

# MINUTES\*

MAC MEETING OF October 20, 2021



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The METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) met on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. The meeting was held via teleconference. \*Minutes are “summary” minutes, not verbatim minutes.

**1. CALL TO ORDER** at 6:00 PM.

**2. ROLL CALL** - The following MAC Members were present via teleconference, representing a quorum:

James Von Hendy, Chair	Veronica Elsea
Joseph Martinez, Vice Chair	Michael Pisano
James Cruse <b>Absent</b>	Becky Taylor
Jessica de Wit	

Additional METRO staff and presenters:

Alex Clifford, CEO/General Manager	Curtis Moses, Safety, Security, & Risk Management Director
Margo Ross, Chief Operations Officer	Brandon Freeman, Bus Operator
Isaac Holly, IT and ITS Director	Donna Bauer, Administrative Specialist
John Urgo, Planning & Development Director	

**3. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Chair Von Hendy referred to the letters attached to the agenda and appreciated that METRO staff had addressed them.

**4. RECEIVE AND FILE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 18, 2021**

**MOTION: ACCEPT AND FILE THE MINUTES FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF AUGUST 18, 2021 AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION: ELSEA**

**SECOND: TAYLOR**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 6 AYES: Von Hendy, Martinez, de Wit, Elsea, Pisano, and Taylor. Cruse was absent.**

**5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC)**

Discussion unfolded on when the Chair would give the next MAC report to the Board of Directors (BOD). Due to scheduling constraints, an update will be given at the January 28, 2022 BOD meeting.

**6. COVID-19 UPDATE**

Alex Clifford, CEO/General Manager, reported on the following:

- No METRO employee has tested positive for COVID-19 since September 10, 2021.
- METRO continues to offer on-site testing for those employees unvaccinated.
- METRO is working on a mandatory vaccine policy.
- METRO continues to follow all of the COVID-19 protocols from the CDC, OSHA, Cal-OSHA, FTA and the County Health Department to keep the workplace safe.
- CDC moved Santa Cruz County to the yellow or moderate level.

Vice Chair Martinez praised METRO for honoring Jaime Garcia-Perez at his memorial service by decorating a ParaCruz van that he drove for many years.

Mr. Pisano thanked METRO for keeping the Bus Operators and passengers safe during COVID. Discussion ensued around Bus Operators getting flu shots. CEO Clifford said that METRO does not make that mandatory but does offer a flu clinic every fall.

Ms. Elsea asked for an update on the number of people who can ride on the Hwy. 17 buses. CEO Clifford responded that Santa Clara County Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) has eliminated the capacity constraints on the Hwy. 17 buses.

Ms. Elsea mentioned that it is difficult to hear the announcements with a mask on and requested that Bus Operators in Lane 1 at the METRO Center be more alert to blind people walking in that area. Margo Ross, Chief Operations Officer, said that METRO can be more vigilant.

Ms. Elsea requested an update on the Operator shortage. CEO Clifford responded that METRO is actively recruiting Bus Operators. Human Resources and Marketing are attending local events and advertising on radio and television to promote the \$4,000 hiring bonus. Ms. Taylor inquired if METRO has considered raising the pay for Bus Operators. CEO Clifford replied that METRO Bus Operators rank about 10<sup>th</sup> among the highest paid Operators in the nation.

## **7. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS (ITS) UPDATE**

Isaac Holly, IT and ITS Director, said METRO has issued a notice of termination of contract to GMV Syncromatics. METRO is working on awarding the contract to the next vendor.

Ms. Elsea thanked Director Holly for his commitment to this project and offered assistance in the form of letter writing to the Board of Directors if needed. Mr. Pisano and Ms. Elsea reminded Director Holly they would be available for beta testing with the new vendor.

## **8. SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE**

### **a. Quarterly Ridership Report**

John Urgo, Planning and Development Director, said the quarterly ridership report will be going to the Board of Directors in November. UCSC September routes are at 90% of pre-COVID ridership. The new Route 18 has the highest ridership by trip. Local ridership numbers are at 65% of pre-COVID and Hwy. 17 is at 33% pre-COVID, but both are increasing.

### **b. Bus Stops**

#### **b.i. Bus Stop Sign Improvement**

Director Urgo reported that the new bus stop poles and signs have been replaced at all 800 bus stops. Discussion followed regarding adding Stop ID in Braille to the signs. It was determined that further discussion was needed at the next MAC meeting.

#### **b.ii. Maintenance of Simme-Seats at Bus Stops**

Director Urgo said Facilities has two spare Simme-Seats. If one is not in good condition, please report it so it can be replaced.

### **c. Other Projects**

#### **c.i. ParaCruz and On-Demand Microtransit Trips**

Director Urgo is bringing a report to the BOD on Friday, October 22, 2021 regarding METRO's on-demand microtransit service. METRO is about six months into this project. We are averaging seven trips per day which is low. About two-thirds of the ridership is existing paratransit customers, telling us that ParaCruz riders appreciate the ability to book trips on the same day. Discussion followed on the rules and radius of same day bookings.

Chair Von Hendy asked if METRO is advertising the service available on Hwy. 17 now that the VTA constraints have been lifted. Director Urgo said not any more than pre-COVID. He added that METRO is evaluating the Hwy. 17 route and will look at providing trips to San Jose State University for the winter schedule.

Ms. Elsea asked for an update on the Pacific Station North Redevelopment Project. After a brief discussion on grant funding, it was decided to add this topic to the next MAC agenda to explore further.

**9. ESTABLISH AND APPROVE THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE**

**MOTION: APPROVE THE 2022 MAC MEETING DATES OF FEBRUARY 16, APRIL 20, AUGUST 17, AND OCTOBER 19.**

**MOTION: PISANO**

**SECOND: ELSEA**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 6 AYES: Von Hendy, Martinez, de Wit, Elsea, Pisano, and Taylor. Cruse was absent.**

**10. ELECT THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2022 TERM**

**MOTION: ELECT CHAIR VON HENDY FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM (JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2022)**

**MOTION: ELSEA**

**SECOND: DE WIT**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 6 AYES: Von Hendy, Martinez, de Wit, Elsea, Pisano, and Taylor. Cruse was absent.**

**MOTION: ELECT VICE CHAIR MARTINEZ FOR A ONE YEAR TERM (JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2022)**

**MOTION: DE WIT**

**SECOND: ELSEA**

**MOTION PASSED WITH 6 AYES: Von Hendy, Martinez, de Wit, Elsea, Pisano, and Taylor. Cruse was absent.**

**11. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO CEO**

None.

**12. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

None.

**13. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

- Update on Braille signage to identify the Bus Stop ID
- Update on Pacific Station North Redevelopment Project
- MAC taking a position on climate change
- Discuss bus stop at Enterprise Technology Center

**14. DISTRIBUTION OF VOUCHERS**

Donna Bauer, Administrative Specialist, will mail out the vouchers on Thursday, October 21, 2021 to all members in attendance at this meeting.

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 6:00 PM. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer  
Administrative Specialist