



**SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (METRO)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES*
APRIL 26, 2024 – 9:00 AM**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) convened on Friday, April 26, 2024, 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.

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

2 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 <i>AR 9:03 AM</i>	City of Watsonville
Director Mike Rotkin	County of Santa Cruz
Ex-Officio Director Alta Northcutt	Cabrillo College
Ex-Officio Director Edward Reiskin	UC Santa Cruz
Daniel Zaragoza	Interim CEO/GM
Julie Sherman	General Counsel

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

3.2 Maria Avila, Language Line Services, provided Spanish language interpretation services.

4 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Director Koenig mentioned a recent trip to CSAC (California State Association of Counties) Legislative Conference using public transportation. He experienced the real-time tracking information on the buses and praised METRO staff on making these improvements.

Board Chair Brown thanked Daniel Zaragoza, Interim CEO/General Manager, for leading the agency in this time of transition.

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

5 ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Chair Brown announced there were two additional written communications received and will be added to the agenda packet.

Carol Roberts, Phil Gomez, and Stanley Brown, members of the public, expressed concerns about the impacts to their neighborhood since buses started running on Willowbrook Lane in Aptos.

Wayne Ross, member of the public, made several suggestions to the Board: modify the bike racks on the buses to accommodate the wider-wheeled bikes; stop printing Headways to save money; provide solar-powered charging stations for cell phones and charge for their usage; select Board Members through elections vs. appointments; and provide better customer service between Bus Operators and the public.

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

6 LABOR ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATIONS

Brandon Freeman, SMART General Chairperson, Local 0023, provided a response to the concerns raised on Willowbrook Lane. This route was chosen for safety reasons. Other options were explored but this was the most viable option. METRO is currently in negotiations with Cabrillo College to find an alternative turnaround point.

He also expressed gratitude for all that Interim CEO/GM Zaragoza has done for the agency over the years in his various roles and shepherding METRO through these changes.

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

7 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT EXISTING AGENDA ITEMS

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

CONSENT AGENDA

8.1 ACCEPT AND FILE: PRELIMINARY APPROVED CHECK JOURNAL DETAIL FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2024

Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer

8.2 ACCEPT AND FILE MINUTES OF MARCH 22, 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

Daniel Zaragoza, Interim CEO/General Manager

8.3 ACCEPT AND FILE: THE YEAR TO DATE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF MARCH 31, 2024

Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer

- 8.4 CONSIDERATION OF DECLARING VEHICLES AND/OR EQUIPMENT AS EXCESS FOR PURPOSES OF DISPOSAL OR AUCTION
Chuck Farmer, Chief Financial Officer
- 8.5 RECOMMENDED ACTION ON TORT CLAIMS
Gregory Strecker, Safety, Security & Risk Management Director
- 8.6 CONTRACT FOR TRANSIT SERVICES WITH THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ FOR SERVICE TO THE SOUTH COUNTY GOVERNMENT SERVICES CENTER
John Urgo, Planning & Development Director
- 8.7 CONSIDER A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING THE INTERIM CEO/GENERAL MANAGER AS THE AUTHORIZED AGENT TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO RECEIVE FORMULA FUNDS FROM THE FY24 LOW CARBON TRANSIT OPERATIONS PROGRAM
Derek Touts, Capital Planning and Grants Programs Manager
- 8.8 ADOPT AN ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY FOR DESIGN-BUILD PROJECTS
Julie Sherman, General Counsel

There were no public comments.

The Board Chair called for a roll call vote on Items 8.1 – 8.8.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED

MOTION: DIRECTOR ROTKIN

SECOND: DIRECTOR KOENIG

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

REGULAR AGENDA

- 9 **PRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEE LONGEVITY AWARDS FOR: (20 YEARS) JUAN GALLEGOS BELMARES**
Board Chair Brown thanked Mr. Belmares for his 20 years of service at METRO.
- 10 **SANTA CRUZ METRO RAPID CORRIDORS STUDY**
John Urgo, Planning & Development Director, spoke to the presentation. He highlighted that the study focuses on making METRO's core intercity routes faster, more reliable, and easier to access. He covered the public outreach performed with the community, operators, and local jurisdictions and feedback received. He finished by reviewing the improvement goals of enhanced bus stop amenities, relocation/consolidation of rapid bus stops, bus bulbs and transit islands, transit signal priority, enhanced pedestrian crossings, queue jumps, and road and intersection improvements.

Discussion followed on:

- Implementation time frame
- Removal of bus stops
- Bus pullouts vs. transit islands
- Travel time saved by implementing free fares systemwide
- Tracking and addressing complaints
- ADA compliance at transit islands
- Funding
- Updating METRO design standards/guidelines to incorporate study recommendations
- Aesthetics of bus stops/shelters on local routes vs. rapid corridors
- Digital ads/displays
- Impacts to housing and climate change along these corridors
- Consider the change in ridership before/after school terms begin/end
- Mar Vista Drive bus stop
- Buffered Bike and Congestion Mitigation Project
- Providing service to 100,000 residents within a one-half mile stop

Staff addressed all concerns.

Mr. Freeman gave an example of time spent currently dwelling at bus stops and the subsequent bunching effect of the buses. He emphasized that making these changes highlighted in the study are critical to achieving METRO's goals.

A member of the public asked if the transit signal priority (TSP) only applies to these corridors in the study. Mr. Urgo responded that all signals used in the county were requested for the TSP but did not get funded.

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

11 INTERIM CEO/GM ORAL REPORT

Daniel Zaragoza, Interim CEO/General Manager, announced the following items:

- Recognized the Safety & Training Coordinators (Leo Peña, Robert Valdivia, and Chrystal Ayres) and introduced the new Administrative Specialist, Suzie Mistry.
- METRO's One Ride at a Time (ORAT) campaign is a finalist for the CAPIO (California Association of Public Information Officials) award in the Most Innovative Communications category. The first place and runner up will be announced on May 14, 2024.
- Congratulated Danielle Glagola, Marketing and Communications Director, on receiving the CALACT Rising Star Award for new professionals in the public transit industry.
- Congratulated Margo Ross, Chief Operations Officer, on being appointed to the CTA Finance and Management Committee and Operations Committee. This was awarded to COO Ross in recognition of her knowledge and experience in the transit industry.

- Gregory Strecker, Safety, Security and Risk Management Director, attained his CSP (Certified Safety Professionals) certification from the Board of Certified Safety Professionals.
- METRO celebrated Earth Day by participating in the City of Santa Cruz Earth Day event on April 20, 2024. On Earth Day, April 22, 2024, METRO offered free fares countywide.
- METRO will participate in Kids Day in downtown Santa Cruz on May 4, 2024.
- METRO will participate in Fun Day on May 10, 2024 at the Santa Cruz County Mounted Posse Grounds.
- Reminded the attendees that METRO is celebrating Transit Appreciation Day after the Board meeting at the Judy K. Souza Operations Facility.

He thanked METRO's management, staff, unions and Board Members for all their support during this transition period.

Director Dutra thanked Interim CEO/GM Zaragoza for stepping in and running things so smoothly. He also suggested that METRO review the option of discontinuing the printed version of Headways and instead consider a digital version. Ms. Glagola said METRO had previously reviewed this option but has received requests to continue the paper version, especially from those without internet access, but was open to exploring the option again.

There were no public comments.

12 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Board Chair Brown announced the next regular Board meeting will be on Friday, May 17, 2024, at 9:00 AM at the METRO Admin Office, 110 Vernon Street, Santa Cruz, CA.

13 ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 10:21 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bauer
Executive Assistant