



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES*
APRIL 28, 2023 – 9:00 AM**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) convened on Friday, April 28, 2023 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 9:01 AM by Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson.

2 SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT

Curtis Moses, METRO’s Safety, Security and Risk Management Director, highlighted responding to a medical emergency as well as where the exits are in case the Chambers need to be evacuated.

3 ROLL CALL: The following Directors were **present**, representing a quorum:

Director Kristen Brown	City of Capitola
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 Donna Lind	City of Scotts Valley
Director Bruce McPherson	County of Santa Cruz
Director Scott Newsome	City of Santa Cruz
Director Larry Pageler	County of Santa Cruz
Director Quiroz-Carter	City of Watsonville
Director Mike Rotkin	County of Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Dan Henderson	UC Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt	Cabrillo College

*Attended via teleconference at 110 F Street, Davis, CA

Michael Tree	CEO/General Manager
Julie Sherman	General Counsel

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today’s meeting is being broadcast by Community Television of Santa Cruz County.

We anticipated providing Spanish language interpretation services but due to technical difficulties, are not able to provide that service today.

5 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Hearing none, Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

6 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, congratulated METRO on the recent grant awarded to the agency and spoke to his email dated April 26, 2023 (attached).

Lani Faulkner, Equity Transit, thanked CEO Tree, Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson, and Wondimu Mengistu, Capital Planning and Grants Program Manager, and the METRO team on the TIRCP Grant won to make a more robust transit system and providing affordable housing options.

Jonathan Goren, UCSC student, requested more service to the UCSC campus.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

7 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

Jordan Vascones, SEA President, spoke to the retention problems with new and existing employees. He also expressed that labor negotiations are going well. He also mentioned working on the rollout of the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Project with Clever Devices and happy to see the deployment on METRO's buses.

James Sandoval, SMART General Chairperson, Local 0023, also spoke to the retention problems in the agency and addressing them in the labor negotiations.

Ex-Officio Director Henderson requested an update on the current terms of the existing labor contracts. Dawn Crummié, METRO Human Resources Director, provided those details.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

8 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

Having none, Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

9.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK JOURNAL DETAIL FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2023

Chuck Farmer, CFO

9.2 ACCEPT AND FILE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 24, 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager

9.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE YEAR TO DATE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF MARCH 31, 2023

Chuck Farmer, CFO

- 9.4 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE A 4TH AMENDMENT EXTENDING THE CONTRACT FOR TWO YEARS WITH LAW OFFICES OF MARIE F. SANG FOR LEGAL SERVICES IN THE AREA OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION, INCREASING THE CONTRACT TOTAL BY \$24,000
Dawn Crummié, HR Director
- 9.5 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF DECLARING VEHICLES AND/OR EQUIPMENT AS EXCESS FOR PURPOSES OF DISPOSAL OR AUCTION
Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 9.6 APPROVE: CONSIDER A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER AS THE AUTHORIZED AGENT TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO RECEIVE FORMULA FUNDS FROM THE FY23 LOW CARBON TRANSIT OPERATIONS PROGRAM
Wondimu Mengistu, Capital Planning & Grants Program Manager
- 9.7 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF RATIFICATION OF USE OF STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF ONE NON-REVENUE EMERGENCY SERVICE TRUCK
Eddie Benson, Maintenance Manager
- 9.8 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE A 3RD AMENDMENT EXTENDING THE CONTRACT FOR TWO YEARS WITH BROWN ARMSTRONG ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION FOR FINANCIAL AUDIT AND TAX SERVICES, INCREASING THE CONTRACT TOTAL BY \$95,150
Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 9.9 APPROVE: CONSIDER A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 610 AND DIRECTING METRO STAFF TO ENGAGE ASSEMBLYMEMBER HOLDEN AND ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS TO ADVANCE THE LEGISLATION IN THE 2023-24 REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION
Wondimu Mengistu, Capital Planning & Grants Program Manager
- 9.10 RECOMMENDED ACTION ON TORT CLAIMS
Curtis Moses, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director

There were no public comments.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

SECOND: DIRECTOR BROWN

MOTION PASSED WITH 10 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, McPherson, Newsome, Pageler, Quiroz-Carter, and Rotkin). Director Lind was absent.

REGULAR AGENDA

10 PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE LONGEVITY AWARD: (15 YEARS) NOAH VASSEUR

Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson acknowledged Mr. Vasseur for his years of service.

11 PRESENTATION OF SAFETY CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR THIRD QUARTER ENDING MARCH 31, 2023

Curtis Moses spoke to the new Federal Transit Agency (FTA) guidelines. This safety award is going to Customer Service for consistently promoting safety within the agency and with the public riders. A group photo (attached) was displayed.

There were no public comments.

Hearing nothing further, Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson moved to the next agenda item.

12 APPROVE: ADOPTION OF THE CALIFORNIA UNIFORM PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION COST ACCOUNTING ACT AND INTRODUCTION OF THE INFORMAL BIDDING ORDINANCE

Julie Sherman, General Counsel, spoke to the item. She reviewed METRO's current formal bidding process and explained that by joining the California Uniform Public Construction Cost Accounting Act (CUPCCAA), it would allow METRO to utilize informal bidding procedures for contracts of low value public works projects, thus providing a more effective and streamlined procurement process. She requested the Board adopt a resolution to opt-in to CUPCCAA and introduce the informal bidding ordinance to open up the public hearing period.

Director Rotkin asked how these companies would be held accountable in complying with METRO's needs under CUPCCAA. General Counsel Sherman explained that there will still be a written contract in place detailing the scope of work needed and labor laws and compliance requirements still need to be followed.

There was no public comment.

ACTION: MOTION TO ADOPT THE CALIFORNIA UNIFORM PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION COST ACCOUNTING ACT AND INTRODUCTION OF THE INFORMAL BIDDING ORDINANCE

MOTION: DIRECTOR PAGELER

SECOND: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

MOTION PASSED WITH 10 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, McPherson, Newsome, Pageler, Quiroz-Carter, and Rotkin). Director Lind was absent.

13 CEO ORAL REPORT

Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager, provided updates on the following:

- Six new Bus Operators now have their licenses.
- Twenty-two new Bus Operators will start a new class in May and thanked staff for their recruitment efforts. Ms. Crummié thanked the unions for the work they did in making this come together.

- One Ride At a Time Press Event on March 29, 2023 and vendor support.
- Mass Transit Magazine – METRO was on the cover of the April edition.
- CALACT “Above and Beyond” Award for storm assistance.
- Groundbreaking for Hwy. 1 Bus-on-Shoulder Project.
- Ten articulated buses arriving from San Diego, CA.
- Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) and Automated Passenger Counter (APC) systems.
- Website redesign.
- Scotts Valley receiving \$1.6 million grant to improve the storm water drainage by the Cavallaro Transit Center.
- TIRCP Grant Award of \$38.6 million and the projects it will cover.

Director McPherson congratulated CEO Tree and staff for such a positive report.

Director Rotkin asked if the timing of receiving the hydrogen buses and the completion of the future hydrogen station are in sync. CEO Tree responded that METRO is coordinating that effort and it currently has a 30-day gap. Discussion continued on the capabilities of the AVL and APC systems.

Director Dutra appreciated the credit card option being implemented. He explained how he used it in New York recently and it worked well. He also expressed concern on updating bus shelters in the South County and would like to see digital signage used there. He’s looking forward to an update on the Reimagine METRO program and route alignments. He expressed concern that the recent media event was not held at the Watsonville Transit Center and suggested an event be held there in the near future to highlight the funds received for that community. CEO Tree explained that California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) coordinated that effort and agreed a Watsonville event would be appropriate. Director Dutra also asked if any of the proposed housing will benefit METRO employees. CEO Tree said he will meet with MidPen Housing to work on those details; the current description is listed as affordable housing.

Director Pageler thanked METRO for pulling together and providing the link to the news clips.

Director Koenig requested an update on the Soquel Corridor bus stops. John Uργο, METRO Planning and Development Director, responded that staff has identified that 38 bus stop improvements are needed on that corridor. Director Koenig asked if the AVL will be seen on Google Maps. Isaac Holly, METRO IT and ITS Director, said it is already available on Google.

Director Koenig asked who owns the Cavallaro Transit Center in Scotts Valley and perhaps looking at Scotts Valley’s housing needs. CEO Tree responded that the City of Scotts Valley and METRO hold a joint ownership in the 2.5 acre parcel.

Director Brown mentioned that CEO Tree is a testament to the agency’s leadership and successes.

Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson acknowledged the hard work that goes into writing grants and thanked Mr. Mengistu and Mr. Urgo for getting it right. METRO is demonstrating that it is relevant and a community partner. People are noticing and talking about METRO.

14 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson announced the next Board Meeting will be held on Friday, May 19, 2023 AT 9:00 AM at the METRO Admin Office, 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz.

15 ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Kalantari-Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:59 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer
Executive Assistant

Attachment

From: [Brian Peoples](#)
To: boardinquiries@scmtcd.com; [Michael Tree](#)
Cc: [Donna Bauer](#); [Michael Tree](#); [Guy Preston](#); [Manu Koenig](#); "jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org"; [Bruce McPherson](#); Justin.cummings@santacruzcounty.us; Felipe.hernandez@santacruzcounty.us; rj12@comcast.net; sbrown@cityofsantacruz.com; [Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson](#); thekristenbrown@gmail.com; apedersen@ci.capitola.ca.us; vanessa.quiroz@cityofwatsonville.org; eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org; openup@cats.ucsc.edu; [Zach Friend](#); Robertpquinn@gmail.com; [Gine Johnson](#); citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org; info@scrtc.org
Subject: Metro Comments / support Mr. Guy Prestons recommendations (1st term)
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 8:36:37 AM

This Message Is From an External Sender

This message came from outside your organization.

~ Please exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments. ~

Metro Directors,

The following in our verbal statement at the upcoming Metro Board of Directors' meeting - in support of our written statement within the Metro Agenda.

Oral Statement:

First of all, we want to congratulate Santa Cruz Metro on the new grant funds for the new e-buses – what a great win for Metro and our community! Congratulations !!

Mr. Tree hopefully this makes it so a new sales tax measure is not needed to support Metro operations. Having said that, we need to get Metro the funds necessary for a world-class bus system – so if additional operational funds are required – we support providing Metro more funds from Measure D.

Following up with the letter and photo of the eagle/hawk we submitted for Oral Communications, we received this photo from a supporter who is saddened by the environmental damage that is occurring in the construction of the Coastal Trail next to the old railroad tracks.

During RTC Executive Director Guy Preston's first term as Executive Director, he recommended to the RTC Board the Interim Coastal Trail plan – based on his expertise and experience in transportation projects and systems. Mr. Preston

Attachment

understands the laws associated with railbanking and preserving the publicly-owned property as a transportation resource. When Mr. Preston recommended the Interim Coastal Trail years ago, I felt so bad for him because of the false claims made by Roaring Camp, Ms. Clark and other train advocates. They falsely claimed that their Beach Train would be closed. **More humiliating was watching the RTC Board not support Mr. Preston but listening to the false claims against Mr. Preston and his recommendation.**

These false claims carried over to the Measure D elections resulting in a “distorted message” on the community desires for the Coastal Corridor. The fact is, the public did not vote to move forward with a train on the corridor. We believe more accurate election results is the **landslide defeat of former Supervisor John Leopold** who was a big train advocate, **approval of Measure L** where Capitola residences supported using the Capitola Trestle for a trail and **2016 Measure D Sales Tax to widen Highway 1, invest in Metro and build the Coastal Trail.**

Mr. Preston has offered to walk the Coastal Corridor with RTC Board members to help inform them on the best approach to building the trail. Some have accepted his invitation and walked and heard of his personal recommendations. If you have not walked the corridor with Mr. Preston, please reach out to him and schedule a walk. We need to listen to his expertise. We find it so frustrating and sad that RTC Board would put false claims by a private company over the expert guidance by the transit expert.

Those of you who believe that Measure D was a message that the public wants a train, well, the \$8M train study is moving forward. Those who believe the public wants to preserve the corridor for a future train – that is what the Interim Trail will do. Just as thousands of other communities have done across America, we need to railbank the corridor to preserve it for future transit. **We do not need to keep the old railroad tracks to preserve if for transit in the future – as stated by Mr. Preston years ago.**

We ask Metro RTC members to listen to Mr. Preston’s recommendations years ago and not be deceived by private interest in preventing the use of the Coastal Corridor for transportation today. Please contact Mr. Preston and schedule a

Attachment

tour of the corridor and listen to his viewpoints. We need to open the Coastal Corridor as a transportation resource and that can only be done effectively by moving forward with the Interim Coastal Trail.

Best regards,

Brian Peoples
Trail Now

