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**Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Council  
(SBCTAC)**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, October 9, 2007**

Buellton City Council Chambers  
140 West Highway 246  
Buellton, CA

**SBCTAC Members Present**

Jim Talbott (Chair)  
Barry Stotts  
Ed Zoost  
Richard Fernbaugh  
Howard Kraus  
Bea Merwin  
Julie Kahn  
Austin O'Dell  
Vibiana Saavedra  
Tully Clifford  
Petra Löwen (Vice-Chair)  
Julie Guzman  
David Damiano  
Polly Bleavins  
Matt Dobberteen

SMOOTH  
Community Access Network  
SMAT/RAC  
COLT Transit Agency - Lompoc  
R&D Transportation  
Community Partners in Caring  
Transit User – South County  
SMAT  
Farmworker Population Representative  
Santa Ynez Valley Transit  
Independent Living Resource Center  
Transit User – South Coast  
SBMTD – South Coast  
Children & Families Commission  
County Transit

**Others Present**

Michael Seden-Hansen  
Pat Mickelson  
Dan Rodriguez  
Kathryn Cook  
Ashley Payne

Breeze Bus  
CalTrans  
Easy Lift  
VTC Enterprises  
Community Partners

**SBCAG Staff**

Michael Powers  
Gregg Hart

**Member Agencies**

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Talbott called the meeting to order and initiated a round of introductions.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Talbott asked for public comment and Barry Stotts stated Victor Suhr had called and told him he would not be at the meeting today..

**3. MINUTES**

Following a motion by Barry Stotts, seconded by Bea Merwin, the minutes of September 11, 2007 were approved with the following changes: record Howard Kraus as absent, correct spelling of SMAT on page. 5, and indicate the prior Minutes were dated August 14, not the 10<sup>th</sup>. The vote was all in favor except Polly Bleavins who abstained.

**4. CONSOLIDATED PUBLIC TRANSIT HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Michael Powers presented the staff report.

Ashley Payne asked if the new changes to the process will affect current funding grants. Michael Powers answered no; the changes are for future grant cycles.

Jim Talbott stated that last year the state was unclear about how much money would be available to the region and inquired if this year the regional allocation would be known sooner. Michael Powers answered the issue has still not been resolved in Sacramento.

Vibiana Saavedra referenced page 4.1 and noted improvements in CTSA services are contingent on resources. She inquired how services can improve without new funding. Michael Powers responded CTSA's have expressed concern about their ability to coordinate social service agency transportation services without additional funding. Progress will be limited by resources because federal funding is limited and social service agencies are also resource constrained.

Jim Talbott added that over the past 5-6 years CTSAs have become very concentrated on providing direct transportation services to individuals. Without a new revenue source CTSAs will have a hard time expanding efforts to consolidate social service agency transportation services.

Ashley Payne mentioned that New Freedom funds went unspent last year. Jim Talbott indicated it in North County it wouldn't necessarily require a large funding increase because the money could be spent smartly. Polly Bleavins asked if money unspent last year rolled over to this year. Michael Powers answered yes.

Vibiana Saavedra asked how SBCTAC will measure progress next year when we consider changes to the program. Michael Powers answered there are performance requirements for funding recipients. As for the progress CTSAs will have made in expanding coordination of social service agency transportation services, SBCAG could survey to measure progress. This funding is not a mandate to perform but rather a carrot to encourage progress.

Vibiana Saavedra stated the report is very good, but I'm still not clear on how we measure success. Jim Talbott suggested the committee recall this conversation when we review application for funding. We can require performance measures from funding recipients but we have to be careful trying to measure outputs because many of the services provided are qualitative rather than quantified. Vibiana Saavedra suggested another way to measure progress would be to keep track of customer narratives whether positive or negative. Bea Merwin stated that not every customer contact is positive; she explained she had recently heard from a senior bus rider in Lompoc that the bus stop she uses was moved five blocks and it is hard for her to get to the bus now.

Ashley Payne asked if there was going to be a local reporting requirement in this year's grant cycle. Do we expect local funding recipients to file a separate report to SBCTAC? Michael Powers explained we probably want to limit applicants reporting requirements because we have to be sensitive to increasing the administrative burden applicants already struggle over. Ashley Payne stated reports are currently filed quarterly. The reports require counting the number of trips provided and the environmental benefits generated by the service. She stated that local applicants should be required to participate in some kind of forum to discuss transportation coordination. Barry Stotts cautioned that staff turnover in the social service agencies created problems for efforts to track program outcomes. Jim Talbott suggested SBCTAC's application scoring subcommittee could also work with funding recipients to mentor them and monitor their efforts. Barry Stotts added that a survey instrument should be very simple to fill out, perhaps a 3x5 mail able card.

Vibiana Saavedra made a motion to release the report for public review and comment. Bea Merwin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **5. UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS**

Michael Powers presented the staff report.

Barry Stotts asked if anyone had a list of contractors or publications for VAFB. Bea Merwin said the base has a newsletter. Polly Bleavins added there is also a base newspaper. Bea Merwin suggested the Lompoc Chamber works closely with VAFB personnel and the Chamber's Executive Director, Denny Anderson would have a good list of contacts. Polly Bleavins also mentioned the 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant's Association would be another group to contact and the base has fairly regular newcomers meetings for new base personnel and their families. Michael Seden-Hansen said the Breeze marketing effort has included VAFB so they have a contact list as well.

Austin asked for clarification about the local workshops. Michael replied that the cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria and the County agreed to hold noticed workshops in the fall to identify unmet transit needs and report to SBCTAC on their findings. Michael recommended that these notices be widely distributed.

Jim Talbott inquired whether COAST would continue the surveying work they've done in the past; he also asked if other community groups were planning to do other outreach.

Polly Bleavins suggested the First Five Commission's Welcome Baby Program is meeting with every new parent in the county and they have been very receptive to distributing information to parents about community resources.

Vibiana Saavedra suggested involving high school students through the Key Club and Future Leaders of America in distributing surveys.

David Damiano suggested Univision had been very helpful in airing PSAs for MTD. KPMR is the Univision affiliate in North County should be approached to help with this issue.

Kathy Cook asked if SBCAG had an e-mail network. Michael Powers answered yes.

Ashley Payne stated there will be a non-profit support center roundtable on transportation in November that could be used for outreach.

Barry Stotts suggested airing PSAs on the north county government channels and doing outreach to the college campuses.

Polly Bleavins added that VAFB has a government access channel too.

## **6. MEASURE D RENEWAL**

Gregg Hart presented the staff report. He stated that the SBCTAC letter had been submitted to both advisory committees. Austin asked if the interregional transit projects would be subject to a competitive application process and Gregg replied affirmatively.

Gregg stated that local public works officials in the south coast and SBCAG have met with SBMTD to discuss MTD operating and capital needs and funding.

Barry asked if the SBCTAC letter had an impact and Gregg replied affirmatively.

Vibiana stated that the City of Santa Maria had committed 25% of local funding to transit, bike, pedestrian projects.

Matt Doberteen asked SBCTAC of needs in the Fifth Supervisorial District given its rural nature. SBCTAC members offered increased or new services to Cuyama, Garey/Sisquoc, Los Alamos. Matt also asked if the Valley Express was an eligible south coast transit project and Gregg replied affirmatively.

Julie Kahn asked about funding for rail. Gregg replied that \$15 million for a pilot program had been identified as a means to fund Amtrak service in the commute period of the day.

## **7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES**

Gregg Hart presented the staff report. He also talked about the upcoming workshops. Michael added that SBCTAC would be able to review the report at the November meeting.

## **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ashley announced the Transit Workshop by the Non Profit Support Center on November 15 in Santa Maria.

Bea announced the Non Profit collaboration forum on November 18 in Lompoc.

David stated that MTD released a nationwide RFQ for the downtown Transit Village which is near the existing Center.

Austin reported that the Santa Maria City Council had approved property acquisition for the SMAT Transit Center and that an RFP for design had been distributed. He added that the Breeze marketing program had received an award.

Julie Guzman recommended that SBMTD establish an emergency after-hours number so bus riders can check on the status of late buses.

Matt stated that on October 23 the County Board would consider approving an application for a state grant that would be used to purchase vans for farmworker transportation.

Michael Powers distributed an announcement of workshops on the Regional Transportation Plan update.

**9. ADJOURN**

There being no other business, Jim Talbot announced that SBCTAC was adjourned until the next scheduled meeting on November 13, 2007