

## **STAFF REPORT**

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**DATE:** April 10, 2023  
**TO:** Sacramento Regional Transit Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Tabetha Smith, Clerk to the Board  
**SUBJ:** APPROVAL OF THE ACTION SUMMARY OF MARCH 27, 2023

### RECOMMENDATION

Motion to Approve.

**SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
BOARD MEETING  
March 27, 2023**

**ROLL CALL:** Roll Call was taken at 5:31 p.m. PRESENT: Directors Budge, Daniels, Hume, Jennings, Kozlowski, Serna, Valenzuela, and Chair Kennedy. Directors Loloee and Maple arrived at 5:38 p.m. Absent: Director Singh-Allen.

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Kennedy started the meeting with a moment of silence in remembrance of Steve Miller, former SacRT Director and Board Chair, who recently passed away.

**2. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- 2.1 Motion: Approval of the Action Summary of February 27, 2023
- 2.2 Resolution 2023-03-023: First Amendment to the FY 2023 Operating Budget  
(J. Johnson)
- 2.3 Resolution 2023-03-024: Approve Design, Development and Construction Support Project Agreement for 7<sup>th</sup> Street Light Rail Station Between Downtown Railyard Venture, LLC and Sacramento Regional Transit District (L. Ham)
- 2.4 Approving the First Amendment and Conditionally Delegating Authority to the General Manager/CEO to Approve Work Order No. 4 with AECOM Technical Services, Inc. to Provide Environmental Support for the Sacramento Valley Station Relocation (L. Ham)
  - A) Resolution 2023-03-027: Approving the First Amendment to the Contract for Environmental Support Services With AECOM Technical Services, Inc.; and
  - B) Resolution 2023-03-028: Conditionally Delegating Authority to the General Manager/CEO to Approve Work Order No 4 to the Contract for Environmental Support Services With AECOM Technical Services, Inc. to Provide Environmental Support for the Sacramento Valley Station Relocation Project
- 2.5 Resolution 2023-03-026: Approving the Second Amendment to the Contract for Final Design Services for Rail Modernization 15-Minute Light Rail Service to Folsom Project with AECOM Technical Services, Inc. (L. Ham)

2.6 Resolution 2023-03-025: Approving the Use of Developer Fees Towards Bus Purchases (L. Ham)

Public comment was taken by phone from Jeffery Tardaguila.

Mr. Tardaguila recognized Steve Miller's contributions and asked for clarification of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting on March 15, 2023.

***ACTION: APPROVED - Director Serna moved; Director Budge seconded approval of the consent calendar as written. Motion was carried by voice vote. Ayes: Directors Budge, Daniels, Hume, Jennings, Kozlowski, Serna, Valenzuela and Chair Kennedy. Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Directors Loloee, Maple and Singh-Allen.***

**3. INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

**4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**5. PUBLIC HEARING**

**6. PUBLIC ADDRESSES BOARD ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Public comment was taken by phone from Jeffery Tardaguila and Dan Allison.

Mr. Tardaguila asked if there were any similarities to the three Siemens Light Rail vehicle incidents that went off the tracks and recommended having workshops in lieu of canceling meetings.

Mr. Allison, representing Sacramento Transit Advocates and Riders (STAR), is wondering what the right answer is after the failure of Measure A.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

7.1 Motion: Authorize the General Manager/CEO to Pursue a Legislative Amendment to SacRT Enabling Legislation Relative to the Board's Composition and Voting Structure (C. Flores)

Chris Flores provided a brief history of SacRT's Board Composition and Voting Structure. He stated a committee was created to address representation concerns voiced by Sacramento County and the City of Elk Grove following annexations and the switch to one member, on vote structure in 2022.

The Board Composition and Voting Structure Ad Hoc Committee met on March 15, 2023 and unanimously voted to recommend to the Board to pass a motion allowing the General Manager/CEO to pursue additional Board seats for Elk Grove and the County of Sacramento. Mr. Flores noted that Director Valenzuela was unable to attend due to a

scheduling conflict. He mentioned that a unanimous vote is needed to move forward and the Committee recommended continuing to convene to discuss potential changes to SacRT's structure for Board members including alternates, caps, and adding additional members.

Mr. Flores stated that currently, Assemblymember Nguyen has legislation, AB 354, serving as a placeholder for board composition changes.

Director Valenzuela has no objections to adding a seat for the City of Elk Grove; however, City staff has concerns about adding a seat to the County of Sacramento.

Public comment was taken by phone from Dan Allison (STAR) and Jeffery Tardaguila.

Mr. Allison stated that STAR supports adding a seat for Elk Grove and Sacramento County. They also support non-elected members serving on the Board as alternates and Board members.

Mr. Tardaguila agreed with Mr. Allison and suggested a fact sheet be used moving forward to make things simple to understand as far as the changes being considered.

Director Budge shared there was a very comprehensive discussion regarding board composition and the voting structure which is how a recommendation was established.

Director Daniels asked why a unanimous vote is required.

Mr. Flores explained that Ms. Nguyen would like to see unanimous consent to move forward.

Director Daniels asked for clarification on populations and number of votes for the City and County of Sacramento.

Mr. Flores responded that the City of Sacramento's population is 518,000 and they have 4 votes, and the unincorporated County of Sacramento has a population of 580,000 and they have 3 votes.

Director Daniels asked if the City took a position on Director Valenzuela's vote.

Director Valenzuela explained the City's stance but stated that they did not vote on the position.

Director Budge shared it is difficult to use service levels as a basis for number of board seats.

Director Serna asked if it is legislation or the Assemblywoman's desire that the Board vote unanimously. He feels that requiring a unanimous vote would allow one person to prevent the Board from moving forward.

Mr. Flores clarified it is a desire to see unanimous consent among the Board.

Director Serna suggested that before the Board considers the item that there is a clear understanding of the Board's desire.

Chair Kennedy agreed.

Mr. Flores mentioned the voting could be separated to vote on one item.

Mr. Hume moved to approve an additional seat for Elk Grove.

Director Budge seconded.

Director Serna wanted additional clarification about the issue of the vote needing to be unanimous or a simple majority vote on a motion.

Chair Kennedy does not think unanimity should be required.

Director Budge reminded the Board that Assemblymember Cooley felt the same way, that the vote should be unanimous.

Director Serna explained that normally a majority vote rules and he is nervous when a unanimous vote is expected as it gives each Board member unusual authority.

Public comment was taken from Rick Hodgkins.

Mr. Hodgkins shared that the Board should make sure Elk Grove is treated equally.

Director Maple asked if there was an urgency for the vote to happen this evening.

Mr. Flores mentioned provisions would need to be done by June.

Director Loloee asked what the advantage of the unanimous vote is to the Assemblymember and he would like a clearer understanding.

Mr. Flores shared he would go back to the Assemblymember's office to clarify their expectation.

Director Serna proposed a substitute motion of postponing the item.

Chair Kennedy stated unanimity is unrealistic and moving forward, if there were no unanimity, he would like to go forward with a recommendation.

***ACTION - Director Serna moved to continue the item; Director Kozlowski seconded. Motion was carried by roll call vote. Ayes: Directors Budge, Daniels, Hume, Jennings, Kozlowski, Loloee, Maple, Serna, Valenzuela and Chair Kennedy. Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Director Singh-Allen.***

## **8. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

- 8.1 General Manager's Report
  - a. Major Project Updates

- b. SacRT Meeting Calendar
- c. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- d. Customer Service Update

Mr. Li welcomed everyone to the first in-person meeting in more than three years.

Mr. Li remembered SacRT past-Chair, Steve Miller, sharing that he passed over the weekend. He thanked him for the many memories while serving on the SacRT Board for 16 years and leaving a lasting legacy on the agency and the entire region.

Mr. Li acknowledged that March 18<sup>th</sup> was Transit Driver Appreciation Day. SacRT has over 700 operators who diligently work to keep the buses and trains moving and is thankful to have 97% service levels due to effective recruitment efforts and a dedicated workforce.

Mr. Li acknowledged that March is Women's History Month and in recognition, SacRT celebrates the historical importance, achievements, and influence of women in the transit industry. He proudly shared that at SacRT the average pay for female employees is slightly higher than male employees and the majority of the management staff is women.

Mr. Li provided a Light Rail Modernization update. At the beginning of the month, SacRT celebrated a landmark achievement with delivery of the first new low-floor light rail vehicle. Mr. Li thanked Board members who attended the photo opportunity and announced later this summer, SacRT will celebrate the groundbreaking for an additional track in Folsom.

Mr. Li congratulated SacRT staff on completing the Bus Stop Improvement Plan which includes a comprehensive list of necessary and desired improvements to bus stops throughout SacRT's service area and identifies over \$65 million worth of improvements to 630 bus stops.

Mr. Li attended the APTA Legislative Conference in Washington DC to hear about federal legislation and policy initiatives and had the pleasure of meeting with Federal Transit Administrator Nuria Fernandez and her staff to update them on SacRT's services, and advocate for various projects. Sacramento is ranked 31<sup>st</sup> out of the top 50 urbanized areas in the nation with the most transit travel in North America. Mr. Li invited Board members that will be attending Cap to Cap to join him at a scheduled meeting with Nuria Fernandez and Department of Transportation staff.

Mr. Li concluded his remarks reminding everyone that SacRT is turning 50 years old next week. Many events are planned to celebrate the significant role SacRT has played in shaping the community over the past half century.

Mr. Li introduced Devra Selenis to present the planned 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Ms. Selenis shared the updated logo that represents the milestone anniversary and then gave a general overview which included a multitude of elements including community events and Free Ride Transit Tuesdays. She announced the celebration will kick off with a press

event at the Cosumnes River College Station where Board members and regional leaders will speak and SacRT will unveil the anniversary bus and light rail train.

Public comment was taken by phone from Rick Hodgkins.

Mr. Hodgkins asked if with the platforms being raised system wide, how someone would cross the tracks to go the opposite direction.

Chair Kennedy asked Mr. Li if staff could follow up with Mr. Hodgkins.

Carmen Alba presented an Operations and Customer Service Update. She offered a peer comparison for service and ridership and discussed service interruptions and the challenge of bus cancellations. She explained that operator absences (planned and unplanned) remain a significant challenge.

Ms. Alba touched on light rail service stating on time performance is 98% and the cancellation rate is at 1.3% which is primarily due to weather and workforce shortages.

Ms. Alba went over passenger communication tools that are utilized and recognized it is imperative that passenger notifications are timely, and communication is clear.

Ms. Alba provided information regarding the managing of bus trips, fleet utilization by route and how SacRT operations mitigates bus cancellations. Ms. Alba introduced David Topaz to continue the topic of mitigation efforts including HR initiatives to address staffing challenges.

Director Budge asked what a “tripper” was.

Ms. Alba responded that in house they are “commuters” or “school trippers” which occur in the morning or evening. They are not all-day routes.

Director Valenzuela offered a similar explanation regarding “school trippers”.

Mr. Topaz shared SacRT’s Human Resource efforts to improve operator staffing some of which include hiring bonuses, paid training, and competitive wages. SacRT has invested in improving staffing which has resulted in a 12% increase in costs for FY2024.

Mr. Li emphasized that to maintain the current level of service, SacRT needs added staff to cover for the additional sick leave and this is an industry-wide trend.

Mr. Topaz covered SacRT’s attendance and leave management details. He announced SacRT has a new Training and Workforce Development Department that was established in May 2022 and focuses on developing quality training content for staff, supervisors, and managers to foster engagement and development of staff at all levels. Mr. Topaz stated Customer Service training is being implemented on day one of new employment training. Mr. Topaz said SacRT if focusing on quality communication, messaging, accountability,

and corrective action while incentivizing good customer service and rewarding good behavior with employee recognition programs.

Ms. Alba concluded the presentation recognizing the vast majority of staff in operations show up every day and provide excellent service to the citizens of Sacramento.

Director Valenzuela thanked staff for the helpful breakdown. She believes the absentee issue is a shift in the industry with exposure being very high and wonders if it is safe to assume it will continue at this frequency for a while.

Mr. Li mentioned it is kind of a new habit. If staff does not feel comfortable, they will call out. He also corrected a previous statement regarding sick time increasing by 10% when it is actually increased by 20-30%.

Director Valenzuela would like to be careful to not incentivize unwanted behavior such as encouraging employees to work when they are not feeling well.

Ms. Alba agreed with Director Valenzuela and stressed that SacRT discourages staff to come to work when they are sick and also mentioned it does result in additional costs.

Director Maple thanked staff for the presentation. She asked how SacRT is incentivizing employment and if the wages are competitive to combat the workforce shortage.

Mr. Topaz shared operator wages have increased substantially as of January 1. By the end of the four year contract, SacRT will have moved up 5 spaces as far as the ranking in the country. Also, SacRT hired almost 300 people last year during a pandemic and nationwide driver shortage.

Director Budge asked if there was any success with hiring refugees.

Mr. Topaz is not aware of any specific hires but, SacRT is actively interested in hiring, is attending community events and career fair days.

Director Loloee requested an email with requirements of employment as his district has almost 3,500 Afghanistan families and he would like to share the opportunity with them.

Chair Kennedy recommended coordinating with SETA as they have a refugee program and he thanked staff for recognizing not every route is created equally.

Public comment was taken by phone from Jeffery Tardaguila.

Mr. Tardaguila thanked Ms. Alba for bringing the information regarding bus cancellations to the Board and providing information about how the concerns are being addressed.

## **9. REPORTS, IDEAS AND QUESTIONS FROM DIRECTORS, AND COMMUNICATIONS**



9.1 Sacramento Placerville Transportation Corridor Joint Powers Authority Meeting Summary of March 13, 2023 (Budge)

Director Serna expressed his concern regarding two intersections, 7<sup>th</sup> and H Street and 8<sup>th</sup> and H Street. He stated when drivers encroach the intersection and operators attempt to make a turn, that the operator will lay on horn until the light changes and the vehicles clear. He is requesting if this is not a safety requirement, that the operators are retrained on the use of audible signaling.

Mr. Li responded that if it is not in violation of policy, it will be stopped immediately.

Director Valenzuela shared her concern for the funding of the SmaRT Ride program. She asked for staff to review the language of Measure A and make a case to STA to get additional discretionary funding to keep the service going.

Director Budge expressed concern of students at closed campuses using SmaRT Ride at lunch to take them to local restaurants.

10. **CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC ADDRESSES BOARD ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (If Necessary)**
11. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSED SESSION ITEMS**
12. **RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION**
13. **CLOSED SESSION**
14. **RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**
15. **CLOSED SESSION REPORT**
16. **ADJOURN**

As there was no further business to be conducted, the meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

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PATRICK KENNEDY, Chair

A T T E S T:  
HENRY LI, Secretary

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tabetha Smith, Assistant Secretary