

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES Transit Productivity Committee - TPC May 17, 2018

Dow & Associates Conference Room, Ukiah

PRESENT:

MCOG Board Members: Susan Ranochak and Steve Scalmanini
MTA Board Members: Jim Mastin
Senior Centers Rep.: Charles Bush, Redwood Coast Seniors
Staff: Janet Orth, Nephele Barrett and Marta Ford, MCOG
Carla Meyer and Jacob King, MTA

ABSENT: Jim Tarbell, MTA

- 1. Call to Order.** MCOG Director Ranochak called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. Jim Tarbell was excused by prior arrangement.
- 2. Public Expression.** None.
- 3. Annual Review of MTA Performance Reports Against MCOG Standards.** Janet gave an overview of her written staff report and her initial review of performance using the adopted “CPI Adjusted Rolling Average” with both one-year and three-year results. She noted the data was still a year behind schedule for review.

Service Type	2016/17	2017/18	3-Year Average
Dial-A-Ride (DAR) met Cost/Hour, improved Passengers/Hour	2 of 4	Pending data from MTA	1 of 4
Short Distance Bus Routes met just Cost/Hour	1 of 4		1 of 4
Long Distance Routes declined in Farebox, Cost/Hour rose	2 of 4		4 of 4
Senior Centers declined in Farebox, Cost/Hour rose	3 of 4		4 of 4

Discussion included:

- Description and consideration of the four service types.
- There is potential to improve DAR, especially in a rural area. (Carla)
- Costs are up for all types because the labor union negotiated higher pay for the previously underpaid drivers. Also ridership is down 16% over the past year due to loss of choice riders, attributed to homeless people using bus shelters. Ridership is down as a nationwide trend, but is worse here. MTA’s shelter cleaner was assaulted and robbed at the Pear Tree Center in Ukiah. MTA is in process of changing out benches with designs that discourage loitering. (Carla)
- This issue came up recently at the County Continuum of Care governing board and will be addressed as a high priority. It will not change quickly, but have confidence that it will change. (Charles)
- Senior centers have a different scenario. Riders are dispatched. Another advantage is dealing with transportation clientele linked to a range of other services. (Charles)
- Review of the five recommendations from most recent independent Triennial Performance Audit of MTA, for the period ended June 30, 2015; the next audit is due to start this year. (Janet)
 - 1) “Develop internal goals for collection and measurement of on-time performance.” – N/A, in progress.
 - 2) “Develop a charter policy that meets federal and state requirements.” – N/A, MTA is eliminating charter services.
 - 3) “Consider an alternate funding formula for Senior Center TDA funds.” – It may be time to address.
 - 4) “Update the Short Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP).” – MTA will apply again for a Caltrans planning grant in the upcoming cycle this fall.

- 5) “Review opportunities for increasing local revenue to boost farebox recovery.” – Discussion of new advertising revenues (\$100,000), agriculture vanpool (\$30,000), opportunities for fare revenue agreements with Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC), and other ideas. (All)
- Any recommendations for Short and Long-Distance fixed bus routes? (Janet)
 - Bus shelter issue is the main problem right now. Mendocino College is not a problem due to state funding of MTA’s free student fares through Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP), so college ridership is up. There is better security at the Ukiah main campus; County Sheriff monitors regularly. After the recent incident, MTA has sought more support from law enforcement, so far unsuccessfully. Ukiah City Council appointed a new ad hoc committee to address this issue. About two-thirds of homeless are rooted in community, staying put where services are. The other third is transient, route is north-south, and should be moved back to where they came from to get services. Actions should be around getting local homeless into housing. A recent report identifies a need to find ways to stop nuisance behavior in public places. Another major target is policing of transients, coupled with taking care of the local home-grown group. Charles will report and work on this with the Continuum of Care governing board. (Carla, Janet, Jacob, Steve, Charles)
 - Reference to report: Homelessness Needs Assessment and Action Steps for Mendocino County, by Marbut Consulting, March 19, 2018.
 - MTA has adopted a state-compliant rider exclusion policy, such that it can exclude nuisance riders for up to one year. (Carla)
 - Does summer school/student traffic go up much? No. MTA offers a summer youth pass all summer for \$40 and sells about 50 passes, down from 100. Is that because they are not going out as much and are more connected with social media? Likely it is a combination of homelessness and social media. (Charles, Carla, Jacob, Jim, Nephele)
 - Short-range routes: Ukiah, Fort Bragg, and Willits have had regular fixed routes for the past three years. Willits is dragging down average performance. Black Bart Casino did not renew batch tickets agreement with MTA. (Jacob)
 - Long-range routes: Willits locals ride #20 to/from Ukiah. Why is performance down for long-range? Three-year review meets all standards; most recent year reviewed met just 2 of 4. Was that a bad year or a trend? Ridership is down in general. Gas is still cheap, but would take \$5 price to affect it. (All)
 - MTA’s route committee is reconvening to analyze each route. Drivers meet Saturdays once a month. Ideas include express routes, so people don’t need to wait as long and get to destinations on time, as well as unmet needs solutions. MTA is active internally to address productivity. (Carla)

Janet called for the question of recommendations to the Council. Carla suggested 1) review routes that have not been reviewed in years; 2) work with community partners on addressing the homeless issue; and 3) compare MTA’s fare structure to like agencies in rural areas. Charles added “make safe, friendly places.”

Discussion followed on fare revenues. Carla wanted MCOG to reduce its farebox standard from 15% to 10%, consistent with new state law (SB 508 in 2015). Jim and Charles agreed that raising fare prices is a disincentive to increasing ridership; it is more important to get more riders. Jim clarified that when MTA increases its fare prices, it is mainly to meet compliance standards.

- What is the timeline for considering this change? Route committee results should be considered first. It was agreed to revisit in six months. (Steve, Carla, Jacob, All)
- Other transit agencies want to get out from under even the 10% new state standard. Further discussion of the need for riders over fares. Public transit should be made cheap and easy. Transit is the only government service requiring an additional funding share. (Jim, Charles, Carla)

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Bush, seconded by Scalmanini, and carried unanimously (*4 Ayes; 0 Noes; 1 Absent*), the TPC recommended that 1) MCOG consider reducing its farebox standard to ten percent over the next few years and revisit the issue this time next year with another year or two of performance data; 2) MTA work with community partner agencies to address the homelessness problem that is impacting ridership; and 3) MCOG encourage MTA to conduct a review of all routes on the system for productivity.

– *Annual Transit Performance Reviews (one year and three years) are attached*

4. Review and Recommendation on MTA's Analysis and Prioritization of 2018/19 Unmet Transit Needs.

Janet briefly reviewed the annual process and adopted definitions. Carla handed out her 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. Carla's report was ranked by five categories: *Already Exists* (2), *High Priority–Consider for FY 2018/19* (5), *Medium Priority* (2), *Low Priority* (5), and *Not an Unmet Need* (5), for a total of 19 needs. (One of the 18 needs on MCOG's list, SSTAC's #2, was split into two parts.) Carla's review and group discussion included the following.

- "Already Exist" – Weekend and after hours rides for seniors and adults is partially provided, in Ukiah area on evenings and Saturdays. However, MTA provides door-to-door service, not door-through-door. Refer to Low Priority for other destinations and times.
- "High Priority–Consider for FY 2018/19" – Design of downtown Ukiah shuttle routes is in MTA's existing budget. This and earlier morning service for UVAH clients are under review by a Route Committee. It is a misconception that people are willing to ride smaller busses but not larger ones. Smaller vehicles can be used in the evenings but would be over capacity by day. An additional Ukiah-Point Arena round trip might encourage family trips. Service to Willits pool and High School would target youth and can be evaluated for a low-cost route adjustment.
- "High Priority–Consider for FY 2018/19" – The only high priority of five SSTAC identified needs was a long-standing one for "Wheelchair accessible door-through-door assisted services for seniors and disabled adults on Wednesday in the Ukiah area." MTA proposes that funding come from revising the formula for distribution of TDA transportation funds to the senior center contracts, a task that has been recommended in the past two triennial performance audits of both MCOG and MTA. There is currently no mechanism to evaluate the funding formula, but perhaps the time has come to tackle this issue.
- "Medium Priority" – Two needs from MTA's list were identified. Brooktrails service has been tried many years ago, but demographics have changed. The Route Committee will consider it and Potter Valley service for MCAVHN (Mendocino County AIDS/Viral Hepatitis Network) clients.
- "Low Priority" – A South Coast shuttle from Sea Ranch to Gualala/Manchester and the other four SSTAC identified needs were in this category. "Transportation from remote rural areas to existing transit stops" was considered by MTA staff to be a logistical challenge.
- "Non-Qualifying Unmet Needs" – These were considered infeasible, not transit, or not a public service.

Discussion followed on reasonable-to-meet needs and how they could be funded or otherwise provided. Staff recommended appropriate language for a motion to reflect the above discussion.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Mastin, seconded by Bush, 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 2018/19, contingent on review of existing routes, update of the funding formula for senior centers' transportation contracts, and potential new revenues through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Program, as identified on the FY 2018/19 list:

- #6-M Design of more shuttle routes that remove parking downtown and well as increase housing, with smaller buses that people would ride
- #7-M Addition of one-day round-trip from Ukiah to Point Arena
- #12-M Service to Willits pool and High School
- #1-PH Ukiah fixed route and DAR service starting a half hour earlier in the mornings for transportation to jobs (UVAH clients)
- #4-S Wheelchair accessible door-through-door assisted services for seniors and disabled adults on Wednesdays in the Ukiah area.

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

5. Review and Recommendation on Fiscal Year 2018/19 Transit Claim. Janet reviewed her written analysis and staff recommendation very briefly, since the meeting had gone into overtime. She noted that Local Transportation Funds available for public transit are up 4.4% (\$132,444) over the previous year.

Carla confirmed that State Transit Assistance (STA) funds are claimed by MTA for deposit to the Capital Reserve Fund (CRF). This would be the first contribution by MTA to the reserve in many years. No CRF funds are claimed for expenditure in FY 2018/19. Janet clarified that MTA’s Five-Year Capital Plan submitted with the claim only covers Vehicle Replacement and no CRF needs are identified. By law, MCOG cannot hold a reserve without identifying capital projects for it. Carla stated that MTA’s budget was not yet finalized, but that the CRF could be used to fund their transit center project. She will provide the complete Five-Year Capital Plan after adopted by MTA, and also a revised claim to reflect this discussion.

After discussion, MCOG’s staff recommendation was approved as follows.

Recommendation:

Upon motion by Bush, seconded by Mastin, and carried unanimously (*4 Ayes; 0 Noes; 1 Absent*), the TPC recommended that MCOG:

- 1) Allocate full funding of MTA’s claim for FY 2018/19 Local Transportation Funds, and
- 2) Make allocations for State Transit Assistance and Capital Reserve funds when adjusted to reflect Long Term Capital and MTA’s adopted Five-Year Capital Plan is provided to MCOG.

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
MTA Operations	2,661,288	
Unmet Transit Needs	0	
Senior Center Operations	493,777	
Transit Capital Reserve	0	
Total LTF		3,155,065
State Transit Assistance Fund (STA)		
MTA Operations	300,000	
MTA & Seniors Capital	49,000	
Transit Capital Reserve	331,645	
Total STA		680,645
Capital Reserve Fund (CRF)		
MTA Capital, Current Year	0	
Senior Capital, Current Year	0	
Long-Term Capital Reserve	632,138	
Total CRF		632,138
Adjustment for STA Contribution to CRF		(331,645)
Total Recommended FY 2018/19 Transit Allocation		4,136,203

6. Miscellaneous / Members’ Concerns. None.

7. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Submitted by Janet Orth, Deputy Director / CFO

Mendocino Council of Governments

Annual Transit Performance Review

March 1, 2016 - February 28, 2017

MCOG Standards	Passengers per Hour	Farebox Ratio	Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	Cost per Passenger
<i>When comparing to performance:</i>				
	Higher # is better	Higher # is better	Lower # is better	Lower # is better
Dial-A-Ride				
Spring 2016	4.1	14.7%	\$87.25	\$21.28
Summer 2016	5.0	14.7%	\$87.25	\$17.45
Fall 2016	4.1	14.7%	\$87.25	\$21.28
Winter 2016/17	4.2	14.7%	\$87.25	\$20.77
Annual Average	4.4	14.7%	\$87.25	\$20.20
Standard	4.5	15.0%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$95.15	\$21.14
Result	not met	not met	✓	✓
Short Distance Bus Routes				
Spring 2016	7.8	12.4%	\$85.22	\$10.93
Summer 2016	10.0	12.4%	\$85.22	\$8.52
Fall 2016	9.0	12.4%	\$85.22	\$9.47
Winter 2016/17	7.6	12.4%	\$85.22	\$11.21
Annual Average	8.6	12.4%	\$85.22	\$10.03
Standard	14.0	15%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$86.42	\$6.17
Result	not met	not met	✓	not met
Long Distance Routes				
Spring 2016	3.3	13.3%	\$97.03	\$29.76
Summer 2016	4.4	13.3%	\$97.03	\$22.05
Fall 2016	3.8	14.5%	\$97.03	\$25.53
Winter 2016/17	2.9	13.3%	\$97.03	\$33.46
Annual Average	3.6	13.6%	\$97.03	\$27.70
Standard	3.2	15%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$93.80	\$29.31
Result	✓	not met	not met	✓
Senior Centers				
Spring 2016	3.3	9.5%	\$47.55	\$14.41
Summer 2016	3.9	14.3%	\$54.08	\$13.87
Fall 2016	2.8	9.8%	\$48.23	\$17.23
Winter 2016/17	3.1	10.8%	\$51.49	\$16.61
Annual Average	3.3	11.1%	\$50.34	\$15.53
Standard	3.0	12.0%	NA	NA
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$50.03	\$16.68
Result	✓	not met	w/i margin of error	✓

NOTES:

"CPI Adjusted Rolling Average" uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Annual Average, All Urban Consumers, California, percent change from calendar year 2016 to 2017, added to the past three-year average and rounded. See Standards chart.

Check-mark symbol indicates the standard was met.

Cost per Passenger is the result of Cost per Hour divided by Passengers per Hour (may differ slightly from MTA report).

Round-off errors may occur between MTA's report and this summary, or differences based on number of decimal places entered.

Inland and Coast routes were changed by TPC recommendation to "Short Distance" and "Long Distance" respectively.

Flex Routes were deleted from this table.

Mendocino Council of Governments Annual Transit Performance Review

3 Years: March 1, 2014 - February 28, 2017

MCOG Standards	Passengers per Hour	Farebox Ratio	Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	Cost per Passenger	Cost/Hr Annual CPI adj.	
<i>When comparing to performance:</i>						
	Higher # is better	Higher # is better	Lower # is better	Lower # is better		
Dial-A-Ride						
Mar. 1, 2014 - Feb. 28, 2015	4.0	12.3%	\$95.58	\$24.07	\$97.33	1.83%
Mar. 1, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016	3.9	13.9%	\$97.46	\$24.99	\$98.89	1.47%
Mar. 1, 2016 - Feb. 28, 2017	4.4	14.7%	\$87.25	\$20.20	\$89.22	2.26%
3-Year Average	4.1	13.6%	\$93.43	\$23.09	\$95.15	1.85%
Standard	4.5	15.0%	NA	NA		
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$95.15	\$21.14	Cost/Hr divided by Pass/Hr	
Result	not met	not met	✓	not met		
Short Distance Bus Routes						
Mar. 1, 2014 - Feb. 28, 2015	13.1	13.7%	\$89.18	\$6.81	\$90.81	
Mar. 1, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016	12.9	16.4%	\$80.15	\$6.22	\$81.32	
Mar. 1, 2016 - Feb. 28, 2017	8.6	12.4%	\$85.22	\$10.03	\$87.14	
3-Year Average	11.5	14.2%	\$84.85	\$7.69	\$86.42	
Standard	14.0	15%	NA	NA		
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$86.42	\$6.17		
Result	not met	not met	✓	not met		
Long Distance Routes						
Mar. 1, 2014 - Feb. 28, 2015	4.2	17.9%	\$93.23	\$22.48	\$94.94	
Mar. 1, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016	3.6	19.2%	\$85.99	\$23.92	\$87.25	
Mar. 1, 2016 - Feb. 28, 2017	3.6	13.6%	\$97.03	\$27.70	\$99.22	
3-Year Average	3.8	16.9%	\$92.08	\$24.70	\$93.80	
Standard	3.2	15%	NA	NA		
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$93.80	\$29.31		
Result	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Senior Centers						
Mar. 1, 2014 - Feb. 28, 2015	3.4	12.8%	\$47.76	\$14.17	\$48.63	
Mar. 1, 2015 - Feb. 29, 2016	3.0	12.6%	\$49.25	\$16.71	\$49.97	
Mar. 1, 2016 - Feb. 28, 2017	3.3	11.1%	\$50.34	\$15.53	\$51.47	
3-Year Average	3.2	12.2%	\$49.12	\$15.47	\$50.03	
Standard	3.0	12.0%	NA	NA		
CPI Adjusted Rolling Average	NA	NA	\$50.03	\$16.68		
Result	✓	✓	✓	✓		

NOTES:

"CPI Adjusted Rolling Average" uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Annual Average, All Urban Consumers, California, percent change from corresponding calendar year to year, added to each of the past three years and averaged.

Check-mark symbol indicates the standard was met.

Cost per Passenger is the result of Cost per Hour divided by Passengers per Hour (may differ slightly from MTA report).

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