

## STAFF REPORT

**SUBJECT:** COMMITTEE REPORTS

**MEETING DATE:** May 15, 2010

**AGENDA ITEM:** 15

**STAFF CONTACT:** Michael Powers

### RECOMMENDATION:

Receive report of LOSSAN Policy Board Meeting of April 28, 2010

### DISCUSSION:

Staff attended the recent LOSSAN Board meeting in Oceanside on April 28. Below is a summary of important issues:

- Need for legal services was discussed due to a Public Records Act request by LA Times reporter. SANDAG counsel did not want to give advice on this matter as they had not been authorized to assist LOSSAN by the SANDAG Board. So this raised issue of legal representation for LOSSAN. The SANDAG rep, Joe Kellejian will discuss with Gary Gallagos, SANDAG Executive Director and the SANDAG board.
- The Treasurer function needs to be separated from SANDAG and LOSSAN is soliciting a volunteer agency to perform this function.
- State Budget update by Bill Bronte, Division of Rail  
It is not getting better but due to tax swap approved in the 09/10 budget bill, the Division of Rail budget is not getting any worse. Prop 1A application to California Transportation Commission will emphasize Positive Train Control (PTC), \$200 mil to Metrolink, \$60 – 90 mil for Coaster, divided by train miles. BN&SF in northern Ca. is in good shape on PTC so only \$10 mil. is needed there. [It is unfortunate that this money will not be used for needed capacity improvements as it was originally intended]  
Federal Rail Administration has issued a Notice of Funds Availability, \$50 million in FFY (federal fiscal year) 2010. However, for states to compete for federal money, projects need to be in approved state rail plan that meets federal guidance, in National Rail Plan due to be finalized in September. A State plan has to be integrated across users and modes. Therefore, State of California will update the State Rail Plan so it can address this requirement.

#### Member Agencies

Buellton ■ Carpinteria ■ Goleta ■ Guadalupe ■ Lompoc ■ Santa Barbara ■ Santa Maria ■ Solvang ■ Santa Barbara County

There is an FRA call for projects for the FFY 2009 appropriation of \$65 million in remaining ARRA (Track 4) funds and is due 5/19. The state's application will likely use the prior projects from the "Oct. 2 Massacre" [When Governor decided that the application for federal funds would be for High Speed, vs. Intercity, rail projects]. Project level NEPA documents are required, so no projects in the LOSSAN North corridor are eligible. The same procedure will be used for FFY 2010.

Bill expressed concern about an impending federal policy change impacting rail corridor operating costs. Intercity rail corridors under 750 miles would become a state responsibility. If this is approved it could add \$10 million/year operating costs to state budget and could impede implementation of new services. In addition, changes to cost allocation system and historic "bad accounting" by Amtrak could add costs to state. Western states are in general opposition to this change. Division of Rail expressed concerns about the impact of these cost increases on state subsidized rail operations.

Bill discussed the "Next Generation Equipment Committee" that is working on "National Standards and Specification for Rail Corridor Equipment." There is too much state to state variation in rail equipment and there is a need to encourage domestic rail car production. The California rail car model might be accepted as national standard if issues of level boarding and crash worthiness can be resolved.

Linda Culp indicated the New Amtrak Board appointment is moving very slowly. Senator Feinstein submitted one name but will not divulge who it is and Senate staff recommended talking to House rep which is most curious. LOSSAN supports the appointment of a representative from California to the board.

Question about UP and other rail involvement. Bill Bronte stated BN&SF have been very cooperative in identifying rail capacity projects for federal funding but UP has been slow to engage on FRA funding programs. Now however UP is realizing it may have missed out on capacity improvements. so they may be undergoing a significant change in attitude. Bill added that capacity and minutes of delay are the real performance issues.

LOSSAN North: Bill provided a status report on the Caltrans and Amtrak evaluation of schedule and service changes and described options they are evaluating.

- ❖ MON through FRI – single RT trip LA to SBA w/commuter like schedule
- ❖ Existing service on trains 799-798-792 with no changes
- ❖ MON through THU – multiple trips LA to SBA w/commuter like schedule
- ❖ FRI-SAT\_SUN – single RT LA to SLO
- ❖ Same as #1 with train extending to SFO – with NO capital improvements
- ❖ The 2008 Coast Daylight schedule LA to SFO – with capital improvements (This has NOT been discussed with Caltrain for agreements or assumptions and does not include SBA commuter like schedules.)

LOSSAN Board members expressed concerns about re-scheduling the northbound early morning train to an earlier NB start time. Fred Strong, SLO rep. raised concerns about impacts on SLO service, Art Brown (OCTA) stated early LAUS departure will lower intercity rail ridership for the corridor, Jackie Bacharach expressed concern about disrupting Metrolink inbound (Ventura to LA) trains. SBCAG staff replied what our

interests were, more information, need for additional alternative for commuters from Ventura County to Santa Barbara/Goleta, more options to address congestion, etc.

The next policy board meeting will take place on May 26<sup>th</sup> in Los Angeles.