co-Chairpersons: Ted McLean and Hobart Bartshire

Marin County: Hobart Bartshire, Marcus Ferrone, Michael Ham, Stanton Klose, Dan Knight, Edwin “Ted” McLean, Jo Trotter, Michael Wall, Don Wilhelm

Sonoma County: Win Archibald, Michelle Donnelly, Matt Rogina, Jr., Christina Rivera

San Francisco and East Bay: Jim Stone

1. Roll Call (5 minutes)
2. Bus Stopper¹ (5 minutes)
3. Outstanding Business (10 minutes)
 - a. Cell Phone Usage on Buses – Update on messaging that requests riders to limit usage
 - b. Other
4. New Business (10 minutes)
 - a. GGT Passenger Survey of Bus and Ferry Riders and Non-Riders
 - b. Other
5. Review of Events and Announcements
6. Public Comment (2 minutes per speaker)
7. Adjourn to Toll Increase Open House in Multi-Purpose Room

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 21, 2008

¹ Members to submit observed problem in bus operations, preferably in writing, and provide a verbal summary in less than 2 minutes

BUS PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)



Meeting Summary of Wednesday, January 23, 2008

Committee Members Present:

Marin County Hobart Bartshire, Marcus Ferrone, Stanton Klose, Dan Knight, Ted McLean, Jo Trotter, Michael Wall, Don Wilhelm
San Francisco/East Bay Jim Stone
Sonoma County Christina Andrade, Winifred Archibald, Michelle Donnelly

District Staff Present: Ron Downing, Principal Planner; Helen Haas, Customer Relations Supervisor

1. **Roll Call:** Ron Downing opened the meeting at 6:10 p.m., noting that a quorum of BPAC members was present. He then clarified the meeting schedule for the upcoming months because the committee has digressed from its previously planned calendar of meetings. Committee members were unclear about the scheduling of the January meeting, since it occurred on the fourth Wednesday while the committee had agreed to meet on the third Wednesday of every other month. Mr. Downing indicated that he expected to be out of town on business the third week of January and this meeting was held on the fourth Wednesday so GGT staff could be available to conduct the meeting. The regular meeting calendar for the balance of 2008 was clarified as follows:

- Wednesday March 19, 2008
- Wednesday May 21, 2008
- No meeting in July
- Wednesday September 17, 2008
- Wednesday November 19, 2008
- No meeting in December

Mr. Downing reminded the committee that they could convene special meetings outside the regular calendar if there was a need to discuss items that BPAC wanted to take a position on, such as fare increases or service changes. BPAC members agreed that the calendar looked good, but the one item they wanted to find out more about was the proposed toll increase. Mr. Downing responded that there were open houses planned for the community to find out about the proposal and BPAC members were welcome to attend. Ted McLean and Don Wilhelm noted that BPAC may want to draft a letter of support for the toll increase, given that toll funds enable transit service to continue. (*NOTE: It was subsequently decided to combine the March 19 BPAC meeting with the Toll Increase Open House in San Rafael on the same date.*)

2. **Bus Stopper:** No bus stopper items were submitted in advance by BPAC members.

3. **Marin County Transit District/Marin Transit:** Mr. Downing reported that Marin Transit will be changing its Twin Cities Shuttle (Route 221), effective March 10. The route will be modified to serve Marin General Hospital, the Bon Air Shopping Center, and, on selected peak trips, the Larkspur Ferry Terminal. Seasonal trips will be added to the West Marin Stage South Route that will operate only between March and December.

4. **Outstanding Business:**

- a. **S.F. Federal Building Employees' Request for Service:** At the November meeting, 10 employees at the San Francisco Federal Building requested that GGT consider their request for direct service to their new office location, and offered two proposed realignments to morning inbound Financial District service. BPAC moved that GGT staff provide a response to this request after looking at the two proposals. GGT staff subsequently analyzed the Federal Building employees' proposals and identified that it would cost between \$200,000 and \$400,000 per year to implement. Federal Building employees also asked for consideration of direct commute service from Marin locations to the San Francisco Civic Center. GGT staff concluded that, given the modest ridership potential and very high cost of providing direct SF Civic Center commute service, a more reasonable alternative would be to (1) extend Route 93 service to Mission and 7th Street to allow a drop-off adjacent to the new Federal Building and (2) consider expanding Route 93 service when resources permit. Ron also distributed copies of a letter from Susan Chiaroni, Bus Division Deputy General Manager, outlining the GGT staff response to the SF Federal Building employee proposals. BPAC members were satisfied that the request had been looked at and responded to.
- b. **Cell Phone Usage on Buses:** BPAC members were concerned about the distraction of loud and lengthy cell phone usage and had asked that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion. Helen Haas noted that GGT does have a cell phone policy and showed BPAC members where it was in the Transit Guide. Mr. Downing also circulated copies of advertisements from other transit agencies regarding their cell phone usage policies and previous GGT posters featuring "Miss Etty Ket" that admonished riders to limit cell phone use. BPAC members indicated that they didn't want to prohibit cell phone use; instead, they wanted something that fellow riders could point to if another passenger was being inconsiderate with his/her cell phone. They were concerned that if the offending passenger questioned why they should limit their call, the only reference on board the bus could be found in the Transit Guide. Mr. Downing showed a proposed mock-up by the Marketing Department of a graphic encouraging passengers to "Keep it down or keep it off". BPAC members generally liked the theme and suggested that it be preceded by a tag line "Be Courteous to your fellow riders..." Further discussion ensued that the tag line could be applied to other examples of courteous behavior, such as not eating food, or keeping packages or luggage off seats so other passengers could use them. Staff asked if BPAC wanted to see a further refinement of this messaging along with the graphics, but BPAC concluded that they were fine with staff taking the initiative in getting this done sooner rather than later. Mr. Downing and Ms. Haas indicated they would work with the Marketing Department to get posters, signs or stickers created, whichever is most appropriate.
- c. **GGT Buses Serving Shared Muni stops in San Francisco:** Mr. Downing reported that, following discussion with Bus Operations staff, bus operators will be reminded that they must look for prospective passengers at shared stops in San Francisco and make sure that no one wants the bus before proceeding. Passengers will be reminded to signal the bus. Members believed the combination of these two behaviors would reduce the problem of passups.
- d. **Timely Information at "511" for service delays due to special events, accidents etc.:** Ms. Haas reported that she is working with "511" to improve this information and noted that the service disruptions related to the winter storm on January 4, 2008, were updated very well on the "511" website. She indicated that there is still room for improvement, but things are much better than they were.

- e. **Muir Woods Service (Route 66):** Mr. Downing reported that ridership on this service during 2007 surpassed all expectations, with over 33,000 passenger trips carried. This was more than double the approximately 14,500 passenger trips recorded during the Summer of 2006. Despite the success of this service during 2007, this is the last year of the demonstration project, and funding for continuing this service beyond 2008 is questionable at this time.
5. **New Business:**
 - a. **TransLink Update:** TransLink continues to attract new users, and Ms. Hass noted that passenger complaints about being overcharged have leveled off due to better education about tagging on and tagging off. The next agencies to launch TransLink will be Muni, CalTrain and BART.
 - b. **GGT Passenger Survey of Bus and Ferry Riders and Non-Riders:** Mr. Downing reported that funds have been allocated to conduct the first comprehensive survey since the 1980s of passengers' and non-riders' attitudes and perceptions about GGT and GGF service. A Request for Proposals has been issued, and staff is awaiting responses from qualified market research firms. The work will include an on-board survey of regional bus and ferry passengers, a telephone survey of non-users, and an option for focus groups. Marin Transit is also interested in participating in the survey to update their passenger information, and this will be another option in the proposals. A contract is expected to be awarded in early April, and work would begin immediately thereafter. Staff hopes the rider survey data collection will be completed before the end of the school year as ridership patterns change during the summer vacation season.
 - c. **Ferry Passenger Survey (October 2007):** A smaller-scale survey was conducted by GGT staff in October in an attempt to determine whether the increase in ferry ridership has a correlation with a decrease in bus ridership. The survey found that most of the increase in ferry ridership is associated with trips being made by riders new to the system or by current riders making more trips. The survey also found that more Larkspur Ferry riders are coming from northern Marin (Terra Linda to Novato).
 6. **Review of Events and Announcements:** There were no other announcements other than Mr. Downing's recap of the BPAC meeting schedule for the remainder of 2008 (described above in Item #1).
 7. **Adjourn:** Ted McLean suggested that the meeting adjourn, and his motion was seconded by Hobart Bartshire. Other committee members unanimously agreed, and the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.