



DRAFT MINUTES

San Francisco County Transportation Authority

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

1. Roll Call

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

Present at Roll Call: Commissioners, Chan, Haney, Mar, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (10)

Absent at Roll Call: Commissioner Mandelman (entered during item 8) (1)

2. Executive Director's Report - INFORMATION

Tilly Chang, Executive Director, said in the interest of time, she would not present the Executive Director's Report and noted that it was posted on the agency's website.

There was no public comment.

3. Approve the Minutes of the September 14, 2021 Meeting - ACTION

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Melgar motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Mar.

The minutes were approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (10)

Absent: Commissioner Mandelman (1)

Vice Chair Peskin excused Chair Mandelman who had a conflict with the first half of the meeting.

Consent Agenda

- 4. [Final Approval] Allocate \$885,777 in Prop K Funds and \$410,000 in Prop AA Funds, with Conditions, for Four Requests - ACTION**
- 5. [Final Approval] Accept the Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) Phasing Study Final Report, Support the DTX Phasing Strategy of the Transbay Joint Powers Authority, and Release \$2,644,557 in Previously Allocated Prop K Sales Tax Funds, with Conditions, for DTX Project Development - ACTION**
- 6. [Final Approval] Authorize the Executive Director and Other Authorized Representatives to Enter Into a Revolving Credit Agreement for \$125 Million with U.S. Bank National Association; to Execute and Deliver Legal Documents Relating Thereto; and To Take All Necessary or Appropriate Related Actions in Connection Therewith - ACTION**



7. [Final Approval] Authorize Examination of Transaction and Use Tax Records - ACTION

Commissioner Walton moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Ronen.

The consent agenda was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (10)

Absent: Commissioner Mandelman (1)

End of Consent Agenda

8. San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Transportation Recovery Plan: 2022 Muni Service Network - INFORMATION

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Director of Transportation Jeffrey Tumlin introduced the item and introduced Julie Kirschbaum, Director of Transit, and Sean Kennedy, Transit Planning Manager, who presented the item.

Vice Chair Peskin expressed concern about the usefulness of SFMTA's survey that did not allow respondents to suggest alternative options or a hybrid option.

Commissioner Preston echoed those concerns and added that there was no option to receive public feedback and opinions. He asked why the presented plan aimed for an 85% restoration when the Board of Supervisors had passed a resolution to urge a plan for complete restoration. He asked if the plan for complete restoration was finished and why it was not in the presentation today.

Ms. Kirschbaum responded that the available resources allow for a 10% service restoration by February, and the main focus of today was to receive guidance and feedback on that 10% service restoration. She confirmed they would deliver an on-time response for complete service restoration and said today's discussion was framed by the hiring that SFMTA would be doing from now until February.

Director Tumlin added that scheduling constraints restricted public engagement opportunities for February's service restoration. He said they have been receiving public comments through the SFMTA website. He said he expected larger-scaled planning to begin around December, where SFMTA would have more time to engage with the Board and the public.

Commissioner Preston commented that there were other options with more ambitious goals not being presented despite the resolution made by the Board of Supervisors.

Director Tumlin responded that the plan was limited by SFMTA's ability to hire and train within the time frame rather than resources. He added that SFMTA was working on a plan for complete restoration and were eager to reach that goal.

Ms. Kirschbaum added that this was an example of growth faster than what staffing could accommodate. She explained that SFMTA initially targeted a 70% service restoration for back-to-school connections and ended up scheduling about 75%. Ms. Kirschbaum said they were maximizing operator overtime to staff the service. She stated that 85% restoration for February was determined by staffing, which would improve as SFMTA continues to hire and train.



Commissioner Preston asked whether any elected body had voted to authorize or adopt the 5-Minute Network as a priority objective.

Director Tumlin answered that speed, adaptability, and reliability were the adopted goals that they were working to actualize and present to the SFMTA Board for the February service plan.

Commissioner Preston asked for clarification on whether any bodies have adopted or authorized the plan as a priority objective.

Director Tumlin answered that no bodies had done so as no recommendations were ready yet.

Commissioner Preston expressed concern that the heavy inclusion of the 5-Minute Network Vision showed SFMTA's bias toward achieving this goal through increased frequency of service at the cost of reductions for other lines.

Director Tumlin answered that they respond to policy direction and have received many policy calls for fast, frequent, and reliable Muni service. He stated that their responsibility was to present the advantages and disadvantages of options for response. He referenced Mr. Kennedy's earlier remarks during the presentation in saying all three possibilities have individual advantages and disadvantages and said they were not recommending any particular option.

Commissioner Preston pointed out that the three options presented restricted possibilities for other solutions, and the naming of these options affected public reaction. He gave several examples of how naming could skew the public's response, including how the "Frequent Option" scenario entailed more frequent service for specific lines by eliminating other lines.

Director Tumlin reassured that none of the three options eliminated lines but simply restored service in different ways. He reiterated that the current planning effort was to determine how to allocate staff.

Vice Chair Peskin added that word choice and the limited ability for public feedback could skew survey results.

Commissioner Preston said he was concerned about the neutrality of the survey and objected to the lack of proposed service in District 5. He pointed out the lack of proposed return service for lines serving Japantown and the Western Addition and said it did not align with SFMTA's claims of advancing equity.

Director Tumlin responded that all three options provided the same amount of service for each neighborhood but allocated it differently. He noted efforts in collecting feedback and demographics from neighborhoods to hear their service preferences.

Commissioner Melgar thanked Ms. Kirschbaum and Director Tumlin for the improved frequency and reliability of transit in District 7. She noted stagnation in food, education, and job opportunities for Districts 1, 4, and 7 across the three options and commented on the overall policy issues embedded in the plan. She said she would like to expand on this discussion in the Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting. Commissioner Melgar pointed out that loss of service on hills, such as on Brotherhood Way and in Golden Gate Heights, would significantly impact seniors and people with disabilities. She said the survey did not give opportunities for them to



provide feedback. She worried that although this plan aimed to restore service and allocate staffing for February, the underlying policies would set up future development patterns.

Ms. Kirschbaum gave an example of the 29 Rapid line to demonstrate avoiding tradeoffs between neighborhoods. She said although the 29 Rapid would aid their efforts in improving school access, they did not implement it since it would burn through their operator mechanic pool. She explained that this also contributed to the issue Commissioner Preston brought up about the lack of service to Japantown and Western Addition. She also explained they were proposing temporary, small-scale adjustments to service in District 7 based on ridership data.

Commissioner Melgar responded that although the adjustments are small, choosing frequency for high ridership lines at the expense of basic access to a few was a policy that needed more discussion.

Director Tumlin thanked Commissioner Melgar for the invitation to the Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting. He agreed that this type of conversation was critical to have with policymakers as Muni service greatly impacts the city's ability to achieve its land use ambitions.

Commissioner Mar echoed previous Commissioners' concerns over the lack of opportunities for feedback and suggestions beyond the three scenarios. He noted that despite one of the names being the "Familiar Option," the plan included significant line reductions and eliminations. He listed some examples, including a service gap for the 58 line on Sloat Boulevard and a required transfer along the J Church line to get to downtown. He asked if these service changes were permanent or were part of SFMTA's progress in determining the best option to provide service with limited resources.

Ms. Kirschbaum replied that it was the latter, and they were working with community stakeholders to determine the next steps.

Commissioner Mar asked if SFMTA was still considering restoring full service for the J Church and the 23 Monterey.

Ms. Kirschbaum replied yes.

Commissioner Mar asked if inadequate resources, in addition to a lack of staffing, was an issue impacting the difficult tradeoff choices. He also asked what it would take to fully restore pre-pandemic service and increase frequency on high ridership lines.

Ms. Kirschbaum clarified that the workforce issue was constrained by time but would improve as SFMTA continues to hire. She said that resource constraints could be addressed if SFMTA could identify new funding, but no amount of funding could speed up the staffing process.

Commissioner Chan gave an example of a positive experience she had on the N train, which was smooth and efficient, and a negative experience with the 38 Geary line. She said she did not realize the 38 bus shelter she waited at was not in use, missed three buses, and had to take the 38 to Balboa and 33rd Avenue. She got off at Balboa and 33rd to walk home and did not see any 38 Geary buses the entire time. She said that she was capable of walking home, but the experience demonstrated SFMTA's inability to serve their riders. Commissioner Chan also pointed out the inadequate language



services for their survey. She reported that community organizers had developed their own surveys to be more understandable and accommodating for public feedback and said this was how she knew SFMTA was not serving her constituents. She expressed disappointment in SFMTA's plan and did not have any questions.

Vice Chair Peskin said that there seemed to be unanimity in opinions about the survey methodology.

Commissioner Haney asked how the survey addressed concerns in safety. He reported concerns from Chinese-speaking seniors about service changes requiring extra walking, referenced the city's focus on protecting API seniors, and asked how non-English-speaking residents could give their feedback.

Ms. Kirschbaum answered that the survey initially had a text messaging feature for those without internet access, but they opted for a phone number instead to accommodate language needs. She said community dialogue and verbal feedback were helping them assess the different scenarios and their impacts on riders. She thanked Commissioner Haney for highlighting this issue.

Commissioner Haney commented on moving a transit stop a couple blocks from a large building massively impacts seniors and how they get around, their safety, and their routine. He said to think about navigation, working with seniors on their particular needs, when distributing surveys, getting input, and making decisions and that a small change may feel small to the SFMTA but not for the hundreds of seniors living in those big buildings. Commissioner Haney requested more information on how SFMTA was working with the school district on access to schools, having heard a lot of concern from educators that changes in transportation had negatively impacted students and educators. He reiterated that changes that may seem small on a map can be huge for access to schools, certain communities, educators, and families, specifically considering where they are coming from and going to. Commissioner Haney asked about the role of the school district, noting the changing starting times for school, language questions, and asked how SFMTA was ensuring that aspect of the restoration was really centered.

Ms. Kirschbaum answered that SFMTA was working closely with the school district and was able to hear their feedback specifically over the summer. She commented that SFMTA also designed the August service changes as a back-to-school effort, prioritizing connections and getting service restored to some of the hilltop neighborhoods. Ms. Kirschbaum also answered that SFMTA provided some very specific guidance to the school district as they were thinking about start times, like staggering start times since there weren't big surges of kids all coming at the same time; however, for education reasons, the school district decided to consolidate the school times. Ms. Kirschbaum added that SFMTA was working to be responsive to that in real time like adding more service in January to the 44 O'Shaughnessy and 48 24th and Quintara, where there was acute crowding around school times. She concluded that both SFMTA and the school district were working through their different approaches.

Commissioner Haney thanked Ms. Kirschbaum for her answers and reiterated that there was a lot of concern about the matter, hoping that there was engagement with the school communities by doing surveys and analysis learning what is really going on, not just heads of the school district who may not be able to give their full breadth



of feedback and may not have all of the levels of information.

Commissioner Preston thanked colleagues, for their questions and said he appreciated Director Tumlin's comments about wanting policy guidance and discussion with the Board of Supervisors. He asked what the total cost, staff time and consultants included, and how much had been spent, and what was the overall budget for the survey regarding winter restoration.

Director Tumlin responded that staff would respond later with the numbers.

With respect to reallocating service between different lines, Commissioner Preston asked for clarification on why a city-wide survey was being conducted to decide how residents of the Western addition and Japantown would be given service.

Director Tumlin commented that the impacted lines go all the way across the city with several of them in the Richmond and Japantown districts but connected to many other neighborhoods. He elaborated the impacts were distributed through many neighborhoods in San Francisco, which explained the types of survey questions and would present what specific populations preferred, to inform the hard policy choices SFMTA would have to make with its limited staffing.

Commissioner Preston responded that the information was not clear in the survey as to how residents specifically in his district were being asked for feedback. Additionally, he said SFMTA had said, there should be no overall impact on other neighborhoods because it was the same service hours and same neighborhoods.

Director Tumlin answered that each of the three options provided roughly the same amount of service to all neighborhoods in San Francisco and it was a matter of where to invest service based upon hiring in the agency. He further commented that SFMTA's immediate goal was racing to meet a fast-approaching deadline for building schedules and hiring bus operators to improve transit service by February and that all of that would help SFMTA improve future survey instruments for the next round of service expansion to get to 100% and 110%. Director Tumlin stated that SFMTA needed a quick answer on how the agency should allocate our operators and mechanics this February so they could act on it.

Commissioner Preston responded that he never heard of this kind of outreach for this kind of decision, and with a limited pot of money and service, they should do community outreach that was targeted to neighborhoods. He further expressed that this was a very focused survey with the results dictating some very neighborhood-specific decisions of how to allocate the same transit hours between lines and whether to bring them back; and the current method precluded meaningful input by the folks most impacted. Commissioner Preston asked if it was possible to activate the 21 and to achieve the overcrowding relief and greater service on the 5 with longer buses, why couldn't people have both those important lines.

Ms. Kirschbaum answered that SFMTA was moving back to the 60-foot buses for the 5 Fulton, having made some shifts in vehicle size based on operator availability. She said SFMTA will be opening up the opportunity for operators to change the type of vehicle they drive and to change their home division and that will also allow them to do some important rebalancing and will help get 60-foot buses back on the 5 Fulton. Ms. Kirschbaum stated that SFMTA did appreciate the feedback on the survey and clarified the survey didn't preclude the local conversations, that they were reaching



out to different neighborhood groups and there was still opportunity for those conversations they would follow up directly with Commissioner Preston's office on any missed topics.

Commissioner Chan commented that she agreed with Commissioner Preston bringing the hearing back to the Government Audit & Oversight Committee and trying to better understand the plan, as well as the Controller's Office looking into SFMTA's finances. She further commented that she would like to see a budget that really values the working people in San Francisco that depend on the City's public transit.

Vice Chair Peskin commented that it would be interesting to get the answer to Commissioner Preston's question of how much the survey actually cost and urged SFMTA to tread with caution and to not seek to justify the results of that citywide survey.

During public comment, Karen Canard objected to the lack of targeted public outreach about whether the temporary forced transfer on the J Church transfer should be made permanent. She also asked that the J Church transfer be severed from the winter service plan and a separate outreach process be conducted.

Zack Lipton commented that funding and a plan from the commission were needed for the restoration of 100% pre-pandemic service hours. He requested the Board to move forward on long-term stable funding for Muni to provide short-term guarantees of funding necessary to bridge the gap so hiring didn't have to stop because of financial constraints and so service restoration wouldn't be further delayed.

A caller urged SFMTA to calculate how long it took a disabled person to cross either Church Street or Church and Market streets to change trains, let alone descend into the station; noting that these were scary pedestrian crossings, even for young able-bodied people. She also urged SFMTA to reinstate through J Church trains to the Embarcadero and acknowledged SFMTA's hard work.

Lorraine Petty supported and urged the full 100% restoration of all the pre-covid lines.

A caller commented that she would like the J Church line to be restored; that crossing Market Street is inaccessible for many people and discourages use of public transportation and burdens people, which was not the way to increase ridership, there were other ways to speed up transit, and taxpayers were tired of the lack of responsibility and accountability for the money that was spent.

Kathy De Lucca, with Community Living Campaign, commented how inaccessible the outreach has been for senior and disabilities populations with less than a month to take a survey or attend the meeting, and lack of notification. She also commented that SFMTA should restore the full pre-pandemic Muni network and then engage the community in a real discussion about the future of Muni before changing any lines.

Ofrita Onio thanked Commissioner Melgar for her efforts and asked to restore the 6 Parnassus bus line to its pre-pandemic route along with all the other routes.

Scott Feeney requested the 6 Parnassus be restored since it provided access into upper neighborhoods that would otherwise be cut off. He also commented that frequency was not improved by consolidating routes which took access away from people, and requested support for funding measures for frequent and high coverage



transit, instead of choice between two lines.

A caller commented that SFMTA should restore J Church service to downtown now and observe the performance, asserting that the most vulnerable members of the community were disproportionately harmed by the service cut, which included seniors, people with disabilities, and women who have been accosted, waiting for the J Church at night.

Anna Staggio-Monopolis commented that as a senior, did not want to be forced to transfer to get to a destination, walk uphill, or walk longer distances to get to a bus line; and delaying restoration of the full service to the J Church line caused transit riders to resort to using alternate means of transportation. She also commented it was not safe for seniors, people with disabilities, and families with infants and children to have to dodge traffic at an extremely busy intersection or go down two flights of stairs to the underground; and asked for the J Church and 48 Quintara/24th Street lines to be restored.

Cat Carter with San Francisco Transit Riders commented that she appreciated all the Commissioners' questions and concerns and echoed their concerns about the outreach process and survey, urging SFMTA to do a much better job of partnering with diverse groups in the future, centering on the needs of the most dependent and not just serve the majority. She also requested full restoration of Muni service, asserting many riders had already lived without service for too long and none of the three survey options provided sufficient service.

Roland Lebrun commented that the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority went through the exact same process six years ago with catastrophic results, including increase in service miles and drop in ridership. He requested the Board direct and support Muni in restoring 100% of pre-pandemic

A caller requested the restoration of the J Church and pre-pandemic service for Muni in general.

Edward Mason commented that the walking transfer to another line was unsafe; the subway performance was below pre-COVID capacity and the J Church should and could be accommodated in the subway; and the 2022 plan should restore pre-COVID weekend and weekday service for all lines.

David Pilpel commented that the J Church should be in the subway, it was inequitable to force J Church riders to transfer when other rail riders have a one-seat ride and were not forced to transfer at a portal, and SFMTA should restore all routes to at least pre-COVID weekend levels. He also commented that follow-up hearings at the Government Audit & Oversight Committee were needed with possible legislation. He further commented that Muni employees and unions should be consulted in addition to the riders with a better and different survey instrument. He concluded by saying all San Francisco needed public transit and Muni, not just some of San Francisco.

Barbara Castarello spoke of her personal experience waiting for the J Church at night, as well as witnessing a safety hazard for a senior pedestrian. She urged SFMTA to restore full service to the J Church line.

After public comment, Chair Mandelman resumed chairing duties at the meeting and thanked Vice Chair Peskin for presiding during his absence.



9. BART's Recovery Plan Update - INFORMATION

BART Board Director Bevan Dufty introduced the item Robert Powers, General Manager for BART, who presented the item, and Pam Herhold, Assistant General Manager, Performance and Budget.

Commissioner Safai thanked Director Dufty and Mr. Powers for their collaboration on affordable housing and transit-oriented development. He said they are super excited for the new construction and all the work they did along with SFMTA and his office. He added that they have two major hubs: Balboa and Glen Park BART Station that serve their residents, so they care deeply about the effort and energy they put into that. Additionally, Commissioner Safai thanked Mr. Dufty for his work stating that during his tenure he has been very proactive in engaging in this part of town, and he thanked Mr. Powers for being an accessible Executive Director.

Janice Li, BART Director, echoed Mr. Dufty's comments stating that they have confidence in Mr. Powers. She reassured the Board that they believe in the partnership with SFMTA and the Board and added that their phone lines are always open and they will be sure to be responsive to any inquiry they may have while finding ways to work together.

Chair Mandelman thanked Director Li for her engagement around some of the issues impacting residents in their system who are also unhoused in their neighborhoods. He mentioned that he had spoken with Mr. Dufty regarding who in the city would be available to respond to particular issues or concerns that were raised in an internal staff level meeting and extended the offer to have another meeting or escalate it back to this Board.

Commissioner Preston echoed thanks for BART's progressive policing efforts. He asked about the experience with the 50% off fares and said he was curious what the discounted September fares results were and if there was any analysis on that, to which Mr. Powers said it was likely too early to answer and that after they finish post processing of the September data, they would report out to the BART Board.

Ms. Herhold added that they would take a look at their September data and particularly compare it to how their October ridership plays out. She added that they had been tracking their ridership daily and weekly, and what has helped drive their ridership was the service restoration they put into place in early August of this year. She added that they would be happy to report back to the Board with their results at a later date.

Commissioner Preston thanked Ms. Herhold and said he thinks it is important that they pilot these efforts. He invited BART to stay in touch with his office as they looked at the data and making decisions on whether any aspect of that will continue on into the future.

Director Dufty replied that when he and Director Lateefah Simon came to the BART Board, the youth fare stopped at age 12, and since then youth fare between ages 12-18 was implemented. He said he thinks that has brought a lot of youth ridership in and they hope to do more, adding that he appreciates the direction they and others have taken on these issues.

Commissioner Melgar thanked Director Powers for the collaboration with Director Chang and her district. She said it has been important for the dream of having subway



connections. With respect to free BART for youth, she asked if they could expand on the plans they have for the future beyond what they are doing for the pandemic. She said they have implemented Free Muni for Youth in the budget for the city, she is hoping it remains because it is an important part of training a new generation of riders.

Mr. Powers said when he was out in the system talking to youth riders, a lot of them said they were not participating in the 50% off youth. He said they have to make sure they are communicating that out to their ridership so that everyone can take advantage of the discounts.

Ms. Herhold added that they now offer 50% discounts to youths up to 18 years old which was raised from 12, and from that they saw a jump up from ridership. She said they capture a lot of younger riders with the SF State Gator Pass, at acknowledged that the Transportation Authority provided seed money to get that going.

Commissioner Melgar said she would like to get the data when available. She also thanked BART for the girl's safety campaign, and said that Muni could learn a lot from this effort. She added that she is looking forward to getting what information they can from BART so they can replicate that program with their public transportation.

During public comment, a union representative asked for support in increasing the BART share of funds in the upcoming San Francisco Tax Expenditure Plan.

Laurie Thomas, Chief Director of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association thanked BART for their cooperation, returning late night service and helping the association's campaign "Relax your Vax" promotion efforts by distributing the campaign marketing flyers at BART's stations.

Anastasia Monopolies called to thank BART and the Commissioners for their support and insightful questions.

Jessica Lan, from the Business Travel Association acknowledged BART's efforts during the pandemic, and for offering extended late night service, and for their responsiveness to their requests, echoing Laurie Thomas' comments.

A caller thanked BART for the presentation and suggested that they conduct youth outreach via social media platforms such as TikTok.

Commissioner Walton thanked Director Powers and his team for the presentation.

10. Investment Report and Debt Expenditure Report for the Quarter Ended June 30, 2021 - INFORMATION

This item was deferred to the call of the chair.

Other Items

11. Introduction of New Items - INFORMATION

There were no new items introduced.

12. Public Comment

During public comment, Roland Lebrun thanked the Board for approving the Prop K allocation for the Downtown Extension (DTX). He referenced the minutes from the July 16 DTX Executive Steering Committee Meeting and suggested the Board follow the



conversation. Lastly, with respect to the third track, he said that is not a requirement and they are going to end up doing substantially different than what is currently on paper.

Edward Mason provided an update on the commuter buses and said prior to the pandemic they had 100 corporate commuter buses authorized at 24th and Church Street, and the numbers declined significantly with the pandemic, but are starting to rise again. Mr. Mason shared that between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. pre-pandemic, there were about 40-45 commuter buses at 24th and Church Street, and now there are about 20 buses an hour. Lastly, he shared his concern about the majority of the buses running empty during the current climate crisis, and with very few passengers who should be riding Caltrain to get to their destination.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.