



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES*
JUNE 27, 2025 – 9:00 AM**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) convened on Friday, June 27, 2025, as a hybrid meeting.

The Board Meeting agenda packet can be found online at www.SCMTD.com. *Minutes are “summary” minutes, not verbatim minutes. Audio recordings of Board meeting open sessions are available to the public upon request.

This document was created with accessibility in mind. With the exception of certain third party and other attachments, it passes the Adobe Acrobat XI Accessibility Full Check. If you have any questions about the accessibility of this document, please email your inquiry to accessibility@scmtd.com.

1 CALLED TO ORDER at 9:00 AM by Board Chair Downing.

2 SAFETY DEBRIEF

Gregory Strecker, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director, provided a debriefing on safety, emphasizing the evacuation routes in response to an emergency.

3 ROLL CALL

The following Directors were **present**, representing a quorum:

Director Rebecca Downing	County of Santa Cruz
Director Jimmy Dutra	City of Watsonville
Director Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson	City of Santa Cruz
Director Manu Koenig	County of Santa Cruz
Director Fabian Leonor	County of Santa Cruz
Director Donna Lind	City of Scotts Valley
Director Martinez	County of Santa Cruz
Director Scott Newsome	City of Santa Cruz
Director Melinda Orbach	City of Capitola
Director Quiroz-Carter* AR 9:26 AM	City of Watsonville
Vacant	County of Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt	Cabrillo College
Ex-Officio Director Edward Reiskin	UC Santa Cruz

*Attended via teleconference at 231 Oakes Road, Santa Cruz, CA

Corey Aldridge	CEO/General Manager
Julie Sherman	General Counsel

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 Today’s meeting was broadcast by Community Television of Santa Cruz County.

4.2 Maria Avila of Language Line Services provided Spanish interpretation services.

5 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Board Chair Downing invited Board Members and staff to march in the Aptos 4th of July Parade. In addition to promoting METRO with one of its ParaCruz vehicles, she will promote a Week Without Driving with the County that is happening later this year. Please contact her for more details.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Downing moved to the next agenda item.

6 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brett Garrett, member of the public, spoke to RTC's study regarding the cost of the trains and suggested reviewing transportation alternatives (e.g., personal rapid transit) in addition to METRO's services.

Tim, member of the public, spoke about the increased frequency of Route 79 on Bridge Street and suggested the current frequency is too much for that area and to consider using smaller buses. He also suggested rerouting this service to another street and requested Bus Operators to slow down on this route, claiming the buses were causing damages to his property.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Downing moved to the next agenda item.

7 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

Having none, Board Chair Downing moved to the next agenda item.

8 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

Having none, Board Chair Downing moved to the next agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items appearing on the Consent Agenda are recommended actions which are considered to be routine and will be acted upon as one motion. All items removed will be considered later in the agenda. The Board Chair will allow public input prior to the approval of the Consent Agenda items.

9.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK AND ACH JOURNAL
DETAIL FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2025
Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer

9.2 ACCEPT AND FILE:
A. MINUTES OF APRIL 16, 2025 METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
B. MAY 16, 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Corey Aldridge, CEO/General Manager

9.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE YEAR-TO-DATE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AS
OF MAY 31, 2025
Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer

9.4 APPROVE: FY26 RENEWAL OF EXCESS WORKERS' COMPENSATION
INSURANCE THROUGH PUBLIC RISK INNOVATION, SOLUTIONS, AND
MANAGEMENT (PRISM)
Dawn Crummié, Chief Human Resources Officer

- 9.5 APPROVE: RECOMMENDED ACTION ON TORT CLAIMS
Gregory Strecker, Safety, Security and Risk Management Director
- 9.6 ACCEPT AND FILE: RENEWAL OF LIABILITY AND VEHICLE PHYSICAL DAMAGE INSURANCE PROGRAM COVERAGE WITH CALTIP FOR FY26
Gregory Strecker, Safety, Security and Risk Management Director
- 9.7 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE A 5-YEAR LEASE FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2880 RESEARCH PARK IN SOQUEL, CA
Rina Solorio Gomez, Assistant Operations Manager, ParaCruz
- 9.8 APPROVE: REVISED CLASS SPECIFICATIONS AND WAGE SCALES FOR POSITIONS WITHIN THE CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT
Dawn Crummié, Chief Human Resources Officer
- 9.9 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO TO EXECUTE A FIVE-YEAR EXTENSION AMENDMENT (EIGHTH AMENDMENT) TO THE CONTRACT FOR TRANSIT SERVICES WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ (UCSC)
John Urgo, Chief Planning and Innovation Officer
- 9.10 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AWARD OF CONTRACT TO MANSFIELD OIL COMPANY OF GAINESVILLE, INC. FOR BULK FUEL AND FUELING SERVICES NOT TO EXCEED \$1,175,760
Freddy Rocha, Maintenance Deputy Director
- 9.11 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AWARD OF CONTRACT TO T&J LEWIS INC. D/B/A CLASSIC GRAPHICS FOR BUS BODY REPAIR AND PAINT SERVICES NOT TO EXCEED \$1,150,000
Freddy Rocha, Maintenance Deputy Director
- 9.12 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE A 3RD CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH NEW FLYER OF AMERICA TO INCREASE THE CONTRACT TOTAL BY \$647,816.40 FOR AN EXTENDED PROPULSION SYSTEM WARRANTY FOR METRO'S FORTY-FOUR NEW FLYER BUSES
Margo Ross, Chief Operations Officer
- 9.13 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AWARD OF CONTRACTS TO KUBA, INC., LITTLEPAY, INC., AND WORLDPAY, LLC FOR CONTACTLESS CREDIT AND DEBIT CARD TRANSIT FARE PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR AN AGGREGATE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$2,100,000
Derek Toups, Planning and Innovation Deputy Director
- 9.14 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE A 4TH AMENDMENT EXTENDING THE CONTRACT FOR TWO YEARS WITH EAST BAY TIRE CO. FOR PURCHASE, DELIVERY AND SERVICING OF METRO'S REVENUE AND NON-REVENUE TIRES, INCREASING THE CONTRACT TOTAL BY \$685,100
Freddy Rocha, Maintenance Deputy Director

There were no public comments.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Downing called for a voice vote.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR KALANTARI-JOHNSON SECOND: DIRECTOR KOENIG

MOTION PASSED WITH 8 AYES (Directors Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Leonor, Lind, Newsome, and Orbach). Directors Martinez and Quiroz-Carter were absent.

REGULAR AGENDA

- 10 PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE LONGEVITY AWARDS FOR:**
(10 YEARS) ARASELI CAMPOS, TRANSIT SUPERVISOR
(10 YEARS) JUAN CASTILLO, TRANSIT SUPERVISOR
(10 YEARS) FRANCISCA FERNANDES, BUS OPERATOR
(10 YEARS) JUAN GARCIA, BUS OPERATOR
(10 YEARS) LANEA HIGHTOWER, TRANSIT SUPERVISOR
(10 YEARS) AMY LONA, BUS OPERATOR

*Signifies those present to receive their certificates in person.

Board Chair Downing thanked all for their years of service at METRO.

There were no public comments.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Downing moved to the next agenda item.

- 11 RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR THE SERVICE OF MIKE ROTKIN AS
A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Board Chair Downing and other Board Members read the resolution of Mr. Rotkin's accomplishments over the past 46 years.

Several Board Members expressed tribute to his contributions to METRO, and his commitment to serving all the jurisdictions in Santa Cruz County by supporting several nonprofits, generously giving of his time, welcoming fellow Board Members when joining the METRO Board of Directors, providing guidance and sharing his wisdom in reaching across the aisle on many issues that the community faced and a willingness to work collaboratively. Board Members expressed how deeply Mr. Rotkin would be missed.

Ben Finke, Bus Operator, also expressed appreciation for Mr. Rotkin's honesty and communication skills.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Downing called for a roll call vote.

**ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR THE
SERVICE OF MIKE ROTKIN AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

MOTION: DIRECTOR LIND SECOND: DIRECTOR KOENIG

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Leonor, Lind, Newsome, Orbach and Quiroz-Carter). Director Martinez was absent.

12 METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) SEMI-ANNUAL ORAL UPDATE

Veronica Elsea, MAC Chair, praised Mr. Rotkin for his service and offered condolences to his family, friends, loved ones, and colleagues on behalf of MAC.

She continued with her semi-annual report and thanked METRO staff, CEO Aldridge and Board Chair Downing for their attendance at MAC's meetings. Some of the issues MAC is working on are Braille signage at bus stops, changes at METRO's transit centers, restrooms for the Bus Operators, smoking at some of the transit centers, ParaCruz eligibility forms, and expressed appreciation for increased security at the River/Front Transit Center. MAC is also helping to test the new website and the Transit Royale app and hopes they will be accessible to everyone. She expressed safety concerns with putting future bus stops on islands. In addition, she spoke about the vacancy of the Mobility Training Coordinator and hoped the position would be filled soon. In closing, she invited the Board Members to attend the next MAC meeting on August 20, 2025 at 6:00 PM at METRO's Admin Office.

Discussion followed on:

- Timeline for filling the position of Mobility Training Coordinator
- ADA Ride Program and its challenges for the disabled community
- Seniors with assisted devices being passed up

Staff addressed all concerns.

Board Chair Downing added her appreciation for MAC's efforts and recognized the challenges Ms. Elsea and other MAC Members face in attending these meetings.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Downing moved to the next agenda item.

13 PUBLIC HEARING TO COMMENCE AT 9:00 AM OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS THE MATTER CAN BE HEARD FOR:

A. STATUS OF JOB VACANCIES, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION EFFORTS AT SANTA CRUZ METRO PURSUANT TO ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 2561; AND

B. FINAL ADOPTION OF THE SANTA CRUZ METRO'S FY26 AND FY27 BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 9:47 AM.

Dawn Crummié, Chief Human Resources Officer, spoke to her staff report on AB 2561 providing an informational update. She reported that METRO is under the 20% vacancy threshold and some of the vacancies are currently being recruited for.

Board Chair Downing invited the labor unions to provide presentations or comments on this item. There were none.

There were no public comments.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Downing moved to Item 13B.

Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer, spoke to his presentation and requested the Board of Directors adopt the FY26 and FY27 budget. He focused the discussion on the adjustments that have occurred since the May 16, 2025 meeting. He reviewed the budget summary and walkdown, budget drivers, income funding sources, transfers, full-time equivalents, explained the changes to the operating reserves for FY25 and FY26 and concluded with the capital budget projects and its funding.

Discussion followed on:

- Operating and Capital Reserve Fund
- Hydrogen fuel costs
- Fuel tax credit
- Acquiring smaller buses to reduce fuel costs
- Discuss hydrogen processes with other transit agencies and ARCHES (Alliance for Renewable Clean Hydrogen Energy Systems)
- Managing budget shortfalls
- Backup plan if sales tax measure does not pass
- Cost of running an electric bus versus a hydrogen-fueled bus
- Reduction in the number of Bus Operators and the impacts to the service

Staff addressed all concerns.

There were no public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 10:30 AM.

Board Chair Downing called for a roll call vote.

ACTION: MOTION TO ADOPT METRO'S FY26 AND FY27 BUDGET AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR LIND

SECOND: DIRECTOR ORBACH

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, Leonor, Lind, Newsome, Orbach and Quiroz-Carter). Director Martinez was absent.

14 CEO ORAL REPORT

Corey Aldridge, CEO/General Manager, spoke to the following items:

- Attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the *Coastal Rail Trail Segment 7 Phase II* at La Barranca Park on May 21, 2025.
- *Leadership Santa Cruz County* celebrated its graduation on June 18. CEO Aldridge was proud to graduate as part of the Class of 38, alongside Danielle Glagola, Chief Communications & Marketing Officer, and Juan Serrano, Paratransit Supervisor. The upcoming Class of 39 will include Kristina Mihaylova (Finance Deputy Director), Monik Delfin (HR Deputy Director), and Greg Nolan (Fleet Maintenance Supervisor).

- Two weeks ago, METRO staff toured the Pacific Station North currently under construction.
- Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) was awarded \$128.7 million from the Senate Bill (SB) 1 funds allocated by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for its multimodal projects. \$93.6 million of that will go to SCCRTC to complete Highway 1 and the coastal rail trail project; \$13.8 million to Santa Cruz County for Soquel Drive improvements; and \$13.8 million to METRO for the rapid corridors project.
- METRO's Summer Service began Thursday, June 19, and includes the following changes:
 - Routes 1 & 2 serving Watsonville to Santa Cruz will run every 20 minutes for most of the daytime and evening (every 60 minutes early AM and late PM).
 - Route 3 detour due to the Murray St. Bridge closure.
 - Routes 18 & 19 to run at 30-minute peak service. New route variants 18B & 19B provide additional service to the base of campus.
- Construction of the mobile fueling station is nearly complete. We expect the final component--the silencer--to be installed in August. In the meantime, we're able to fuel a limited number of buses.
- Fuel-cell bus training for our Mechanics is underway.
- Training for Supervisors, Dispatchers, Fleet staff, Vehicle Service Workers, and First Responders on the *Temporary Fueler Emergency Action Plan* has been successfully completed. Law enforcement training is scheduled for August, and driver certification for the fuel-cell buses has begun.
- On June 29, SMART and METRO will co-host a *Senior Celebration Dinner* at the Freedom VFW Hall from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM to honor seniors in our community. Free rides will be available from the River/Front Street Transit Center, Watsonville Transit Center, and Capitola Mall.
- METRO will participate in the *Scotts Valley 4th of July Parade* where CEO Aldridge will serve as one of the judges. METRO will also have a presence in both the Watsonville and Aptos parades.
- On July 18, METRO will participate in a *Mid-Town Block Party*, displaying a bus and hosting a booth.
- METRO will join the *Family Fun Day* on July 19 at Sky Park in Scotts Valley from 10 AM – 3 PM.
- METRO has secured a weekly booth at the *Watsonville Farmers Market* throughout the summer.

- Mark your calendars for the **Bus Rodeo and Picnic** scheduled for Saturday, October 18, at METRO's 809 W. Beach Street lot in Watsonville. Please consider volunteering as a judge or announcer.
- Since the May 16 Board meeting, METRO has welcomed two new team members--one Buyer and one Mechanic I.

Director Koenig commented that it is exciting to win this Cycle 4 grant and if METRO knows where the \$10 million construction local match will come from. CEO Aldridge said he will find out.

There were no public comments.

15 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Board Chair Downing announced the next regular Board meeting will be held on Friday, August 22, 2025 at 9:00 AM at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main Street, Watsonville.

16 ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Downing adjourned the meeting at 10:37 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Bauer
Sr. Executive Assistant