

**San Joaquin Regional Rail JPA Board Meeting  
Minutes of the March 24, 2017 Meeting**

The San Joaquin Regional Rail JPA met on March 24, 2017 from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM in Modesto, CA. The following transpired:

1. **Attendees** – Chair Chisea (Stanislaus Co.), Vice-Chair Tatzin (Contra Costa Co.), Nottoli (Sacramento Co./RT), Espinoza (Merced Co), Haggerty (Alameda Co.), Verboon (Kings Co.), Frazier (Madera Co.), Quintero (Fresno Co.), Shuklian (Tulare Co.)
2. **Actions and Consent Calendar** –
  - Board swore in new members
  - Board approved the Consent Items without comment
  - The next SJJPA Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 26, 2017 in Fresno, CA; the Board approved having a call-in number for this meeting.
3. **Public Comments** – Mr. Steve Roberts of the RailPAC discussed the proposed federal budget and the implications it would have on the SJJPA. He noted that the proposed elimination of the Amtrak operating subsidy at the federal level for federal savings would shift the burden to the states and to the SJJPA for the routes and services provided resulting in an increase in fares, a reduction of services, or increased pressure on the state to cover the costs and defund something else. The Chair of the Board noted he shared the concern.
4. **San Joaquin Valley Committee Report** – Mr. Daniel Krause of the SJJPA provided an overview of the citizens-based working group. He noted that the last meeting was March 3<sup>rd</sup> and that 18 members from 12 Counties and four Amtrak representatives attended. The group consists of community members nominated by the members of the SJJPA (SacRT has Mr. Steve Cohn and Mr. Mike Costa as representatives).

The group was “energized” and focused on a review of the Draft 2017 SJJPA Business Plan and made several suggestions on enhancements to the text of the Plan with the key focus being on-time performance, increasing business attractiveness, improving and rehabilitating the stations (but don’t displace adjacent neighbors), increase marketing for the bus services, evaluate commuter bus and focus on the University student market, in particular.

Mr. Krause also noted that the following items have been discussed with the citizens-based working group and will be studied further by the SJJPA in FY18:

- QR Codes to take passengers to websites with up-to-the-moment status on trains, etc.
- New signage at stations.

- Potential new stations at the Coliseum/Oakland Airport, along the Sacramento Subdivision, I80/Natomas with a Sacramento International Airport connection, and Marysville.
- New Kern County to San Jose commuter bus connection service.

- 5. Review Public Comments on Draft 2017 SJJPA Business Plan Update** – Mr. Dan Levitz of the SJJPA provided an overview of the Business Plan and the comments received. He noted that written comments were received from eight of the SJJPA agencies (including RT) and all were positive and supportive. He noted that one public individual had provided comments expressing skepticism about the viability of the “Morning Express” service (getting to Sacramento by 8 AM) and that the group Train Riders of California (TRAC) also expressed concern about the Morning Express and suggested that a parallel ROW and 110 MPH service should be studied further. Mr. Levitz noted that these issues are presently under study and the Business Plan does not select any approach at this time.

Mr. Levitz also noted that the items discussed in Agenda Item #4 (above) had been added to the Draft Business Plan for further study. Supportive comments were then provided by the Co-Chair of the San Joaquin Valley Committee. No action required.

- 6. Approve Resolution to Approve Business Plan and Allow Board Members to Participate via Teleconference on the Final Business Plan Presented for Adoption** – Mr. Dan Levitz of the SJJPA provided a brief overview of the Business Plan approval process. He noted the Business Plan needed to be prepared annually and this was required to continue receiving state funding. Mr. Levitz noted that the Draft Plan needed to be approved by the Board, the Draft is then submitted to CalSTA and reviewed by the Agency and then the Final version will be approved again by the SJJPA Board in May 2017. Any comments or changes made by CalSTA will be presented to the Board at the May meeting. Also on the Agenda was a motion to allow for a call-in for the Final Business Plan. The SJJPA Board approved this 9-0.

- 7. Approve Resolution Authorizing One-Year and Three-Month Agreement for Advertising, Social Media and Graphics to Jeffrey Scott Agency (JSA) for a NTE \$352K** – Mr. David Lipari of the SJJPA provided an overview of this item. He noted that this \$352K contract consisted of two budget efforts: 1) To fund work that was previously approved through a competitive selection process; and 2) Shift funds from other firms who were non-performing to this firm to do the work. There was/is no fiscal impact to the SJJPA as the funds were already budgeted.

Questions were raised by several Board Members given the size of the contract. It was noted that this was not a “sole source” contract, rather a “single source” contract by the SJJPA Legal Counsel. Discussion extended for over 60 minutes regarding the matter and the size of the contract. The issue of having to put the work back out to bid and the delays this would incur on the outreach and marketing process and campaign was noted in the discussion as a concern.

The item was temporarily stopped so that Agenda Item #8 could be viewed and the results discussed.

After much discussion, the SJJPA Board voted to direct staff to keep the graphics and social media components totaling \$175K with the Jeffrey Scott Agency and to prepare an RFP for release in August 2017 for Advertising Services for \$175K. A modified Action reflecting this separation of efforts was approved 9-0 by the SJJPA Board.

- 8. Connecting California Campaign Overview** – Mr. David Lipari of the SJJPA and a representative of the Jeffrey Scott Agency (JSA) firm, provided an overview of this item. He noted that this is an “umbrella campaign” for the San Joaquins and was being conducted by the JSA with three key points: 1) having social media contact with the public and Twitter users has grown 4-fold since that last summer to over 10,000 as has Facebook users; 2) a photo contest occurred between 12/20/16 and 1/30/17 with riders taking photos and he showed the winners to the audience; and 3) an Art Hop component in Fresno where an entire Gallery was used for presentation of the photos taken with presentation by staff. No action required. Following this presentation, the Agenda went back to Item #7.
- 9. Update on Morning Express Service** -- Mr. Dan Levitz of the SJJPA provided an update on the proposed Morning Express service. He noted that the service would be implemented in 2018 and this would allow trains to arrive at 8 AM and 11:20 AM in Sacramento and depart at 12:40 PM and 5:40 PM – thus allowing riders to be in Sacramento for a ½-day or full-day and be more conducive to business travelers as an alternative to the car. This proposed service accomplished several items which were underway and needed to be completed:
  - A “temporary layover” facility south of Fresno has been identified and agreed-to by the UPRR and the B-N railroads and is now under design and will be constructed for \$1.5M with state funding in place.
  - Additional parking spaces and some station information signing, lighting upgrades and other minor upgrades at Fresno, Merced, Turlock/Denair, Modesto and Stockton stations would occur. Total costs are in excess of \$2.5M systemwide with funding in place from state sources (\$1.2M) and a San Joaquin COG CMAQ grant (1.3M).
- 10. San Joaquins Operations Update** – A brief update of the San Joaquins was provided by staff:
  - On-Time Performance was down to just over 65% due to the inclement weather and slow order generated by the UP. It was also noted that the train derailment near Cosumnes River as a result of the flows had contributed to reduced operation achievement.
  - Ridership is up about 2% over the last year and had been increasing more until the on-time performance issues due to the inclement weather affected it.
  - New locomotives will be introduced into revenue service this spring which will allow for higher operating speeds and more fuel efficiency and reduce operating costs.

- An Emergency Preparedness Exercise was completed on the San Joaquins as a national effort and included representatives from multiple federal, state and local agencies intended to test the ability of the agencies to respond to a terrorist incident. The results were positive and the agencies “worked extremely well together”.
- There are currently eight (8) Law Enforcement Officers riding the San Joaquins “undercover” in the sense that they are off-duty going to/from work, but available if needed for any incident by Amtrak/San Joaquin service staff.

**11. Appoint One Board Member to the Executive Director’s Ad-Hoc Working Group** – Mr. Verboon from Kings County was selected to replace Mr. Ashida who previously represented the south San Joaquin Valley but did not run for re-election in 2016. This position is one of three representing the geographic coverage of the San Joaquins and work with staff on an ad-hoc basis to address key issues.

**12. Executive Director’s Report** – Ms. Stacey Mortensen provided a very brief update on the SJJPA. In particular, she noted:

- Form 700 is due from Board Members by the end of March 2017.
- A Historic Locomotive has been found and will be released by the UPRR to the SJJPA and will be placed on display in a southern San Joaquin Valley community.
- The SJJPA is actively following and lobbying the state on SB1 (transportation funding) for trying to get allocations of funding for commuter and intercity rail. The challenge is the larger transit agencies that want allocations going to the COGs/MPOs by formula and then distributed. Having funding directly allocated to the commuter/intercity rail providers provides more stability and potentially more funding. The issue is a challenging one and decisions are still uncertain.

**13. Board Comments** – No Board Members comments were made.

**Adjournment** -- The SJJPA Board meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 PM. The next SJJPA Board meeting is scheduled for May 26, 2017 and will be held in Fresno. Because the 2018 Business Plan has to be approved this fiscal year and a quorum is required to hold a vote, a call-in option for this meeting was approved (Agenda Item #2).