

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES

Transit Productivity Committee - TPC

May 21, 2019

Dow & Associates Conference Room, Ukiah

PRESENT:

MCOG Board Members: Michael Carter and Jim O. Brown
MTA Board Members: Jim Mastin
Senior Centers Rep.: Diana Clarke and Marilyn DeFrange, Ukiah Senior Center
Staff: Janet Orth, Nephela Barrett and Marta Ford, MCOG
Carla Meyer, MTA

ABSENT:

Jim Tarbell, MTA

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. Self-introductions were made.

2. **Public Expression.** None.

3. **Review and Recommendation on MTA's Analysis and Prioritization of 2019/20 Unmet Transit Needs – continued from May 2, 2019.** Janet briefly reviewed the annual process, status and adopted definitions.

Carla reviewed status of last year's seven needs found reasonable to meet, contingent on three factors (MTA's review of existing routes; update of seniors transportation funding formula; potential federal 5311 grants). Five needs are in various stages of being met, and the other two are not able to be met in the near term. In discussion, it was agreed to drop the five of these seven needs that appear on the new list as High Priority, since they are already in progress.

Carla confirmed that any needs not found reasonable to meet in the coming year can still be addressed by MTA as opportunities arise from changing conditions. Discussion followed on MTA's newly funded Mobility Management position and potential volunteer driver programs.

MTA's analysis of the list of all testimony compiled by MCOG from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) and the December public hearing was included in the agenda packet. The report was ranked by five categories: *Already Exists* (1), *High Priority–Consider for FY 2019/20* (8), *Medium Priority* (3), *Low Priority* (15), and *Not an Unmet Need* (0), for a total of 27 needs. Carla's review and group discussion included the following (excluding prior-year needs).

- "Already Exists" – #M-15, service to Eagle Peak school in Redwood Valley as requested by parents is provided by an MTA stop within three blocks. MTA is prohibited by law from providing school bus service.
- "High Priority–Consider for FY 2019/20" – MTA's route committee is addressing issues of these needs: #M-7, addition of a bus stop on East Gobbi Street in Ukiah to serve a seniors' mobile home park is contingent on revisions to MTA's Dial-A-Ride program (DAR). #M-9, evening transportation for workers returning from Ukiah to Willits, will not be an expansion of service but could involve a timing adjustment of Route 20. #M-14, a pulse system at Navarro Junction for buses to Fort Bragg, Ukiah, and Point Arena, would time buses to meet together for ride transfers.
- "Medium Priority" – #S-9 and PH-2, to increase Ukiah-Hopland service, was tried years ago but demographics have changed, with more workers in town, so enough riders could now be anticipated. While Hopland is served by Route 65, this is a grant-funded service with restrictions such as meeting Greyhound connections in Santa Rosa; also there is no funding available. #M-10, service on Talmage Road in Ukiah also is constrained by lack of funds, but should be kept in mind for future expansion. DAR service would be more efficient than fixed route for this need.
- "Low Priority" – Each of these 15 needs were reviewed. Most lacked available funding resources. Others were logistically impractical (e.g. Golden Rule Park outside Willits has no safe way to drop off passengers on US-101 northbound). Others were inequitable (e.g. "general public service" by paratransit DAR is being eliminated; since not offered in Ukiah, should not be offered in Brooktrails).

“Unexpected medical emergencies after hours/weekends” should be addressed by 911 call, not transit. Mendocino College service would not be justified on Saturdays, for lack of classes and therefore riders. So for various reasons, these needs did not rise to the top as “reasonable to meet” by definition.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Carter, seconded by Brown, and carried unanimously (4 Ayes; 0 Noes; 1 Absent): The TPC recommended a finding that there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet for Fiscal Year 2019/20, as identified on the list:

- #M-7 Bus stop on East Gobbi Street at senior mobile home park (Ukiah area)
- #M-10 Add more service on Talmage Road for those who cannot walk very far
- #M-14 Reconsider a pulse system at the Navarro Junction for buses to Fort Bragg, Ukiah, Gualala and Point Arena.

[M=MTA; PH=Public Hearing; S=SSTAC]

4. Consideration of Updates to Senior Centers TDA Funding Formula – *continued from May 2, 2019.*

Nephele proposed again continuing this item and scheduling a larger meeting with all of the senior centers. MCOG staff can poll for dates. She noted this is too large of a project to complete in time for the FY 2019/20 budget. Discussion included:

- Agreement with Nephele’s statement. How vehicles are being used by Ukiah Senior Center, i.e. types of trips, to qualify for the funding and apply costs appropriately. Recap of the May 2 TPC discussion. A challenge for USC is pay raises, benefits for drivers; they met the minimum wage requirement but have no new funds to cover it. There are various moving parts to be taken into consideration. (Diana)
- Agree there is a need to look at history, performance, other issues. (Carla)
- Importance of bringing other senior centers in to this review. (Nephele)
- Reported talks with several of the center directors to date introducing the issue, letting them know it is under review. (Diana)
- Logistics of facilitating one or more meetings on this topic in the near future, likely a separate meeting with the centers followed by reconvening the TPC. (Nephele, Mike)
- Brief discussion of related Anderson Valley Senior Center transportation program issues. All agreed to a need to investigate.

No action was taken; the issue was continued to a future meeting.

5. Miscellaneous / Members’ Concerns. Nephele announced planning grants recently awarded by Caltrans to MCOG for 1) SB 743 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Regional Baseline Study and 2) Mendocino County Fire Vulnerability Assessment & Emergency Preparedness, to start in July. Discussion included:

- In reference to a previous event, Carla stated that public transit has better equipment and training than school busses to evacuate people in emergencies. Mike agreed and reported on prior calls and how responses were handled.
- Q&A about Office of Emergency Services (OES) and related matters. As a countywide coordinator, Mike reported new interest in Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, ham radio, and fire-wise communities.
- Carla noted MTA is always ready to respond to emergencies and confirmed that emergency calls should go through Mendocino County OES, then MTA will respond. City of Ukiah has its own OES officer. Discussion followed on which cities come under the County Sheriff’s OES.

Nephele announced a new cycle of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 program funds coming up in July.

Carla reported MTA’s submittal of a grant application for \$1.4 million of FTA Section 5339 funds to include a 35-seat electric bus. Also they are applying for 5-6 electric cutaway vehicles under the Volkswagen legal settlement.

6. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.