



MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Funding, Programs & Legislation
February 8, 2021
2:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Judy Arnold, County of Marin Board of Supervisors
Susan Cleveland-Knowles, Sausalito City Council
Beach Kuhl, Ross Town Council
Eric Lucan, Novato City Council, Committee Chair
Katie Rice, County of Marin Board of Supervisors

Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Anne Richman, Executive Director
Denise Merleno, Executive Assistant
Derek McGill, Planning Manager
Helga Cotter, Senior Accountant
Li Zhang, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer

Chair Lucan called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

1. Chair's Report (Discussion)

Chair Lucan welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting as allowed by Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20 and thanked Supervisor Arnold for her leadership in chairing this Committee in 2020. He asked Ms. Merleno to conduct a roll call where she reported that there was a quorum of the Committee.

2. Commissioner Comments (Discussion)

None.

3. Executive Director's Report (Discussion)

Executive Director (ED) Anne Richman highlighted items in her report including: the acquisition of Gotcha Mobility, the vendor under contract to provide bikes for the Marin-Sonoma Bike Share Pilot Program which is still in the planning phase, by Bolt Mobility; TAM's support for local and regional agencies to submit applications as part of Caltrans' annual planning grant cycle; and the approval of \$1.45 million to the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) from the State's Short Line Railroad Improvement Program to support transitioning freight transportation off the road and onto the rails.

In response to a question from Commissioner Arnold about the application process for planning grant funding, ED Richman clarified that TAM's role in the process this cycle is to provide letters of support to other agencies who are submitting applications.

Commissioner Cleveland-Knowles asked for an update on the status of federal stimulus funding programs.

ED Richman stated that an update would be provided at the next board meeting, but she noted the federal relief act that was signed in December would provide close to \$1 billion of transit funding destined for the Bay Area and that MTC is analyzing the best way to distribute the monies. She added that an additional approximately \$900 million will come to the State through the Surface Transportation Program (STP) which is intended for but not restricted to use on highway projects. She finalized her report by commenting that a discussion of a next relief bill is ongoing at the federal level.

4. Open Time for Public Expression

Chair Lucan asked if any member of the public wished to speak or had submitted a comment by e-mail and hearing none, he closed this item.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2021 (Action)

Commissioner Cleveland-Knowles moved to approve the Minutes of January 11, 2021 which was seconded by Commissioner Rice. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. Advancing Equity in Transportation (Discussion)

ED Richman introduced Planning Manager Derek McGill who presented this discussion item. Mr. McGill noted that the Board began its most recent discussion of this topic in June 2020, after a discussion of who was most impacted by COVID-19.

He reviewed suggested objectives the agency may choose to focus on to advance equity. He then highlighted an internal review staff conducted regarding this topic; provided an overview of TAM activities since 2003 that focused on equity; criteria for identifying communities of concern; the existing planning and policy framework both regionally and at the county and local levels; equity components incorporated into TAM's 2017 Vision Plan; direct actions TAM and its partner agencies have taken to address equity; and suggested areas for further exploration.

ED Richman provided an example of TAM's equity analysis approach, through a public engagement process, relative to the US-101/580 Director Connector Project. She reviewed the approach taken which included: defining who and where the disadvantaged community is; identifying the needs and concerns of the community; measuring the potential impacts on the community and then determining strategies to avoid and/or mitigate inequities. She discussed possible next steps for the TAM Board to consider, specifically for the US101/580 Direct Connector project, and acknowledged that different details should be considered for each project under consideration.

Commissioner Rice agreed with staff's intention to include the topic of equity in the next update of the TAM Vision Plan. She suggested including in the update process a historical context regarding where funding has been allocated and who has benefitted or been burdened by a project receiving those funds.

Commissioner Cleveland-Knowles stressed the importance of sustained involvement of those in underserved communities in the planning process for any transportation project in Marin and recommended that this element be included in the next update of the Vision Plan.

She suggested the need to consider individuals who live outside the County but travel here to work in low-wage positions, and how including the topic of means-based fares and transit schedules as part of this discussion would benefit those individuals.

Commissioner Cleveland-Knowles finalized her comments by agreeing with Commissioner's Rice request to review the agency's past evaluation criteria and metrics to determine a project's success in reaching out to those communities of concern.

Commissioner Kuhl suggested that hands-on commissioner involvement in workshops would demonstrate the Board's genuine interest in reducing equity disparity, and it would educate the board members, firsthand, as to what these communities are experiencing. He wondered if the Board might consider establishing a committee of board members to explore the topic of equity and said he would volunteer to participate in such a committee.

Commissioner Arnold shared a quote that she encouraged the TAM Board to keep in mind: "Equality is where everyone gets a pair of shoes; equity is that they all fit."

Chair Lucan thanked the committee members for their thoughtful comments. He asked for clarification as to how staff would conduct outreach during the current pandemic. Using the examples of the elderly and/or homeless who may not have access to newer technology, he questioned whether platforms such as Zoom, would widely reach those groups.

ED Richman stated that outreach may look different today than prior to the pandemic, but it has not ceased. In addition to virtual community meetings, she noted that small pop-up workshops are a possibility. She added that meeting and building relationships with community leaders and advocates is another way to strengthen engagement in these communities.

Chair Lucan noted that Marin's affluence has made it ineligible for many funding opportunities even though many residents of disadvantaged communities travel throughout the County for work. He asked Mr. McGill how this typical situation could be portrayed to make the County eligible for these funds.

Mr. McGill replied that one of the objectives in this analysis is to consider how Marin supports its investment needs in the County through the equity lens that will be seen by other regional and state partners. He stated that, to the extent that information can be shared with project partners to demonstrate that outreach and community engagement identified their concerns and prioritized needs, Marin then may be eligible and compete better for regional and state grants.

Chair Lucan asked if any member of the public wished to speak or had submitted a comment by e-mail, and hearing none, he closed this item to public comment.

ED Richman thanked the committee members for their comments and stated that staff would plan to present this item at a future board meeting for additional discussion and to determine next steps.

Commissioner Cleveland-Knowles asked staff to add a separate section in future staff reports that addresses the topic of equity as it relates to the subject of the report to keep it in the forefront of the discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.