



DRAFT MINUTES

SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

1. Roll Call

Chair Peskin called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Present at Roll Call: Commissioners Haney, Mar, Mandelman, Peskin, Ronen, Walton and Yee (7)

Absent at Roll Call: Commissioners Brown (entered during Item 3), Safai (entered during Item 3), Fewer (entered during Item 12) and Stefani (entered during Item 12) (4)

Commissioner Mandelman moved to excuse Commissioners Fewer and Stefani, seconded by Commissioner Yee. Commissioners Fewer and Stefani were excused without objection.

2. Chair's Report – INFORMATION

Chair Peskin reported 2019 had gotten off to a terrible start with 8 fatalities taking place on city streets. He announced that earlier that morning there was a crash between a vehicle and a bicycle in District 3. He provided an overview of the March 14, 2019 Vision Zero Committee meeting and stated that the 2018 Traffic Fatality Report showed 23 fatalities, of which 18 were lost on foot and bicycle and in the preceding 5 years, pedestrians accounted for 65% of traffic fatalities of which 52% were in Communities of Concern and 73% were people age 50 and older. From the Vision Zero Committee meeting he also reported that Commissioner Fewer provided moving remarks about the loss of two seniors in District 1, and the importance of addressing high-injury corridors like California Street. He also mentioned that the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) discussed the shortage of enforcement officers and motorcycle units in the Traffic Division and a troubling trend of hit and runs, which SFPD is actively investigating. He added that the SFPD could benefit from additional motorcycle units.

Chair Peskin further updated the Board on the previous week's Vision Zero Committee meeting by stating that the committee heard about the Vision Zero Action Strategy and how the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) was responding to Mayor Breed's directive on rapid response projects to expedite projects such as on Folsom and Howard streets. He said it was good to see the 5th to 6th streets protected lanes going in on Howard last weekend, as requested by Commissioner Haney and Mayor Breed. Lastly, in regard to the Vision Zero Committee meeting he stated that Chair Yee called for a review of how well the city implemented the last 2-year Action Strategy and Commissioner Stefani suggested that the SFMTA education and outreach team work on ways to update drivers on the newer rules and regulations.

Chair Peskin said he would be tracking progress on the many Vision Zero high-injury network projects in District 3 and advancing citywide strategic initiatives like congestion pricing and the Transportation Network Company (TNC) tax that the city was preparing for the November ballot.

He said his hope was that half of the TNC tac fund would be used for safer streets and Vision Zero improvements, with the other half being used to accelerate transit projects. Chair Peskin concluded his report by announcing that the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition would be holding a protected bike lane rally on the steps of City Hall at 12:30 pm.

There was no public comment.

3. Executive Director's Report – INFORMATION

Tilly Chang, Executive Director, presented the Executive Director's Report.

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

- 4. Approve the Minutes of the March 12, 2019 Meeting – ACTION**
- 5. [Final Approval] Reappointment of Myla Ablog and Appointment of Sophia Tupuola and Ranyee Chiang to the Citizens Advisory Committee – ACTION**
- 6. [Final Approval] State and Federal Legislation Update – ACTION**
- 7. [Final Approval] Allocate \$560,000 in Prop K Sales Tax Funds, with Conditions, for the 20th Avenue Neighborway Project – ACTION**
- 8. [Final Approval] Amend the Prop AA Strategic Plan – ACTION**
- 9. [Final Approval] Authorize the Executive Director to Execute a Cooperative Agreement with the California Department of Transportation; License Agreements with the United States Coast Guard; the Utility Relocation Agreement and Amendments to the Memorandums of Agreements (MOAs) for the Construction Phase and with the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA); an Amendment Increasing the Right-of-Way MOA with TIDA by \$1,334,760 Million, to a Total Amount Not to Exceed \$5,534,760 Million; the Right of Way Certification; and the California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act Revalidation for the Yerba Buena Island Southgate Road Realignment Improvements Project – ACTION**
- 10. [Final Approval] Acceptance of the Audit Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2018 – ACTION**

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Mandelman.

The Consent Agenda was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Brown, Haney, Mar, Mandelman, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Walton and Yee (9)

Absent: Commissioners Fewer and Stefani (2)

Items from the Vision Zero Committee

11. [Final Approval] Vision Zero Legislative Update – ACTION

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Walton.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Brown, Haney, Mar, Mandelman, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Walton and Yee (9)

Absent: Commissioners Fewer and Stefani (2)

Direct to Board Items

12. Progress Report for Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project – INFORMATION

Peter Gabancho, Project Manager for the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project at the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) presented the item.

Chair Peskin asked for a breakdown of Phases 1A - 1D of the Van Ness BRT project construction sequence presentation slide.

Mr. Gabancho said Phase 1A had two construction headings, with eight blocks on the south end of the corridor and eight blocks at the north end of the corridor in the east side. He stated that as the utility work finished in the above mentioned active zones the project team expanded into Phase 1B, which was immediately south of the original two construction headings and began doing water and sewer work in those areas.

Mr. Gabancho said as Phase 1A finishes its roadway work, traffic will be shifted over and on the opposite side of the street the project team will begin Phase 1C. He added that Phase 1C would be south of Sutter Street and would require moving construction from the west side of the street to the east. Also, construction from the far north of the corridor would be moving from the east side of the street to the west and would begin doing the same sort of sewer and water work from previous phases.

Chair Peskin asked if the project team had made progress in its attempt to make up for lost time.

Mr. Gabancho said the current delay of 564 days was at or about where it was the last time, he presented an update to the Board. He said the reason for the lack of progress was due to Van Ness Avenue not having a concrete base under the asphalt, contrary to what the project team had expected.

Chair Peskin asked if that meant the asphalt on Van Ness Avenue was sitting on dirt.

Mr. Gabancho answered in the affirmative and said the project team would have shown a greater recovery of the schedule if it were not for the additional work required to lay a concrete base under the asphalt.

Chair Peskin asked why the original potholing did not inform the project team that there was no concrete.

Mr. Gabancho said the original potholing was done in the parking lanes which have concrete under them. He said that the lack of a concrete was not discovered until construction moved into the travel lanes. Mr. Gabancho said Caltrans did not have a standard of having a concrete road base, so the city had been working on its own to get a more permanent fix.

Mr. Gabancho mentioned that when they complete the utility work, they will be building the BRT lanes in the median which is Phase 2 which will start late this year. It is expected to take a year. As they complete the bus running lanes then they will restring the overhead lines and put in pedestrian bulb outs and accessibility ramps which will be the last work before revenue service.

Chair Peskin asked if it was a fair statement that 3 out of the 250 businesses operating on Van

Ness Avenue had closed because of construction impacts.

Mr. Gabancho said that there were 3 businesses where the SFMTA could not rule out construction impacts as contributing to their closing.

Chair Peskin asked if it would be fair to say that there were 10 other businesses that were extremely stressed due construction impacts.

Mr. Gabancho said there were 10 businesses along the corridor that had come to the SFMTA with concerns that were referred to the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD). He added that the SFMTA was working with OEWD to provide support and minimize impacts on the businesses.

Chair Peskin reminded the Board that they appropriated \$5 million of the SFMTA's allotted \$38.8 million in Educational Revenue Augmentation Funds (ERAF) for mitigations for severely impacted businesses from city work. He requested that the SFMTA be proactive in providing funds to businesses that qualify.

Commissioner Fewer stated that the update presented by the SFMTA was inadequate and did not inform the Board of what was happening along the corridor. She requested a report on the status of the small businesses along the corridor where construction work was being done, the estimated loss of revenue due to the construction so far and the projected estimated loss of revenue through the end of the project given the project delay of 564 days. She said that \$5 million was not going to be enough to keep small businesses afloat and reiterated her request through the chair that the SFMTA present a report on the small businesses' economic viability through the duration of construction.

Chair Peskin asked if the SFMTA could prepare a report in conjunction with OEWD before the April 9, 2019 Board meeting.

Kate McCarthy, Public Outreach and Engagement Manager at the SFMTA, said she would coordinate with OEWD to determine if they could meet the April 9 deadline. She added that the SFMTA was actively working on addressing the issues raised regarding small businesses, and in partnership with OEWD, was developing metrics in support of that effort.

Commissioner Safai asked if the SFMTA had public information officers who were in contact with small business owners along the Van Ness corridor.

Mr. Gabancho said three SFMTA staff members had regular contact with all the businesses along the corridor as well as canvassing.

Commissioner Safai asking if the canvassing along the corridor discovered that only the 10 businesses discussed in the presentation were impacted by construction.

Mr. Gabancho said that the 10 businesses identified were the only businesses that came forward and requested to participate in the program.

Commissioner Safai suggested that the SFMTA look back over the last five years of gross receipts of small businesses along the corridor and then look over the two years that the construction's been happening to determine the impact. He agreed with Commissioner Fewer that \$5 million was not enough but said in the short term the fund could help keep businesses stay afloat. He stated that the project was significant in its scope and size and noted that the duration of the project was extended significantly because of the unanticipated underground work. He invited small businesses that were impacted by the construction to share their experiences with the Board

and said that he believed that there were more than 10 businesses along the corridor that had been impacted adversely because of construction.

Commissioner Brown requested that the SFMTA better communicate with the Board and provide background on the businesses. She stated that she walked along the District 5 side of Van Ness Avenue to talk to small business owners and did not make it more than two blocks within a two hour span because of all the complaints she received. She said that she had suggested to business owners to share their gross receipts data with the city to demonstrate the impact construction had on their books. She said she understood the importance of infrastructure projects in the city but was worried that the long-term projects would force many small businesses to close. She said the impact of multi-year projects like Van Ness was felt throughout District 5 and asked on the SFMTA to provide the Board with the outreach plan they use when communicating with small businesses. She requested that the Board be provided with an SFMTA point of contact to whom they can refer businesses that have indicated to the Board that they need help. She also requested a robust plan from OEWD that discussed next steps to help the businesses.

Commissioner Mar said mitigating the impact on small businesses during major construction projects was really important to the Board and thanked Commissioner Fewer for her request for a more detailed business report. He said it was important to learn in real time to adjust not only on Van Ness but also for other transit improvement projects. He requested that the business report also include the type of support OEWD provided to the 10 businesses who requested assistance and additional types of support that could have been provided to the small businesses that closed during construction.

Jonathan Rewers, Manager, Design Strategy and Delivery at SFMTA. He said in regard to the Board's request for data on the Van Ness BRT project, the SFMTA had previously used a formula with the Office of the Controller that demonstrated the impact of construction projects based on sale tax that could be applied to the Van Ness corridor. He suggested that the requested small business impact report be presented at the April 23, 2019 Board meeting to allow the SFMTA sufficient time to work with the Office of the Controller and obtain the requested data. He added that OEWD should also attend the Board meeting to provide an overview of the support they have provided to small businesses along the Van Ness corridor.

Commissioner Fewer requested that the report also provide projected loss for the next two years as a result of the project.

Chair Peskin asked if the SFMTA used a third party for public outreach.

Mr. Gabancho said SFMTA and Walsh Construction staff currently conducted outreach along the corridor.

Ms. McCarthy added that the SFMTA also used Caribou, transit brand ambassadors, that conducted outreach to the small businesses.

Chair Peskin asked for the project office location and how the public can contact project staff.

Ms. McCarthy said the website was sfmta.com/vanness, email was vannessbrt@sfmta.com and the 24/7 hotline was (415) 646-2310. She added that there were two advisory committees, one for community members and another for business owners, and that the committees were accepting applications through March 29, 2019.

Chair Peskin asked for the project office address.

Ms. McCarthy said the project office was located on 180 Redwood Street and had office hours

Tuesdays from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. and Fridays from 10:00 - 12:00 p.m.

Chair Peskin stated that the Transportation Authority Board hearing would be held April 23, 2019 and requested that the SFMTA inform the 250-plus businesses and residents along the Van Ness corridor. He added that the Board would like to hear directly from small business owners and members of the public.

Commissioner Fewer asked for the total shortfall of the project.

Mr. Gabancho said that at the current time there was no budgetary shortfall.

Commissioner Fewer referred to the memorandum in the Board packet and noted that the SFMTA was seeking additional sources of funds and considering deferring uninitiated projects to fill the anticipated Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget need, toward the end of construction and project closeout. She asked if the Geary BRT project was next in the queue of projects.

Mr. Gabancho replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Fewer stated that the construction impacts felt by small businesses along the Van Ness corridor was terrifying small business merchants along the Geary corridor. She said she was concerned that the additional funding needed for the Van Ness BRT project would be taken from the anticipated projects the SFMTA planned to begin in 2021 and would include the Geary BRT. She wanted to put that statement on the record.

Commissioner Mandelman said the Van Ness BRT project was one of the top issues voiced by residents when speaking with their local government. He asked why it was necessary to extend the project throughout the entire corridor instead of breaking the project up into smaller phases.

Mr. Gabancho said the project team looked at a lot of different ways to sequence the construction but could not get around the volume of traffic that goes through the corridor. The current plan has different construction headings staggered along the length of the corridor and was meant to maximize the speed of the construction while minimizing the distribution of the impact along sidewalks and parking lanes. He explained that the project team is maintaining street parking along the corridor and the parking may be across the street or nearby. Construction that is concentrated will have significant impact on parking and sidewalk on both sides of the street for weeks or months. He said the project team worked with the contractor to develop the current approach where they could maintain two lanes of mixed-flow traffic and on one side or the other have an unimpacted sidewalk and an unimpacted parking lane.

Chair Peskin stated that the project changed the traffic patterns along the corridor and then for the better part of a half a year not one shovel full of dirt got turned. He mentioned the rapid progress of construction and the high volume of workers for the new Golden State Warriors arena and asked why that model could not be replicated for the Van Ness BRT project.

Mr. Gabancho said that he shared a similar frustration and that the project team was pushing to get crews out on Saturdays and Sundays when the traffic level drops and work could be done more efficiently. He also said the SFMTA was working with the contractor to bring on more crews.

Chair Peskin noted that bicyclists ride along a series of red barriers north of Broadway was a safety concern given little space and lots of trucks and other traffic. He requested that the SFMTA lay a strip of asphalt down, that could later be pulled out, to allow bicycles to ride safely. He said a similar step was taken in District 5 along Masonic.

Mr. Gabancho said the SFMTA would look into the matter.

During public comment Paul Pendergast, Chair of Public Policy for the Golden Gate Business Association, thanked the Board for standing up for the voice of small business and the impacts they face as a result of long-term construction projects. He recommended that the Board review the sales tax database at the Office of the Controller and said the small business community felt that the \$5 million mitigation fund was woefully inadequate. He said small businesses were the ones hiring people in restaurants and retail making \$15 an hour and were the people the city needed to support.

After public comment Chair Peskin recommended that the Board and public eat at the Helmand Palace, a restaurant on the Van Ness corridor that relocated there after being displaced from Broadway. He also announced that the Board would have a hearing on the economic impacts on small businesses along the corridor April 23, 2019.

Other Items

13. Introduction of New Items – INFORMATION

There were no new items introduced.

14. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.