



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES*
NOVEMBER 18, 2022 – 9:00 AM
MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) convened on Friday, November 18, 2022, via teleconference.

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

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- 1 CALLED TO ORDER** at 9:00 AM by Board Chair Pageler.
- 2 ROLL CALL:** The following Directors were **present** via teleconference, representing a quorum:

Director Kristen Brown	City of Capitola
Director Rebecca Downing	County of Santa Cruz
Direct 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 <i>AR 9:02</i>	County of Santa Cruz
Director Donna Meyers	City of Santa Cruz
Director Larry Pageler	County of Santa Cruz
Director Ari Parker	City of Watsonville
Director Mike Rotkin	County of Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Dan Henderson	UC Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt <i>AR 9:05</i>	Cabrillo College
Michael Tree	CEO/General Manager
Julie Sherman	General Counsel

- 3 ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Today’s meeting is being broadcast by Community Television of Santa Cruz County.
- 4 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS**
Hearing none, Chair Pageler moved to the next agenda item.

5 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, communicated support for METRO's objective in doubling its ridership and offered his group's help in publicizing that goal to help in that effort. He expressed the importance of spending taxpayer dollars effectively. He suggested those monies go to METRO for the purchase of new buses rather than to a rail system along the coastal bluffs or highway, referring to the conclusions of the Transit Corridor Alternatives Analysis (TCAA) initiated by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). He encouraged METRO representatives who sit on the RTC to support METRO and focus on METRO's needs.

Mario, Bus Operator and Watsonville citizen, spoke to METRO's intentions of eliminating Routes 69A and 91X and felt these changes would hurt the community of Watsonville that rely on these routes. He felt it unfair that service is being cut to Watsonville while increasing service on Highway 17 and to UCSC.

Manny, Bus Operator and Watsonville citizen, echoed Mario's concerns. He felt it would be better to eliminate the Watsonville Circulator over the 91X and 69A.

Daniel Dodge, public member, added that these lines are lifelines for people to get to work, healthcare, employment and education. He added that posting notices on METRO's website probably isn't reaching the riders of these routes because they may not even have access to the internet.

Discussion followed on the above route changes as well as the proposed Highway 17 route changes. It was noted that the Watsonville service was the first to be fully restored to 100% pre-COVID levels. Other routes in the system, especially UCSC and Highway 17 routes, are still trying to recover to pre-COVID levels.

Director Rotkin requested METRO staff to briefly explain the temporary changes of these routes and address METRO's outreach to the public.

John Urgo, METRO's Planning and Development Director, explained that METRO is not cutting service but restructuring the routes to provide a higher frequency of service between Watsonville, along Main Street, the Watsonville Hospital and Cabrillo College. There will be essentially no travel change between these locations. However, there will be an impact to customers traveling from downtown Watsonville to downtown Santa Cruz because that express route will be temporarily suspended. That trip will be about 10-20 minutes longer on the 71 or 69W depending on the time of day and traffic.

Mr. Urgo elaborated that service was added to the Watsonville Circulator to cover Freedom and Airport Boulevards. It was suggested earlier that METRO eliminate the Watsonville Circulator, but that is not possible. That is a grant-funded service tied to the zero-emission buses pilot program. We are required to continue operating this route.

The winter bid has been pushed back to December 22, 2022 to carry San Jose State University and Cabrillo College through their fall terms.

METRO is taking the following steps to provide information to the public:

- Post the changes to METRO's website
- Provide a FAQ to explain the changes and options available to a commuter between Watsonville and Cabrillo, Watsonville and downtown Santa Cruz, and the Highway 17 route changes
- Post physical notices at every affected bus stop
- All messages will be translated in English and Spanish

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

6 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

Having none, Chair Pageler moved to the next agenda item.

7 WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Having none, Chair Pageler moved to the next agenda item.

8 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Pageler mentioned the additional written communication received by Jonathan Flint on November 16, 2022 with METRO staff's response (attached).

CONSENT AGENDA

9.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK JOURNAL DETAIL FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2022

Chuck Farmer, CFO

9.2 ACCEPT AND FILE MINUTES OF:

A. OCTOBER 28, 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

B. NOVEMBER 11, 2022 FINANCE, BUDGET & AUDIT STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager

9.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE YEAR TO DATE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2022

Chuck Farmer, CFO

9.4 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DIRECTING THAT THE BOARD AND ITS COMMITTEE MEETINGS WILL CONTINUE TO BE HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE

Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager

9.5 ACCEPT AND FILE: QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT OF GRANT APPLICATIONS, ACTIVE AND PENDING GRANTS FOR THE FIRST QUARTER FY23

Wondimu Mengistu, Capital Planning & Grants Program Manager

9.6 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE METRO PARACRUZ OPERATIONS STATUS REPORT FOR JULY, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2022

Daniel Zaragoza, Operations Manager, Paratransit Division

- 9.7 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE METRO SYSTEM RIDERSHIP REPORTS FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF FY23
John Urgo, Planning and Development Director
- 9.8 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF DECLARING VEHICLES AND/OR EQUIPMENT AS EXCESS FOR PURPOSES OF DISPOSAL OR AUCTION
Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 9.9 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FY23 REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET/PORTFOLIO
Kristina Mihaylova, Deputy Finance Director
- 9.10 APPROVE: RECOMMENDED ACTION ON TORT CLAIMS
Curtis Moses, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director
- 9.11 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING SCHEDULE AND LOCATIONS FOR THE 2023 CALENDAR YEAR
Michael Tree, CEO/General Manager
- 9.12 ACCEPT AND FILE THE YEAR TO DATE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI) REPORT FOR QUARTER ONE AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2022
Chuck Farmer, CFO
- 9.13 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH GIRO, INC. FOR HASTUS SOFTWARE MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT
Isaac Holly, IT and ITS Director
- 9.14 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE A THIRD CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH SPECTOR CORBET AND INCREASE THE PROJECT VALUE BY \$37,500 FOR ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES AT THE METRO PARK-N-RIDE LOT
Freddy Rocha, Facilities Maintenance Manager
- 9.15 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF AWARD OF CONTRACT TO CELTIS VENTURES, INC. FOR GENERAL MARKETING SERVICES FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT TO NOT EXCEED \$1,200,000 FOR A 3-YEAR PERIOD
Danielle Glagola, Marketing, Communications, and Customer Service Director

Director Downing requested adding a location of the Community Foundation in Aptos to the 2023 meeting schedule (Item 9.11). Chair Pageler mentioned that the Board has held meetings in the past at the Capitola City Council Chambers as a mid-county location. Donna Bauer, Executive Assistant, mentioned that METRO has various entities listed in the Bylaws and all were contacted. The Capitola City Clerk's Office responded that it's not allowing outside entities to reserve space in its Chambers at this time. Director Downing said she couldn't tell from the Bylaws if there were restrictions to specific sites and requested METRO to review this further.

Director Dutra expressed gratitude for bringing the meetings back to the various jurisdictions when METRO holds meetings in person again. It provides an opportunity for those people who cannot travel outside of their communities to at least attend one meeting a year in their communities.

There were no public comments.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR KOENIG

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, McPherson, Meyers, Pageler, and Rotkin). Directors Lind and Parker were absent.

REGULAR AGENDA

10 RETIREE RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR: DEBORAH LENORE BALDWIN

Chair Pageler read Lenore's bio and thanked her for her years of service.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE RETIREE RESOLUTION AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR DOWNING

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, McPherson, Meyers, Pageler, and Rotkin). Directors Lind and Parker were absent.

11 PRESENTATION OF SAFETY CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR 1ST QUARTER ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2022: MAJOR SAFETY MILESTONE OF "ZERO INCIDENTS" (OVER 1300 ACCIDENT/INCIDENT FREE DAYS) IN THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS—ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, GRANTS & PLANNING, HUMAN RESOURCES, AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY; MOST HOURS OF SERVICE DURING COVID PANDEMIC--MIGUEL ESCARCEGA, JR., MARIO ESPINOZA, URIEL MENDOZA AND RUBEN VALDEZ

Larry Pageler, Board Chair, introduced the item and turned it over to Curtis Moses, METRO's Safety, Security, and Risk Management Director, to speak to the items. Mr. Moses said we recognized five different departments this quarter for zero accidents/incidents in 1300 days (over 4 years). Similar to what other transit agencies are doing across the nation, METRO is recognizing four employees for their hard work and dedication in transporting the public during COVID.

Chair Pageler thanked staff for recognizing these departments and employees.

Director McPherson suggested writing a letter of thanks or congratulations to those four employees. CEO Tree replied that all recipients were presented with a plaque and METRO held a recognition ceremony and lunch for all involved.

Director Downing suggested doing a press release to the The Pajaronian and Santa Cruz Sentinel with a photograph of the Bus Operators.

12 APPROVE: CONSIDERATION OF ACCEPTING METRO'S UPDATED TITLE VI PROGRAM REPORT AND AUTHORIZING ITS SUBMISSION TO THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

Julie Sherman, General Counsel, spoke to this item and explained that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination against any individual or group based on race, color or national origin in any program that receives Federal funds or financial assistance. METRO is a grantee of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the FTA provides oversight of METRO's systems and services to make sure METRO is complying with Title VI. Every three years METRO's Title VI Policy and Service Standards Policy is reviewed for updates or changes in the laws that may have occurred in that three-year period. Rickie-Ann Kegley, METRO's Paralegal II, and Hanson Bridgett's civil rights team worked together to review METRO's policy and no revisions were made to it. However, updates were made to several sections of the program to confirm it met all legal requirements. General Counsel Sherman requested the Board accept the updated Title VI program report and authorize its submission to the FTA for its review.

ACTION: MOTION TO ACCEPT METRO'S UPDATED TITLE VI PROGRAM REPORT AND AUTHORIZE ITS SUBMISSION TO THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN SECOND: DIRECTOR KALANTARI-JOHNSON

MOTION PASSED WITH 9 AYES (Directors Brown, Downing, Dutra, Kalantari-Johnson, Koenig, McPherson, Meyers, Pageler, and Rotkin). Directors Lind and Parker were absent.

13 CEO ORAL REPORT / COVID-19 UPDATE

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

COVID-19: METRO had five new cases since the Board last met; but none of the divisions within METRO triggered a minor outbreak status.

Bus Operators: We graduated seven of the nine recruits who were in training. The other two are close behind. We have 12 new recruits that will be starting class later this month. We'll do everything we can to keep and support them. We will begin advertising shortly to bring in more recruits.

Santa Cruz Sentinel Article on METRO: It mentioned the three goals discussed at the workshop. The most important of these goals is ridership, not only fully recovering it; but also going beyond and doubling it. The goal is seven million rides in five years. It is an ambitious goal but we see a path to achieve it. As seen in the public survey, riders want frequency on the key corridors, speed and reliability.

KPI Report: Everything is going in the right direction. Ridership on fixed route is up 33% over the first quarter of last year and ridership on paratransit is up 30% over the first quarter of last year. The biggest challenge is managing pass-bys generated from full buses.

Grant Opportunity: Transit Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) was created to fund transformative capital improvements such as reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, vehicle miles traveled, and congestion. We are working closely with the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) to focus on hydrogen

buses and fueling stations. We've also packaged into that grant some housing elements. All-in-all, it will be about a \$35 million grant application. We are making sure everyone in Sacramento, including those that represent us in the senate and assembly, know this is an important ask.

Community: METRO continues to be active in the community. Danielle Glagola, METRO's Marketing, Communications and Customer Service Director, lined up two activities for Halloween. The first was with the County Sheriff's Department Trunk or Treat event. METRO provided shuttle service for a few hundred people to get between Capitola Mall and the Sheriff's headquarters where the event was held. The other Trunk or Treat event was with the County Probation Office and held at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds. We continue to have a lot of fun with the community and look for ways to grow even closer to the community with regard to being a great transit system.

Director Rotkin asked if Board Members could do anything to help lobby our state elected officials on this grant. CEO Tree said the grant is due in February and we are working with CalSTA to tidy up the details. I will reach out to Board Members in advocating METRO's needs to Sacramento.

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

14 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Chair Pageler announced the next regular board meeting will be held on Friday, December 16, 2022 at 9:00 AM via teleconference.

15 ADJOURNMENT

Chair Pageler adjourned the meeting at 9:53 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer
Executive Assistant

Attachment

From: [John Urgo](#)
To: jonathan.flint@sjsu.edu
Cc: [Donna Bauer](#)
Subject: Re: Proposal to eliminate METRO service to SJSU
Date: Thursday, November 17, 2022 8:46:19 AM

Hi Jon,

Due to an ongoing shortage of bus operators currently affecting transit agencies and service across the country, METRO is suspending certain routes and trips this winter to increase efficiency and reduce redundancy of service. One such change will be a temporary suspension of service along Santa Clara in downtown San Jose to serve San Jose State University (SJSU).

Ridership on Highway 17 has doubled over the last year. Yet, METRO has only been able to bring back half of the weekday service, as compared to Pre-COVID. Removing this routing segment will enable METRO to add three additional trips on the Highway 17.

METRO and VTA riders can use a Highway 17 Express Day Pass or 31-Day Pass to board VTA buses and light rail for no additional charge. Go to scmtd.com/fares for details. In addition, SJSU students are eligible for a SmartPass Clipper card, which entitles them to unlimited rides on VTA Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. VTA serves SJSU on routes 22, 23, 64A, 64B, 66, 68, 72, 73, 500, 522, 523, 568, Blue Line, and Green Line. VTA routes that serve SJSU direct from Diridon Station include routes 64A, 64B, 68, 500, 568, and the Green light rail line.

For example, VTA Route 22 departs from Santa Clara and 5th at 8:27 p.m., Route 500 departs from Santa Clara and 7th at 8:28 p.m., and Route 522 departs at 8:27 p.m.; all three of these trips would allow you to connect to the 8:38 p.m. Highway 17 bus at Diridon as scheduled.

We are actively recruiting and expect to continue to increase our driver numbers. We will discuss the opportunity to resume operating the Highway 17 Express to serve SJSU and whether this change can be made for the spring schedule (March) or in subsequent schedule changes.

FAQ

Q: I currently take Highway 17 to downtown San Jose. What are my options?

A: METRO and VTA riders can use a Highway 17 Express Day Pass or 31-Day Pass to board VTA buses and light rail for no additional charge. In addition, SJSU students are eligible for a SmartPass Clipper card, which entitles them to unlimited rides on VTA Local & Rapid buses, Limited routes, and Light Rail lines. VTA routes that serve SJSU direct from Diridon Station include routes 64A, 64B, 68, 500, 568, and the Green light

Attachment

rail line.

Q: Will there be more Highway 17 trips in winter?

A: In the Winter schedule, METRO is adding three additional weekday trips, in both northbound and southbound directions.

From: Jon Flint <jonathan.flint@sjsu.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 7:55 PM
To: boardinquiries@scmtd.com
Subject: Proposal to eliminate METRO service to SJSU

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Dear Santa Cruz Metro Board of Directors,

I am writing to you to express my concern as a Santa Cruz County resident about the proposed elimination of route stops for the Highway 17 Express Bus to San Jose State University.

I rely on the Highway 17 bus when traveling from Scotts Valley to SJSU, where I am studying in the masters in public administration program. In fact, an important factor in why my wife and I moved to and bought a condo in 2021 on Bluebonnet Ln in Scotts Valley was that I could affordably commute from the Cavallaro Station to SJSU for two night classes per week.

If the route stops are eliminated, it will add a 40 minute walk from campus to Didiron Station. Alternatively, I would need to leave class 20 or thirty minutes before the end to ensure that I could arrive at Didiron through city bus routes or walking. If I miss the 8:30 pm time now, it means that I arrive home after 10:30 pm. I work full time at a Santa Cruz County non profit supporting adults with developmental disabilities.

I would likely stop taking the Highway 17 bus entirely if the SJSU stop is eliminated.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter,

Jonathan Flint
268 Bluebonnet Ln, Unit 225
Scotts Valley, CA 95066