



SOCIAL SERVICE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES

DATE

Tuesday, November 16, 2023

The regular meeting of the Social Service Transportation Advisory Council was held Tuesday, November 16, 2023, and was called to order by Chair Frank Simonis, at 12:04 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Frank Simonis, Chair, Potential Transit User Who Is Disabled – appeared via Zoom for Just Cause under AB 2449
Bertha Vega, Local Social Service Provider for Persons of Limited Means
Michelle Hernandez, Local Social Service Provider for Seniors
Olga Olivia Saucedo-Garcia, Local Social Service Provider for Seniors
Franklina Bogan, Potential Transit User Who is 60 Years of Age or Older
Lynda Schafhauser, Potential Transit User Who is 60 Years of Age or Older
Rosalind Esqueda, Social Service Transportation Provider for Seniors
Amber Parkinson (substitute for Monty Cox), Social Service Transportation Provider for Seniors
Vincent Parker, Social Service Transportation Provider for Persons with Disabilities – appeared via Zoom

MEMBERS ABSENT

Alycia Falley, Vice Chair, Local Social Service Provider for Persons with Disabilities

MCTC STAFF PRESENT:

Natalia Austin, Senior Regional Planner
Evelyn Espinosa, Senior Regional Planner
Jeff Findley, Principal Regional Planner

VISITORS PRESENT:

Nicholas Isla, Caltrans
Keyomi Jones, Caltrans
Lorena Mendibles, Caltrans

1. Roll Call

At 12:04 pm, Chair Frank Simonis called the meeting to order and instructed that the roll call for attendance be taken. It was determined that a quorum was present.

2. Public Comment

Franklina Bogan had a question regarding fees for volunteers who ride the bus. Rosalind Esqueda answered her question with information about city and county fares. Frank Simonis advised that if the SSTAC members have concerns then they can bring them to council, but the SSTAC is not an enforcing committee, but instead are advisors.

3. Introduce new SSTAC members

All members introduced themselves, as well as Caltrans staff who were in attendance.

4. Approve Minutes of the May 1, 2023, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

Chair Frank Simonis moved to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2023, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Meeting.
Seconded by Olga Saucedo

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Frank Simonis, Rosalind Esqueda, Amber Parkinson, Bertha Vega, Michelle Hernandez, Olga Saucedo

Noes: None

Abstain: Vincent Parker, Franklina Bogan, Lynda Schafhauser

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Local Transit Agency Updates

Amber Parkinson updated the group regarding new electric charging stations for new electric buses. Frank Simonis inquired if the bus vendor also has maintenance or repair capabilities. Amber Parkinson nor Rosalind Esqueda was aware if the vendor had those capabilities. Lorena Mendibles, Caltrans, commented that Tulare was in a similar situation looking for vendors with maintenance capabilities for electric buses. Amber Parkinson shared that County staff are getting prepared to repair locally. Madera Metro is planning to roll out the new route to the Amtrak Station in the first or second week of December.

6. Overview of SSTAC and Unmet Transit Needs Process

Natalia Austin, MCTC, gave a presentation overview of the role of the SSTAC and the Unmet Transit Needs process. The MCTC Policy Board Adopted Unmet Transit Need and Reasonable to Meet Definitions were explained.

7. UTN Comment Analysis (July 1-Nov 2)

Two public comments that were received during July 1, 2023 – November 2 via the online survey were considered. One was regarding transit services to St. Agnes Community Hospital in Fresno by Madera Metro Dial-a-ride. It was determined by the SSTAC members that there is a need for residents of Madera County to access healthcare in Fresno since there are no hospitals in Madera. Further analysis will be made at a future meeting to make a final determination if this is an unmet transit need and if it is reasonable to meet. The other comment was regarding the ability of users to save the Madera Metro transit schedules. It was determined that there are many ways for Madera Metro transit users to access and save the schedules, so this comment did not rise to the level of an unmet transit need. Further discussion was made regarding the opportunities for residents to submit questions and get information regarding unmet transit needs. MCTC outreach events and MCTC Policy Board meetings were mentioned as options. It was also recommended to reach out to the Board of Supervisor's Town Hall meetings, adding information to utility bills, libraries, and senior centers to get the word out.

8. Announcements

Announcements were made regarding the upcoming storm and resources for assistance. There were also announcements regarding various community events, such as the Pan-Am Senior Dinner, Rotary Club Senior Thanksgiving Center. Chair Frank Simonis shared dial-a-ride information and Natalia Austin, MCTC, shared information about the SB 125 Transit Program.

9. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned by Chair Frank Simonis at 1:19 pm