

MINUTES
SOCAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
AT 2:00 P.M. ON APRIL 25, 2022

Present: Michael Coats, Del Norte Dept. of Health & Human Services
Jennifer Finigan, Redwood Coast Regional Center
Fernando Hernandez, First Transit
Dan Herron, Redwood Coast Transit
Melissa Miguelena, Yurok Tribe
Thomas Pogue, Center for Business & Policy Research
Joe Rye, Redwood Coast Transit

Absent: Charlene Mazzei, Del Norte Senior Center
Lisa McKeown, Mission Possible

Also Present: Tamera Leighton, DNLTC
Mike Young, Del Norte Health Care District

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Tamera Leighton called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by the Council.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Public comments are welcome and encouraged; however, no proposed action can be taken on any item not appearing on the agenda. Public Comments are limited to three minutes.

The following person(s) addressed the Committee: None

4. REDWOOD COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY UPDATE

Joe Rye talked about the effects of the pandemic citing a 50 percent loss in ridership and that ridership has been slow to recover. Incentives have been offered, such as free fares and installing barriers on the buses. The incentives have not worked to increase ridership. Service has been reduced by 33 percent since the onset of the pandemic. Air purification systems have been installed in all the buses as well as transit buildings. Restoring service has been a challenge, demand hasn't returned and recruiting drivers has been difficult. RCT is currently updating its short-range plan and working on the new transit hub plan. Joe presented an idea about forming an ad hoc transit advisory committee that would meet quarterly to share information to better meet the needs of the community and work on community marketing. Potential members are Jennifer Finigan and a member from the Department of Health and Human Services. Tamera will share the SSTAC list with Joe to invite committee members to participate in the new ad hoc committee. The initial meeting will be in early July.

5. ROUNDTABLE STATUS REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS, INCLUDING A REVIEW OF YOUR SITUATION, SERVICE GAPS, AND NEW PROJECTS.

Melissa Miguelena reported the Tribe is having the same issues recruiting drivers. Michael Coats stated the bus tickets provided to DHHS are a good tool for the agency. Jennifer Finigan reported on yearly bus pass purchases and those clients are starting to use those passes. She also stated that pre-planning Dial a Ride services are challenging. Fernando Hernandez also reported that First Transit is also having difficulty hiring drivers even with a wage increase and a \$2,000 sign-on bonus. The SSTAC members discussed student ridership.

6. REVIEW UNMET NEEDS

Suggested Action: Identify and prioritize unmet needs. Report to DNLTC.

Tamera Leighton explained that the Social Services Transportation Committee (SSTAC) reviews the annual list of unmet needs, discusses additional unmet needs, and prioritizes the list which will then be presented to the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission for the adoption of a resolution certifying Unmet Transit Needs.

Mike Young, Board Member Del Norte Health Care District, addressed the SSTAC regarding the District's interest in supporting health care needs in the community, specifically specialized healthcare appointments in other locations. Community members often need rides to appointments in Eureka or Medford and the District would like to partner with transit in some way to find a solution to getting folks to their out-of-town specialized appointments. The SSTAC discussed potential solutions and ideas. Joe Rye added that Redwood Coast Transit is the designated Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) and has funding available to partner with the District for a solution. Joe Rye and Mike Young will work together on this project.

Tamera Leighton presented an overview of the previous list of unmet needs for discussion. Currently, there is no additional funding to address Unmet Needs and all of the Transportation Development Act transit funding is used for transit purposes.

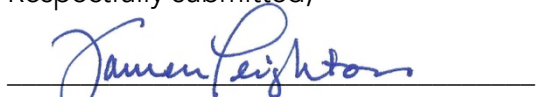
The SSTAC members discussed the previous unmet needs and how many have been met by the community or are no longer a priority. The committee discussed additional needs and approved by consensus the following priorities:

One: Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Two: Comfortable and secure seating for waiting transit riders.

7. ADJOURN: Tamera Leighton adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Tamera Leighton, Executive Director
Del Norte Local Transportation Commission